Tune My Heart

Bible Narratives Personal Devotional Guide

Scott Aniol

Religious Affections Ministries

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To download a printable reading plan, visit www.tunemyheart.com.

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Religious Affections Catechism

The Religious Affections Catechism has deep roots in the traditions of Christians who have gone before. It is based on historic catechisms, including the Heidelberg catechism, the Westminster catechism, Benjamin Keach's catechism, and Charles Spurgeon's catechism. Since it has 52 questions, it is manageable to teach children and then regularly review through the years, allowing families to focus on one question per week and progress through the catechism every year. The catechism covers the most significant doctrinal issues, broad enough so that really any evangelical Christian with any denominational or eschatological position can use it (particular denominations can supplement this with their own specific Questions and Answers). It helps teach core doctrines but also is personal, devotional, and addresses the heart.

To download a printable catechism, visit
www.tunemyheart.com.

1. *Who made you?*
   God made me.
   What else did God make?
   God made all things.

2. *Why did God make you and all things?*
   God made me to glorify him and enjoy him forever.

3. *How did God make you and all things?*
   God made all things out of nothing, by the Word of his power, in the space of six days, and all very good.

4. *What is special about God's creation of you?*
   God made me in his own image.

5. *Who is God?*
   God is a spirit and does not have a body like man. He is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable.

6. *What is God like?*
   God is the first and best of beings. He is holy, powerful, and good.

7. *Are there more gods than one?*
   There is only one true and living God.

8. *In how many persons does this one God exist?*
   God exists in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, equal in essence, power, and glory.

9. *What are the decrees of God?*
   The decrees of God are his eternal purposes, whereby for his own glory he has ordained whatever comes to pass.

10. *How do you know there is a God?*
    The light of nature and the works of God plainly declare that there is a God, but only his Word and Spirit effectually reveal him to me for my salvation.

11. *What rule has God given to direct you how you may glorify and enjoy him?*
    The Word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule to direct me how I may glorify God and enjoy Him.

12. *How can you glorify God?*
    I can glorify God by loving him and doing what he commands.

13. *What is the greatest commandment?*
    The greatest commandment is to love the Lord my God with all my heart, soul, and mind.

14. *How can you come to know God and what he has made?*
    The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.

15. *What is sin?*
    Sin is any transgression against the law of God.

16. *Can you keep the law of God perfectly?*
    No. I am inclined by nature to hate God and my neighbor.

17. *What are the results of sin?*
    Because of sin, all mankind lost communion with God and are under his wrath and curse, resulting in the miseries of this life, death itself, and the pains of hell forever.

18. *Is there any way to escape the punishment of God and be again received into communion with him?*
God's justice demands that I make full payment, either through myself or through a Redeemer.

19. *What kind of Redeemer must you seek?*
I must seek a Redeemer who is a true and righteous human and who is at the same time true God.

20. *Why must the Redeemer be a true and righteous human?*
The Redeemer must be a true and righteous human because the justice of God requires that only one with a human nature who has not sinned may pay for my sin.

21. *Why must the Redeemer be at the same time true God?*
The Redeemer must be true God so that by the power of his divine nature he might bear the burden of God's wrath and restore to me righteousness and life.

22. *Who is that Redeemer who at the same time is true God and a true and righteous human?*
My only Redeemer is the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, who became human and died to pay the penalty for sin.

23. *How did Christ, being the Son of God, become human?*
Christ, the Son of God became human by taking to himself true human nature, being conceived by the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary.

24. *How did Christ satisfy God's just wrath for sin?*
Christ suffered the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross.

25. *Why was it necessary for Christ to humble himself even unto death?*
Christ humbled himself unto death because the justice of God required that satisfaction for my sins could be made in no other way than by the death of the Son of God.

26. *Did Christ stay dead?*
No. Christ rose again from the dead on the third day.

27. *How are you made a partaker of the redemption purchased by Christ?*
    I am made a partaker of the redemption purchased by Christ through repentant faith in him and his substitutionary atoning death.

28. *What is faith in Jesus Christ?*
    Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, by which I receive and rest upon him alone for my salvation.

29. *What is repentance unto life?*
    Repentance unto life is a saving grace, by which I turn from my sin to God, promising to strive after new obedience.

30. *What benefits in this life come from repentant faith in Jesus Christ?*
    Those who repent and believe in Jesus Christ partake of justification, adoption, and sanctification.

31. *What is justification?*
    Justification is an act of God's free grace in which he pardons all my sins and accepts me as righteous in his sight only because of the righteousness of Christ imputed to me.

32. *What is adoption?*
    Adoption is an act of God's free grace in which I am received as a child of God with all its rights and privileges.

