

**Weekly Theme:**  
**Passion Week**  
**Easter**

**Daily Bible Reading:**  
Luke 19

Praises:

Prayers:

## **Monday, March 29**

**What a difference just a few days make!** An ambitious young man decided to run for mayor in his home town where farming and a hard work ethic ruled the community. His savvy opponent was a veteran politician who had served on the town council for over 20 years. About a week before the election, the young man's popularity was building momentum like a runaway train! The old town council member knew desperate measures were needed and began to throw mud on the young man's burgeoning campaign. Just a few days from Election Day, the popular tide had turned and the old politician took a commanding lead in the race.

**What a difference just a few days make!** Suddenly, community support swung dramatically over to the old politician's camp who ended up winning the election in a record landslide! Politics and popularity make for a lethal combination and the old town council member's dirty campaign tactics won out. The young politician started out with such high hopes and dreams only to crash and burn.

As Jesus began His triumphal entry into Jerusalem at the beginning of Passion Week, His popularity had reached its pinnacle. Everyone was cheering and praising God for the miracles He had performed.

**What a difference just a few days make!** Suddenly the people who earlier were cheering and praising the miracles of Jesus were now jeering and chanting "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" to Pontius Pilate, the Roman Governor of Judea. The people began wavering in their commitment to Christ. Most were only cheering Jesus because of the signs and wonders. Few really understood His mission on earth: suffer the cross in order to redeem mankind of sin and make a relationship with God possible again.

As I reflect on the Passion Week, I remember several years ago how our son, Jared, heard the message of the gospel just a few days before Easter Sunday. He understood the mission of Christ and gladly received Jesus into his life by faith.

**What a difference just a few days make!** During this Passion Week, let the suffering of Christ remind you of how incredible God's love is for you!

*Jon DuBois*

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**Read through the Bible this Year**

Luke 5:1-16  
Judges 7-8

**Weekly Theme:**  
**Passion Week**  
**Easter**

**Daily Bible Reading:**  
Luke 20

**Praises:**

**Prayers:**

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**Read through the Bible this Year**

Luke 5:17-30  
Judges 9-10

## **Tuesday, March 30**

*A battleship was assigned to tactical maneuver training for several days. Weather was intense and visibility was poor. Shortly after dark, the lookout reported, "Light on the starboard bow". The Captain called, "SEND: 'We are on a collision course, advise you change course twenty degrees.'" Back came the signal, "Advisable for YOU to change course twenty degrees". The Captain said, "SEND: 'I'm a Captain, change course twenty degrees.'" "I'm a seaman 2<sup>nd</sup> class", came the reply. "YOU had better change course." By this time the Captain was furious! He yelled out, "SEND: 'I'm a battleship! Change course twenty degrees.'" Back came the flashing light, "I'm a light-house!" The Captain quickly changed course.*

Authority is a word that most people don't like for one simple reason. It carries the stigma of controlling. They aren't given the label or title, therefore do not have the power that comes with it. Authority is a word that defines who you are.

Jesus passed the baton of authority to His disciples to continue the ministry long after He walked the earth. Luke was one of those followers. He was the doctor who traveled with Paul and wrote the third Gospel specifically to the Greeks. His focus was on the Greeks to understanding the humanity of Jesus. Jesus' entire life was littered with people who questioned His credentials.

Jesus has just driven out those who were selling in the temple. Each passing day has been time spent teaching in the temple. It is in Chapter 20 that we find Jesus teaching the people in the temple courts regarding the gospel. These people consisted of average Joes, chief priests, teachers of the law, and elders. It was only those in authority that questioned His. Jesus' ministry and life was on a time sensitive collision course toward the propitiation of the cross. He didn't have time for their foolish question thereby leaving the question unanswered. Remember, He was in the temple courts sharing the gospel. Jesus was confident in the credentials of the One who sent Him and the necessity of the mission.

**APPLICATION:** Do I recognize the authority of God in my life? Am I aware of the Holy Spirit's convicting power? What area of my life needs turning over to God at this moment?  
*Eric Miracle*

**Weekly Theme:**  
**Passion Week**  
**Easter**

**Daily Bible Reading:**  
Luke 21

Praises:

## **Wednesday, March 31**

When you think of Easter what is the first thing that comes to mind? Is your first thought about a bunny or is it about Jesus? Ultimately the answer to that question can be found in your walk with Christ. At least I know it was for me and in three very distinct stages.

The first stage came before I accepted Jesus, I had my mind set on the things of the world; and quite frankly, it was all about the bunny. The second stage came within a few years of my accepting Jesus; my life had become a downward spiral as I was living the life of the foolish man Jesus described in Matthew 7:26-27. I was saved but hadn't fully surrendered ALL of my life to Christ. I heard the Word but didn't act on it and great was my fall. I had been saved but had never truly allowed the sanctification process to begin. Then one day as I sat wallowing in my own misery, suffering the consequences of yet another poor decision, I clearly heard the sweet voice of my Savior say, "Now do I have your attention?"

Prayers:

I remember vividly picturing Jesus' hanging on the cross. I couldn't even begin to imagine the pain and agony He went through for me, for us. I tried to imagine what it might have been like to have been a disciple that night in Emmaus when Jesus first appeared to them as they sat having dinner, doubting everything they had seen and heard the last three years of their lives. Jesus stood before them ALIVE! Jesus had risen from the dead, just like prophecy promised He would. It was at that moment my third stage began.

In Luke 21 we not only read Jesus' description of what we will experience in the end times but we also read about a life of total submission. The widow is an example of a life totally surrendered to Christ—the story is not just about the two small mites. She gave ALL that she had to Jesus while the others He refers to gave out of their excess, their "spare" change, their "spare" time. Jesus wants us to surrender ALL that we have to Him not just the leftovers.

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**Read through the Bible this Year**

Luke 6:1-26  
Judges 11-12

What stage are you in? Have you surrendered ALL or are you still.....

*Glenn Best*

**Weekly Theme:**  
**Passion Week**  
**Easter**

**Daily Bible Reading:**  
Luke 22

Praises:

Prayers:

## **Thursday, April 1**

Attending the confirmation of my high school friend at the ceremony in her synagogue I heard each of the candidates present his part of the program on the windows of the temple. These stained-glassed windows each portrayed a period of their Jewish history: Abraham, Moses, David, etc. One window was blank waiting to be filled in for the Messiah, or now perhaps a Messianic Era. Young as I was, my heart wanted to cry out, "FILL IN THE WINDOW! HE HAS COME! HE IS JESUS! HE IS LORD!"

The list of fulfillments by Jesus is numerous. Two in Luke 22 grab my attention. After celebrating the Passover with His disciples, He took the bread and broke it as a symbol of His body broken in the crucifixion. He took the cup which represented His blood shed for the remission of our sins and gave to all. This ordinance He gave us to commemorate His death. No more need for the annual sacrifice of the lamb as the Lamb of God was now to be sacrificed once and for all.

After observing the Passover Jesus and His disciples went to the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus fell to the ground and prayed passionately to His Father that this cup might pass from Him, always adding, "Thy will be done." In Matthew 26:44 it is noted that He prayed this three times. Certain then of His Father's will He went to the cross for the redemption of man.

There was another garden called Eden where its inhabitants did not say "Thy will be done" and Adam and Eve brought sin to all mankind. Gethsemane is a result of their action in Eden,

It was not the Pharisees who loved tradition more than truth, or the Romans who loved power more than principle who put Jesus on that cross. They were but the instruments used to carry it out. It was the sin of man, and the Heavenly Father who sent His son to atone for that sin with the shedding of His blood. Had these religious and political leaders not sent Him to die, there would have been other instruments. There had to be His atonement.

We are surrounded by souls who have empty windows and our hearts need to shout out to them, "FILL IN YOUR WINDOW! HE HAS COME! HE IS JESUS! HE IS LORD!"

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**Read through the Bible this Year**

Luke 6:27-49  
Judges 13-15

*Carole Dunn*

**Weekly Theme:**  
**Passion Week**  
**Easter**

**Daily Bible Reading:**  
Luke 23

Praises:

Prayers:

## Friday, April 2

It was January 1, 1995, and my heart was beating out of my chest. New Year's Day was on a Sunday, and my wife, Stephanie, and I were attending the Sunday morning worship service as usual. Olive had been Stephanie's church since 1970. She was saved and baptized in 1978, and had been a member for most of her life. After some time in the Marine Corps, we returned, and made Pensacola our home. I had been attending Olive since late 1992, but not yet joined the church. I was from a small charismatic non-denominational church. Olive was too big, and the music was too slow. It wasn't my church, but today God was calling me to join. "Lord, it's so big," I prayed. "Join a small group," He said through the message. "Lord, I don't like the music," I complained. "It's not for you," He replied. As my heart continued to pound I had one more protest. "Lord, it is such a long walk to the front of the church." Immediately, the Spirit of the Lord pressed on my heart, "Do you remember my walk to Calvary?"

Reading Luke 23 reminds me of that day. Jesus stands trial and is found to be innocent. (v. 14) Because of the political pressure, Jesus was handed over for crucifixion. He was beaten, mocked, and horribly mistreated before being led away to Calvary. Calvary has a special joyous ring in my ear when I hear it, but Calvary is also translated as Golgotha and the Skull. It was at this dreadful place that He was nailed to the cross and hung until He died. He is the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, the Alpha and Omega, and the propitiation for my sins, an innocent man, and He walked that path for me! Through His death and resurrection I have new life, hope, and the promise of spending eternity in Heaven.

There are still times I am hesitant to do things for God, but I am always reminded of what Jesus has done for me. What is God calling you to do? Whatever it may be, consider first the great things He has done for you.

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**Read through the Bible this Year**

Luke 7:1-30  
Judges 16-18

*Lonny Hughes*

**Weekly Theme:**  
**Passion Week**  
**Easter**

**Daily Bible Reading:**  
Luke 24

Praises:

Prayers:

## **Saturday, April 3**

Hallelujah-h-h! He's alive! Hallelujah-h-h! He has risen! Hallelujah-h-h! He has risen indeed!

He's alive alive alive

Hallelujah alive

Praise and glory to the Lamb

Alive alive alive hallelujah

Alive forever amen

Praise God He is alive. This is the day the Lord hath made. The Son in all his Glory has risen by the power of God. Our hope lies in Jesus Christ and the resurrection.

Wow, I am pumped. How can you not get excited when Easter arrives? To think that the God of the Universe, the God of Genesis 1:1 loves you, yes you, to a point that He sacrificed His Son so that we may be redeemed so that we can have a relationship with Him. Wow! Easter is the day we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

I remember growing up and how Easter was a day you went to church in more than your Sunday best. That Sunday always seemed to be a beautiful sunny day. I recall there always seemed to be more people at church on Easter Sunday than any other day of the year. Even more than Christmas! What is it about Easter that draws such a crowd? Easter is the day that signifies the hope we have in Christ. Without the empty tomb everything beforehand is just a lie. The virgin birth? The miracles? The parables? The cross? The death? Without the empty tomb it all means nothing. Therein lay the reason so many people come to church on Easter Sunday.

Hallelujah-h-h! Hallelujah-h-h! Hallelujah-h-h!  
He's alive!!!

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**Read through the Bible this Year**

Luke 7:31-50

Judges 19-21

*John Werdann*

**Weekly Theme:**  
**Passion Week**  
**Easter**

NO SSCG  
Praises:

**Sunday, April 4**  
**EASTER SUNDAY**

Title:

Pastor's Sermon Outline

Prayers:

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**Read through the**  
**Bible this Year**

Luke 8:1-25

Ruth 1-4

**Weekly Theme:**  
**His Unity Revealed**

## **Monday, April 5**

What does the Church mean to me?

**Daily Bible Reading:**  
Acts 11:21-23

Praises:

I have been in Church in some form or another all my life (this includes the nine months prior to birth as well). I've experienced the good, bad, and ugly of Church throughout my life. I'm sure many of you have in various ways too. Despite the problems of the Church it is evident that God has ordained it to bring glory to Himself, edify those existing in it, and love the community outside. The Bible describes the local Church as a body, with many different members all of which are important to the healthy functioning of the whole.

Prayers:

This concept is not however what I knew to be true throughout my childhood years. I was lucky enough to have a mother who was strong in her faith and devoted to the Church. I have to confess my understanding of the Church was not at all biblical growing up. As a child I recognized the Church as a location or building. I still took pride in it being "my Church". The Church was more of a moral Christian social club surrounded by getting up early on the weekends, stained glass windows, old people with candy, and a red faced, boring gentleman preaching as if it were his last words. Literally there were a few times I thought we needed a doctor and a defibrillator. It amazed me how someone upfront could yell at people as they smiled, raised their hands, and said, "come on...give me more...amen". Church is a group of believers who are committed to worship and serving their God through a passionate transforming love of obedience. It should be a safe place where I can be myself and yet be encouraged to grow in my relationship with God. It is not a perfect group of people recognizing all have sinned and those who accept Jesus are saved only by His grace. God's people (the Church) have forever changed my life and those around me. Through difficult times of parents divorce, sickness, financial struggles, and my mother's death the Church has sheltered, encouraged, and guided my steps. Without faithful men and women sacrificing their time and energy in this life I would not be here today.

**Sunday text:**  
Ephesians 3:1-11

**Memory Verse:**  
Ephesians 3:9  
and to bring to light  
what is the  
administration of the  
mystery which for  
ages has been  
hidden in God who  
created all things

**Read through the  
Bible this Year**

Luke 8:26-56  
1 Sam 1-3

*Eric Miracle*

**Weekly Theme:**  
**His Unity Revealed**

**Daily Bible Reading:**  
1 Thess. 1

Praises:

Prayers:

**Sunday text:**  
Ephesians 3:1-11

**Memory Verse:**  
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**Read through the  
Bible this Year**  
Luke 9:1-17  
1 Sam 4-6

## Tuesday, April 6

I lived the first part of my childhood in Northern Virginia. My dad was in the military, my mother a school teacher, and my brothers (8 and 11 years older) terrorized the snot out of me. Work, school, and sports all week, and church on Sunday. I remember going to church every week. I remember not really knowing why I went to church, but that it was just part of our routine. I liked church, because after church, we hit the SEVEN ELEVEN where we stopped for an ICEE. Every week, church, then a slushy; it was clockwork—it was slushy, cherry bliss.

Almost every summer, we would break from routine to visit my grandparents who lived in sunny Florida. I remember going to stay with them and becoming a part of their routine around their farming community. I remember going to church with them, too, on Sunday; but something about their lives was different, and I noticed it.

During my visits, I got to snuggle right in between my grandparents at night to sleep. I LOVED this time. Every night before bed, they would read their Bible and pray together. I began to watch my grandparents and how they loved each other and loved people. I began to notice that what I was hearing in church, they were actually living in their home and in their community. My grandparents just did not *go* to church, they actually *were* the church. The every day mundane, infused with life, as my grandparents acted like this Jesus I heard about. They spoke to Jesus; they obeyed His teaching and were HIS hands and feet.

It would be several years after seeing these things that I would actually entrust my soul to the saving power of JESUS, but I had learned long before that time, that church was not a fancy building you go to; the church was who you are.

In 1 Thessalonians 1:8 (MSG) Paul encouraged Christians saying: “The word has gotten around. Your lives are echoing the Master's Word, not only in the provinces but all over the place. The news of your faith in God is out. We don't even have to say anything anymore - you're the message!”

Let's determine to let OLIVE be the building, and its people be the church. Then “Hallelujah Corner” will be much more than just a pit stop before Slushy Town.

*Leah Taylor*

**Weekly Theme:**  
**His Unity Revealed**

**Daily Bible Reading:**  
1 Peter 5

Praises:

Prayers:

**Sunday text:**  
Ephesians 3:1-11

**Memory Verse:**  
Ephesians 3:9  
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**Read through the  
Bible this Year**

Luke 9:18-36  
1 Sam 7-9

## Wednesday, April 7

I love church; not just *going* to church, but the people, the worship, the fellowship, and the ministry of the church. I love the body of believers as well as the actual act of going to and being at church.

The church where I grew up is a loving church, so I've been fortunate to have a wonderful church experience. My dad was my Pastor my whole life until I moved away for college. He has been the Pastor of the same church for 36 years!

My dad tried to resign after suddenly becoming a single dad following a divorce in 1974. The members ripped up his resignation letter and said that they would help raise, love, and care for my brother and me. They are a true example of the Love of CHRIST.

My Dad has been in this same town long enough that he is referred to as "Preacher" to anyone who knows him, whether they are his church members or not. He is also a true example of a humble, spirit-led man of GOD who shows the Love of CHRIST to **everyone**; he doesn't pick and choose with whom to share CHRIST's Love, and he is a true 1 Peter 5 Shepherd.

There is just something about coming together corporately to sing, pray, open the Word of GOD, and hear it spoken by our Pastor. The Gospel message is truly a reason to worship and celebrate!

Not only is it important to devote ourselves to teaching and studying the Word of GOD, but fellowship is also a vital part of the Church (Acts 2:42). Our kindred hearts can uplift and help carry one another's burdens through prayer and encouragement.

Finally, I love the ministry of the Church corporate. The Church is fundamental in ministering to the needs of those around us. As individual churches, we reach out to our own communities and help those in need. Corporately, we do even more to reach even farther. Our Associations and The Convention help churches come together to do even greater things than we can possibly do as individuals.

Make church important for yourself and your family; not a chore, but a place of celebration, worship, and fellowship. May the ministry of the Church be worked out so evidently in our daily lives that even the angels and demons see the purpose of the unified church...the Bride of CHRIST.

*Faith Gilliland*

**Weekly Theme:**  
**His Unity Revealed**

**Daily Bible Reading:**  
1 Timothy 4

Praises:

Prayers:

**Sunday text:**  
Ephesians 3:1-11

**Memory Verse:**  
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**Read through the  
Bible this Year**

Luke 9:37-62  
1 Sam 10-12

## Thursday, April 8

On the surface finding a church home where the Gospel is preached by a man of God would seem like a simple task. Throughout my Christian life, I have belonged to churches where the Holy Spirit lived and breathed and sadly I have also visited churches where the Holy Spirit was nowhere to be found. There was one thing I did notice however, was that in nearly every case the church was a reflection of the Pastor. If he was a man of God, a man that listened for and sought after the will of God, a man passionate about Jesus, the church body generally was too. If he was a man that went his own way, a man that looked at his role as Pastor as merely a job and not an opportunity to reach the world for Christ, the church body was more about serving themselves than the world around them.

Pastor Traylor is the man of God Paul describes throughout scripture:

**1 Timothy 4:12** “But rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe” (Sorry I omitted the first part about youthfulness Pastor)

**1 Timothy 4:16** “Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.”

**2 Timothy 4:2** “preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction”

**Eph 4:11-12** “And he gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as **PASTORS**, and teachers, for the equipping of saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ.”

Our Pastor lives and breathes the Word of God every day and from everything I have seen over these last 9 years he is a man beyond reproach. I never worry that anyone I invite to church will hear a message that is not Gospel based and I also I take great comfort in never having to worry about seeing Pastor’s name spread across the front page of the paper in a negative light like so many we have seen before.

So who would you rather have stand in the pulpit each Sunday a man that serves God or a man that serves himself? It does make a difference!

*Glenn Best*

**Weekly Theme:**  
**His Unity Revealed**

**Daily Bible Reading:**  
I Corinthians 12:22-13:1; I Peter 4:7-11; Hebrews 10:24-25; Romans 12:9-16

**Praises:**

**Prayers:**

**Sunday text:**  
Ephesians 3:1-11

**Memory Verse:**  
Ephesians 3:9  
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**Read through the  
Bible this Year**

Luke 10:1-24  
1 Sam 13-14

## Friday, April 9

Church—often when people say it, they mean a building they go to once a week. I learned early in life that it is so much more. I grew up in a Christian home and regularly attended a small Baptist church. It was there as a child, and later as a young man, that I learned “church” is not the building, but is the people.

As I learned, the church is not perfect, but it is a place where we can grow in our Christian walk and develop relationships that can last a lifetime. As fellow Christians, we have the one thing that links us for all eternity—our faith in Jesus Christ.

Growing up in church I watched fellow members remain faithful through many diverse trials. They modeled what Paul wrote in I Corinthians 12:22-13:1, continuing to serve, in love, where God had gifted them. I learned when one member hurt, others hurt with them. I saw what it meant to minister, not through a lesson or a sermon, but by prayer, an action, a visit, or a phone call. This church taught me how to be hospitable, to serve, and to love as Peter directed us (I Peter 4:7-11). I was also able to see how the Bible can come alive with the Lord using a dedicated Sunday School teacher.

It was one of those Sunday School teachers and church leaders, Dave Conner, who taught me what church was really about. It was his one piece of advice that I have tried to keep in the forefront of my mind as I minister in church today—*“People won’t always remember what you teach, or any great Scriptural truth you may be able to share. What they will remember is that you loved them and that you cared about them.”*

I can’t imagine life without church (Hebrews 10:24-25). It is all about the people and relationships that I have built over the past thirty-five years from First Baptist Church of South Point, Ohio, to Olive Baptist Church. No matter what kind, or size of building, the church means the people who will love you and be there for you (Romans 12:9-16).

*Jim Harris*

**Weekly Theme:**  
**His Unity Revealed**

**Daily Bible Reading:**  
Acts 2  
Praises:

Prayers:

**Sunday text:**  
Ephesians 3:1-11

**Memory Verse:**  
Ephesians 3:9  
and to bring to light  
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**Read through the  
Bible this Year**  
Luke 10:25-42  
1 Sam 15-16

## **Saturday, April 10**

What the Church has meant to me...

When it comes to the church, I have been a very blessed man. My ministry heritage goes very deep and God has continued to provide me with awesome experiences of unity within the body. Here are just a few examples of God's rich ministry heritage which I have benefited:

\*Great Grandfather = William John Gilliland planted Golden Glades Baptist Church in Opa-Locka, FL (now a Spanish church in Miami Gardens) bi-vocational pastor

\*As a child, I experienced church as a member of a new church start in W. Palm Beach, FL

\*My father, Thomas Roland Gilliland was a builder and bi-vocational pastor 22 years in Florida and built over 200 churches in Brazil over a period of 30 years

\*My mom was a church secretary for my youth years (first hand ministry)

\*I can never remember a time when I did not like church

\*I have been blessed with a wife who feels the same way I do about ministry and life

\*Faith's dad has served as a pastor for the same church for 33 years

As a child our church met in a high school gym as a church plant in West Palm Beach, FL. I can still remember the weekly task of setting up the gym with chairs and a platform for corporate worship. Sometimes I would still be singing the songs we sang as we cleared the chairs off of the court before leaving for Sunday lunch. For some reason, I don't think I would have been too thrilled about doing that task under different circumstances, but the fellowship and unity of the brothers and sisters, God's family, was so sweet and alive, the weekly task was worth the joy knowing that I was being used by God for a bigger purpose than I ever realized; I was doing Kingdom work. I am so glad God has placed me in the best possible churches throughout my life. The common denominator however was service. The unity came through serving the Lord and others with open hands and a pure heart.

Reading Acts 2 we catch a glimpse of what the church should be. A family of Holy Spirit led believers studying the Word of God, ministering to each others needs, and fellowshiping no matter the circumstances. By serving the body, God will help you let go of the circumstances that bog you down. Time to be involved.

*Robert Gilliland*

**Weekly Theme:**  
**His Unity Revealed**

**Daily Bible Reading:**  
Ephesians 3

SSCG  
Praises:

Prayers:

**Memory Verse:**  
Ephesians 3:9  
and to bring to light  
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created all things

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**Read through the  
Bible this Year**

Luke 11:1-28  
1 Sam 17-18

**Sunday, April 11**

**His Calling Revealed**

SSCG Outline

Paul Discusses Three Foundational Truths to the  
Unified Body of Christ; the Church

Discover the:

1 Pastor of the Church vv. 1-3 & 8

2 Preaching of the Church vv.4-9

3 Passion of the Church vv. 10-13

Pastor's Sermon Outline

**Ephesians 3:1-13**

**Weekly Theme:**  
**His Power Revealed**

**Daily Bible Reading:**  
Mark 5:1-20

Praises:

Prayers:

**Sunday text:**  
Ephesians 3:14-21

**Memory Verse:**  
Ephesians 3:20-21  
<sup>20</sup>Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us,  
<sup>21</sup>to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever.  
Amen.

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**Read through the Bible this Year**  
Luke 11:29-54  
1 Sam 19-21

## **Monday, April 12**

D-Day was the military code name used for the massive invasion of the Normandy coastline by Allied troops on June 6, 1944. They were met that day with fierce fighting and resistance from depleted and desperate German forces. Wave after wave of American & British soldiers came ashore until the Nazis were finally defeated. After they secured the French coastline, the Allies began the liberation of Nazi-occupied Europe. In Mark 5, we see that Jesus was also confronted by the enemy in full force as he stepped onto the Gerasene shoreline. The probability that you and I will be confronted by someone with an unhealthy interest in Satanism and the occult grows higher all the time. Most of these people don't understand that Satan uses lies, confusion, perversion and violence in planning their demise. Satan also constantly attack the minds of many Christians with fear and intimidation persuading us to avoid people held captive to spiritual bondage. He relishes the idea of impeding our impact for the Kingdom of God.

Obviously, the citizens living in this Gerasene community were so afraid that they completely ignored the demoniac. Jesus felt compassion for the man, confronted the fears that paralyze so many Christians, and ministered to him in love. Interestingly enough, scripture tells us that the demons who were terrorizing the man were terrified themselves when they saw Jesus climb out of the boat! Aren't you glad that the Son of Man has total authority over the satanic forces of darkness and evil?

The compassion and kindness that Jesus showed is amazing! Most believers would have avoided this man altogether. Jesus ignored the enemy's power and reached out to a man in spiritual bondage. Like a lion stalking its prey, Satan tries to lure and capture people so he can destroy their lives. In spiritual warfare, our lethal weapons against Satan are God's truth and His love! People need God's love and forgiveness to be set free. Perhaps the lack of being loved is what leads many into spiritual bondage in the first place. Ask God to help you see the needs of people around you. It's really not that complicated...just simply show love to others like Jesus showed love to you!

*Jon DuBois*

**Weekly Theme:**  
**His Power Revealed**

**Daily Bible Reading:**  
Mark 5:21-43

Praises:

Prayers:

**Sunday text:**  
Ephesians 3:14-21

**Memory Verse:**  
Ephesians 3:20-21  
<sup>20</sup>Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, <sup>21</sup>to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

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**Read through the Bible this Year**  
Luke 12:1-34  
1 Sam 22-24

## Tuesday, April 13

Anytime I end up in a conversation about Christianity, or to be more specific Jesus, I am almost always asked a question that starts with the word “Why”. “Why does God allow bad things to happen to good people?” “Why did God take my brother from me?” “Why did God put my friend in a wheelchair?” “Why does God allow babies to be born sick and then allow them to die?” Some reading these words right now may have experienced just such a tragedy and may have sought answers to questions such as these. The truth is: “I don’t know why.” However I do know Jesus, and I know He knows, and maybe one day I will ask Him. Until then I’ll take assurance in knowing that scripture tells us things happen so that the works of God may be displayed in them.

To that point, I have seen God heal a little girl after the doctors told her parents there was nothing they could do. Rather than simply taking the doctor’s word for it and turning off the machines that were in essence keeping their daughter alive, these parents displayed the kind of faith that we see in today’s text Mark 5:21-43. They took the limp and dying body of their daughter and placed her at the feet of Jesus and earnestly prayed for her. They displayed the kind of faith that Jesus wants us all to have in our times of desperation—complete and total dependence on Him; not ourselves, not our fellow man, but Him. I witnessed a miracle of God!

Unfortunately, some churches in the world claim that the only reason people get sick is as a result of sin in a person’s life. These churches may even use scripture such as 1 Corinthians 11:29-30 to prove their belief while overlooking scripture references such as 2 Corinthians 12:7, John 9:1-3, Galatians 4:13 and the story of Job that show that there are indeed other reasons why people get sick.

Everything Jesus does is out of love; sometimes He heals the sick and other times in His divine will He chooses to bring the sick home to be with Him. Do you know someone that is sick? Have you recently experienced the death of a loved one? Please don’t ever forget that Jesus loves them and He loves you too!

*Glenn Best*

**Weekly Theme:**  
**His Power Revealed**

**Daily Bible Reading:**  
Mark 7:24-30  
Praises:

Prayers:

**Sunday text:**  
Ephesians 3:14-21

**Memory Verse:**  
Ephesians 3:20-21  
<sup>20</sup>Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, <sup>21</sup>to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

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**Read through the Bible this Year**  
Luke 12:35-59  
1 Sam 25-26

## **Wednesday, April 14**

Have you ever felt out of place? Life can be lonely and we feel the most vulnerable when we are "new" to a situation. When I was young, we moved every couple of years, and each time I had to adjust to a new school, new classmates, new neighbors, new places to play - - I was a foreigner.

God has a tender heart toward the foreigner, the "alien," the stranger. After He had Moses declare the Ten Commandments, He included this among the directives for the Jews to follow: "Do not mistreat an alien or oppress him; for you were aliens in Egypt." Ex. 22:21. In Ex. 23:9, He added, "...you yourselves know how it feels to be aliens..." What tender words from our precious God, who later took the form of man and walked this earth as one who was the same as the rest of us (fully man) while at the same time was completely different from any of us (fully God). He understood from the very beginning how lonely a person can feel when you are a foreigner, or just a stranger; when "you're not from around here."

But when, in Mark 7:29, Jesus told the Greek woman who had asked for healing for her young daughter, "...it is not right to take the children's bread [referring to the Jews] and toss it to the dogs," it sounds like He insulted her just because she was a foreigner. William Barclay suggests that Jesus was smiling when He said it, and that his tone was gentle. Her reaction, reminding Jesus that even the dogs get to eat the crumbs under the table, was an appropriate rejoinder; and His healing of the daughter was a loving response to her faith. Thus, He showed that God's grace is not limited to the Jews, but is available to the foreigner (that is, the rest of the world).

In Matthew 25, when Jesus identified Himself with the "least of these," He praised His followers for acts of kindness, including this one: "I was a stranger and you invited me in." Jesus knows how it feels to be a stranger. Take comfort in that knowledge when you have to go into alien territory. And remember when, in Jesus' name, you invite a stranger into your home or into your circle of friends, He calls you "blessed." (Matt 25:34).

*Danny Kepner*

**Weekly Theme:**  
**His Power Revealed**

**Daily Bible Reading:**  
Mark 7:31-37

Praises:

Prayers:

**Sunday text:**  
Ephesians 3:14-21

**Memory Verse:**  
Ephesians 3:20-21  
<sup>20</sup>Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, <sup>21</sup>to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

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**Read through the Bible this Year**

Luke 13:1-21  
1 Sam 27-29

## Thursday, April 15

My husband is mostly deaf in his left ear and I tell him he can hardly hear out of his right. So we have to make allowances for that in order for him to hear me when I talk to him. You'll notice when you're with us that I always sit to his right. When you talk to him he'll lean his head to the side somewhat to get that good ear closer to the conversation. If there's a lot of background noise it's almost impossible for him to pick up on what you're saying. He'll look at me and I'll give him indicators as to what the conversation is all about. So we've learned to adjust to the circumstances and take it as it comes.

My sister-in-law's very best friend has recently gone completely deaf. The two of them have taken the time to learn sign language so they can continue to communicate with each other. To us it seems as if it was a seamless connection, but I know that it has taken a lot of work on their part.

Now why do we go to all this trouble for our loved ones? Well the answer is in the question. It is because of our love for them. In today's text we read about the pure love that Jesus had for a deaf-mute. The man was brought to him and the people begged for Jesus to heal him. Nowhere is it noted that Jesus was at all frustrated with this interruption. He took the man away from the multitude and healed him. Don't miss my favorite part of this process where it says "He sighed". Now the man couldn't hear it, remember he's still deaf at this point, but all of creation did! And it's written right here for us to hear. It's called God's pure love through the Son of Man.

My husband cannot always hear me but he can hear Jesus very clearly with his heart. Can you hear Jesus sighing for you? He wants to be with you through everything you're involved in. Have you given yourself freely to His pure love?

*Kim Waters*

**Weekly Theme:**  
**His Power Revealed**

**Daily Bible Reading:**  
Mark 10:46-52

Praises:

Prayers:

**Sunday text:**  
Ephesians 3:14-21

**Memory Verse:**  
Ephesians 3:20-21  
<sup>20</sup>Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, <sup>21</sup>to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

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**Read through the Bible this Year**  
Luke 13:22-35  
1 Sam 30-31

## Friday, April 16

Jesus Loves the Blind, Greek Man

Bartimaeus, Son of Timaeus. What is the big deal that Timaeus was his dad? The root name for Timaeus was Greek. Bar (son of) timaeus (dad's name) was Greek. Jericho was a highly Jewish city. Not only did Bartimaeus have a hard road to tread religiously with the Jews who looked down upon Greeks, he was blind attempting to seek mercy from a group of people who were instructed from childhood to avoid the Gentiles/Greeks.

All of the sudden the Jewish teacher, Jesus comes down the road. Bartimaeus knew what Jesus had been teaching. He taught a message of love, not hate. He taught a message of salvation, not despair. He taught a message of forgiveness, not judgment. He taught a message of healing, not death. Therefore, Bartimaeus yells out, Jesus, heal me!!! Put to practice what you preach. I believe You can because you are Who You say You are. The crowd shushes him because they didn't understand the message of love, salvation, mercy, and healing. They were mesmerized by the teaching, but the doing was a bit more difficult to comprehend.

We can do nothing religiously without the power of Jesus Christ in our lives. We have the power of the Holy Spirit, Almighty God, the Creator in our lives. Let us not think that anyone is un-lovable, un-savable, un-forgivable, or un-healable. For Jesus said, if we have the faith of just a mere mustard seed, His power would work through us to accomplish things we could never imagine.

Never, Never, Never shush the faith of a person because of your lack of belief in the power of God. If you can't restrain yourself from the shushing, just get out of the way and let God handle the situation. He will in a mighty way.

God please forgive me for my lack of faith in your awesome power. Help me see everyone, no matter what or who, as lovable, savable, forgivable, and healable. Daily make me aware of your never-ending, all powerful presence in my life.

*Robert Gilliland*

**Weekly Theme:**  
**His Power Revealed**

**Daily Bible Reading:**  
Mark 13

Praises:

Prayers:

**Sunday text:**  
Ephesians 3:14-21

**Memory Verse:**  
Ephesians 3:20-21  
<sup>20</sup>Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, <sup>21</sup>to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

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**Read through the Bible this Year**  
Luke 14:1-24  
2 Sam 1-2

## Saturday, April 17

One day while talking to my daughter, she looked down at my hand and asked why I wore two rings on my wedding finger. I told her that my engagement ring was a promise her daddy made to me. It symbolized his desire to enter into marriage. The second band--the wedding band, was given to me at the wedding ceremony, indicating our marriage was official.

In engagement rituals of Jesus' time, a man approached a woman's family to ask her hand in marriage. Upon agreement, a binding contract was established that could be broken only by an official divorce. At the time of engagement, the couple was actually contractually married, even though the ceremony had not yet occurred. The bridegroom then left the bride and departed home, where he built onto to his father's existing house. The bridegroom would then return for his bride, and bring her into his father's home to become part of his family. The bride never knew when her bridegroom would return. She and her attendants waited for an unspecified amount of time for this return. He could appear at any time, in the daytime or the night. Though the waiting brought trial, doubt, and temptation; the bride was to remain true to the marriage agreement. The promised covenant compelled faithfulness.

Likewise Jesus has called us to wait for His return. He has not left us abandoned. He has gone to prepare a kingdom where we will reign in intimacy and fellowship with the Triune God. As His bride, the church is to anxiously await His return. When the world seems to fall down around us, we are to stand firm, and remain uncompromised. We have a Love returning for us. He has prepared a kingdom for us! Who in this world loves you enough to build an empire for you? Jesus does! Jesus said, "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am," John 14: 1-3.

Our Love is returning for us and looks forward to granting us a kingdom. Are you ready?

*Leah Taylor*

**Weekly Theme:**  
**His Power Revealed**

**Daily Bible Reading:**

Ephesians 3

SSCG

Praises:

Prayers:

**Memory Verse:**

Ephesians 3:20-21

<sup>20</sup>Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, <sup>21</sup>to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

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**Read through the Bible this Year**

Luke 14:25-35

2 Sam 3-5

**Sunday, April 18**  
**His Power Revealed**

**Ephesians 3:14-21**

SSCG Outline

1. Prayer is the Catalyst for the Power vv. 14-15
2. The Holy Spirit is the Power v. 16
3. Faith is the Hope of the Power v. 17a
4. Love is the Outpouring of the Power vv. 17b - 19
5. His Glory is the Outcome of the Power vv. 20-21

Pastor's Sermon Outline

**Weekly Theme:**

Walk In His Calling  
Through Love

**Daily Bible Reading:**

Romans 12

Praises:

Prayers:

**Sunday text:**

Ephesians 4:1-16

**Memory Verse:**

Ephesians 4:16  
from whom the  
whole body, being  
fitted and held  
together by what  
every joint supplies,  
according to the  
proper working of  
each individual part,  
causes the growth  
of the body for the  
building up of itself  
in love.

**Read through the Bible this Year**

Luke 15:1-10

2 Sam 6-8

**Monday, April 19**

What do the names Anderson, Den Herder, Dunaway, Fernandez, Foley, Heinz, Johnson, Kolen, Scott, Stanfill and Swift mean to you? How about if I added the name Buonticonti now do they ring a bell? Unless you are an avid fan of football you probably wouldn't recognize these as the names of the 12 men that made up the "No Name Defense" of the 1972 Miami Dolphins—the only team in the history of the NFL to finish the season undefeated. They were 12 men each with a different role, 12 men that all played a vital role to the overall success of team, 12 men with a common goal that all understood the importance of the other 11 in order to achieve their ultimate goal.

Isn't that what the church is supposed to be? Isn't a church supposed to be a group of individuals that all work toward the common goal of sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the world around us? In Romans 12, as well as in 1 Corinthians 12, Paul shows that just like with the 1972 Dolphins each member of the church needs to use the unique gifts they have been given to achieve the team's ultimate goal. Scripture refers to these as spiritual gifts that are given to us from the Holy Spirit Himself. Romans 12:6 says "Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly" 1 Corinthians 12: 7 says "But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good." We should all be encouraged by those verses as they clearly show that the Holy Spirit has equipped each of us differently with the sole purpose of serving the common good. In 1 Corinthians 12 Paul also uses parts of the human body to illustrate how they all work together in perfect harmony to form the person we see each day in the mirror. Vs. 20 says "But now there are many members but one body."

It is also important to remember the words of Romans 12:14-16 that encourage us to treat each other with respect, to celebrate each other's victories, to lift each other up in times of desperation and to share each other's burdens. Isn't that what a church is supposed to be? Isn't that what Olive is all about?

*Glenn Best*

**Weekly Theme:**

Walk In His Calling  
Through Love

**Daily Bible Reading:**

1 Corinthians 12:1-3  
Praises:

**Prayers:****Sunday text:**

Ephesians 4:1-16

**Memory Verse:**

Ephesians 4:16  
from whom the  
whole body, being  
fitted and held  
together by what  
every joint supplies,  
according to the  
proper working of  
each individual part,  
causes the growth  
of the body for the  
building up of itself  
in love.

**Read through the  
Bible this Year**

Luke 15:11-32  
2 Sam 9-11

**Tuesday, April 20**

A few years ago, I had the privilege of leading two mission trips from our church to Nagoya, Japan. Each time we flew round-trip, we would make a stop in Detroit, a hub for Northwest Airlines, to make our connecting flight. If you fly to the Pacific Rim on Northwest, plan to go through Detroit.

Airline hubs like Detroit and Atlanta remind me of how the Holy Spirit operates in our lives. In order to travel on this spiritual journey with Christ, we must connect with the Holy Spirit and His power. Dr. Bill Bright, founder of Campus Crusade for Christ, once wrote, “It is impossible for us to become Christians, to understand God’s word, to pray, to live holy lives or to witness – apart from the enabling of the Holy Spirit. We can do nothing for the Lord Jesus, and He can do nothing in us, apart from the person and ministry of the Holy Spirit.”

When you miss your connecting flight, it’s easy to experience frustration, aggravation, and despair! You feel like you’re being treated unfairly and you want some answers! Suddenly, everything is all about you! Missing a connecting flight is like being disconnected to the Holy Spirit. You are powerless to live the Christian life. You stumble along in your own strength and abilities. You are headed nowhere fast! After a while, life becomes all about you. The Holy Spirit serves as our Counselor who enables us to experience and obey everything God has planned for us. Without His power, we cannot understand God’s word, we can’t pray effectively, we won’t experience authentic Christian fellowship or want to share Christ with others.

How do you stay connected to the Holy Spirit? First of all, you must decide “Is it about me or is it about Jesus?” Then, confess any known sin in your life and claim His forgiveness. By faith, invite the Holy Spirit to take control. Picture Him sliding behind the steering wheel of your life as He guides you through each day. Listen and obey His voice when you sense He is leading you to do be obedient. Are you connected right now to the power of the Holy Spirit?

*Jon DuBois*

**Weekly Theme:**

Walk In His Calling  
Through Love

**Daily Bible Reading:**

Romans 15

Praises:

Prayers:

**Sunday text:**

Ephesians 4:1-16

**Memory Verse:**

Ephesians 4:16

from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

**Read through the Bible this Year**

Luke 16

2 Sam 12-13

**Wednesday, April 21**

Tomorrow will be better. I won't feel so much pain. I'll find a job. I'll pass that test. I'll stay on my diet, exercise, get that letter, save my money, apologize and ask forgiveness. We hope for a better day and a better way! In the power of God's Spirit within us we have continual hope. What a blessing—this hope!

Israel hoped: for deliverance from Egypt, from Assyria and Babylon, from Rome, for their Messiah and a great kingdom. Greek proselytes who'd converted to Judaism now shared in their hope. But the rest of the Gentile world did not know that hope for the blessing and salvation of God.

Israel was God's specially beloved and chosen people who always remembered they were His chosen, but forgot why they were chosen—to be a light to the entire world revealing God and His hope for all. Jesus fulfilled Israel's hope of the ages. Those who believed and accepted this hope were reminded by Paul that this same salvation and hope of the gospel had now been given to the Gentiles.

*Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, to confirm the promises made to the patriarchs so that the Gentiles may glorify God for His mercy . . .*

Romans 15:7-8a (NIV)

All Christians were and are to encourage and strengthen each other in the unity and hope of their faith in Christ. God fulfills His promises, past, present and future. We sing this line from Thomas Chisholm's, *Great Is Thy Faithfulness: Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow, Blessings all mine with ten thousand beside.*

Hope is not a vague sense of optimism. Hope has an object, a purpose. We hope for something specifically desired through faith to be fulfilled by the will of God. Hope ranks right up there with faith and love. . We pray with concrete hope for ourselves and others that God will meet stated needs for our good and His will. We look forward with certainty to our eternal life in the presence of God. *Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.* Romans 15:13

*Carole Dunn*

**Weekly Theme:**

Walk In His Calling  
Through Love

**Daily Bible Reading:**

Matthew 14:22-26  
Praises:

## Prayers:

**Sunday text:**

Ephesians 4:1-16

**Memory Verse:**

Ephesians 4:16  
from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

**Read through the Bible this Year**

Luke 17:1-19  
2 Sam 14-15

**Thursday, April 22**

Ever tried to teach a child to swim? “Jump and swim to me, I will catch you! I will not let you sink!” If you can ever coax them off the ledge of the swimming pool; their level of trust is once again tested when they jump in to swim, and you step backwards. You know what they handle, but they don’t really trust you with their safety in the water. You want them to gain strength, in the water, and they want the safety of the shore.

My obedience to God is like this. My Heavenly Father wants to teach me things, strengthen my ability, and sharpen my skills. When He presents me with a faith challenge, I say, “Okay, LORD, I trust you.” But really, I only trust Him for the things I can see, the distance I have already marked, the cost I have already counted, and the limits I have already agreed to. Once He takes a step back into uncharted waters, I turn and swim for shore, saying “I did not sign up for this!” I have only trusted my own ability, not His. I have only trusted in my own strength and the distance I know I can swim.

Is God looking at me saying, “Leah, would I really sit here in this pool and let you drown? Is this all you have believed me for?” Have you only trusted me with what you can see?”

In Matthew 14, Peter asked the LORD for permission to walk to Him on the water. However, as Peter began to walk he saw the strong wind, and he sank. He saw Jesus take a step back. Not a literal step back, but Jesus did add to the faith challenge. “Okay Peter, you trust me with the water, but what about the wind?” The wind was one cost Peter had not calculated and he was sunk. It makes sense to me now, why Jesus reached out to grab him and asked, “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?”

Can I really say I trust God, or do I only trust Him with the distance I have agreed to swim, or the degree of difficulty I am aware of? Do I trust Him enough to let Him take a step back?” Do I trust Him enough to walk with Him into the deep?

*Leah Taylor*

**Weekly Theme:**

Walk In His Calling  
Through Love

**Friday, April 23****One Faith****Daily Bible Reading:**  
Galatians 5

## Praises:

In chapter five of Galatians, Paul warned of trying to combine Jewish law with faith in Christ. The Christians in that area were being led to believe that circumcision was essential for salvation. He explained that by trying to add their own righteousness to God's plan, they were taking away the very thing that had brought them to Christ—His grace. It's not much different today, is it? It seems that the world wants to accept any number of ways to Heaven, but accepting all sorts of ways simply rejects the one true way—the way of faith in Christ alone. Dr. Adrian Rogers used this story to illustrate the importance of placing our faith in the right Source:

## Prayers:

**Sunday text:**

Ephesians 4:1-16

**Memory Verse:**

Ephesians 4:16  
from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

*It was a bitter winter and the Mississippi River had frozen over. There was a man who, rather than going to the bridge nearby, began to walk across. He believed he would be safe because the ice appeared so crusty and thick. But as he reached a distance from the shore, he began to question his decision and started to tip-toe carefully. At once he heard a loud rumbling and crackling sound, and he was sure that the ice was breaking. As he looked up, a man with a team of horses safely drove across the river carrying a load of logs. Immediately, the man regained his confidence and enjoyed the rest of his stroll. So what was the difference between the two men? The second man knew the ice. The reality of true faith is based on our knowledge of God.*

Do you know Christ personally? Where are you placing your faith today?

**Read through the Bible this Year**  
Luke 17:20-37

*Shea Riles*

**Weekly Theme:**

Walk In His Calling  
Through Love

**Daily Bible Reading:**

Acts 19

Praises:

Prayers:

**Sunday text:**

Ephesians 4:1-16

**Memory Verse:**

Ephesians 4:16  
from whom the  
whole body, being  
fitted and held  
together by what  
every joint supplies,  
according to the  
proper working of  
each individual part,  
causes the growth  
of the body for the  
building up of itself  
in love.

**Read through the Bible this Year**

Luke 18:1-17

2 Sam 19-20

**Saturday, April 24**

One Baptism

With what baptism were you baptized?

Historically, baptism has been a way to show your team colors. An individual is baptized showing alignment and allegiance to someone else or some movement.

Understand not all of these forms and functions of baptism are the same.

We as Christians are baptized in Jesus name so that the world will see that we identify with Jesus Christ. This is the function of baptism for the Christian. The function is not salvific, it is symbolic. The form for the Christian is by immersion after one makes a clear decision to submit to the lordship of Christ in their life and commit to live for Him for eternity. This form shows the Gospel message from the baptistery, whether it a hot bath tub in a church or a creek in the woods. A new believer stands in the water testifying that God did in fact walk among us as a perfect man named Jesus. Going under the water totally shows the world that Jesus died on the Cross spilling His blood for mankind so that we can be forgiven of sin for eternity. Coming out of the water shows the world that Jesus came out of that grave, setting the Christian free as a new creation of Christ.

I went through baptism twice. The first time I basically took a bath at the FBC of Palm Beach as a child who went forward with his three older brothers. Not really knowing Who Jesus was in my life. I may have gone through some ritual, but didn't have a clue of the purpose of the form nor function. Three years later I made a personal commitment to Christ asking Him to be my Savior. As a result, my dad (bi-vocational pastor) baptized me in a swimming pool with the small congregation in which he led as witnesses of my alignment and allegiance with Jesus Christ and His body, the Church.

We are baptized in the name of God the Father, the Son Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. This is only when a person can acknowledge their allegiance and alignment with Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior.

A cognitive decision with childlike faith.

With what baptism were you baptized?

*Robert Gilliland*

**Weekly Theme:**  
**Walk In His Calling  
Through Love**

**Daily Bible Reading:**  
Ephesians 4

SSCG  
Praises:

Prayers:

**Memory Verses:**  
Ephesians 4:16  
from whom the  
whole body, being  
fitted and held  
together by what  
every joint supplies,  
according to the  
proper working of  
each individual part,  
causes the growth  
of the body for the  
building up of itself  
in love.

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**Read through the  
Bible this Year**  
Luke 18:18-43  
2 Sam 21-22

**Sunday, April 25**                      **Ephesians 4:1-16**  
**Walk In His Calling Through Love**

SSCG Outline

PRESERVING THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT (1-7)

1. The ATTITUDE of unity (4:2-3)
2. The FOUNDATION of unity (4:4-6)

EDIFYING THE BODY OF CHRIST (8-16)

Paul shares 4 levels of maturity in the Christian walk:

1. Jesus Christ is the STANDARD for maturity.
2. STABILITY is necessary for maturity.
3. SPEAKING IN LOVE shows maturity.
4. UNITY is created out of maturity.

Pastor Traylor's Sermon Outline