33. *What is sanctification?*
    Sanctification is the work of God's Spirit by which I am renewed after the image of God and am enabled more and more to die to sin and live to righteousness.

34. *What do you believe about the Holy Spirit?*
    The Holy Spirit is true and eternal God together with the Father and the Son.

35. *What does the Holy Spirit do for you?*
    The Holy Spirit unites me to Christ, convicts me of sin, comforts me, and sanctifies me.

36. *Since you have been saved by grace alone through Christ, without any merit of your own, why must you yet do good works?*
    I must do good works because Christ also renews me by his Holy Spirit to be his image, so that I might show thankfulness to God for his mercy.

37. *What is prayer?*
    Prayer is an offering up of my desires to God for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of my sins and thankfulness for his mercies.

38. *What is the church?*
    The church is a community of believers in which the gospel is truly preached and the ordinances are rightly administered.

39. *What is the gospel?*
    The gospel is the good news that those who repent and believe in the death and resurrection of Christ for their sins will be forgiven.

40. *To whom should you preach the gospel?*
    I should preach the gospel to all people in all nations to the end of the earth.

41. *What are the ordinances of the church?*
    Baptism and the Lord's Supper were specially instituted by Christ to represent the benefits of union with him by visible and outward signs.

42. *What is baptism?*
    Baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament, instituted by Jesus Christ, to be a sign of the believer's fellowship with Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection.

43. *What is the duty of those who are rightly baptized?*
    It is the duty of those who are rightly baptized to join themselves to some visible and orderly church of Jesus Christ.

44. *What is the Lord's Supper?*
    The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of the New Testament, instituted by Jesus Christ, to be a sign of the believer's communion with Christ and his church through his broken body and shed blood.

45. *What benefits do believers receive from Christ at their death?*
Believers are at their death made perfect in holiness and immediately pass into the presence of God forever.

46. *What will be done to the wicked at death?*
The wicked will at their death be cast into the torments of hell.

47. *Where is Christ now?*
Christ ascended into heaven and sits at the Father's right hand.

48. *How does Christ's resurrection benefit you?*
Christ's resurrection is a certain promise of my glorious resurrection.

49. *How does Christ's ascension into heaven benefit you?*
Christ is my advocate in heaven before his Father and my certain promise that he will take me up to himself.

50. *Will Jesus Christ come again?*
Jesus Christ will come a second time in power and glory, which is the joy and hope of all believers.

51. *What will happen to believers after Christ comes again?*
Believers will live with Christ forever in a new heaven and a new earth.

52. *What is your only hope in life and death?*
My only hope in life and death is that I am not my own but belong to God and to my Savior Jesus Christ.

Weekly Guide

Week 1: Creation and Fall

Weekly memory verse:
Genesis 1:1 – "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."

Weekly hymn:
"All Creatures of Our God and King"

Weekly catechism:
Who made you?
God made me.
What else did God make?
God made all things.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 1: Creation

Genesis 1:1–2:3

Questions for Reflection

Why do you think God created the world in the order that he did?

What is our responsibility toward God as his creation?

What does it mean to have dominion over the earth, to subdue the earth, and to be fruitful?

Day 2: Adam and Eve

Genesis 2:4–24

Questions for Reflection

Why do you think God created Adam from the dust of the earth instead of out of nothing?

Why do you think God created Eve out of Adam?

What does it mean for us today that Adam and Eve were created to worship and obey God?

Day 3: Fall

Genesis 2:25–3:24

Questions for Reflection

Do you notice any similarities between Satan's temptation of Eve and his later temptation of Jesus in the wilderness (Matt 4:1–11)?

What consequences do we still experience today as a result of Adam's sin?

How did God fulfill his promise made in Genesis 3:15?

Day 4: Cain and Abel

Genesis 4:1–16; Proverbs 1

Questions for Reflection

What clear instructions about worship has God given us in Scripture that should regulate how we approach him?

Why is knowledge of God alone insufficient for a life pleasing to God?

How can we resist temptation to sin, either from within our hearts or from others?

Day 5: Noah and the Flood

Genesis 6:1–8:19

Questions for Reflection

What is the main lesson from the story of Noah and the flood?

What does sin deserve?

What is necessary to be rescued from judgment?

Week 2: Abraham and Isaac

Weekly memory verse:

Genesis 12:2 – "And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing."

Weekly hymn:

"The God of Abraham Praise"

Weekly catechism:

Why did God make you and all things?
God made me to glorify him and enjoy him forever.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 6: God Establishes Human Government

Genesis 8:20–9:29; 11:1–9

Questions for Reflection

What did God intend for the purpose of human government?

What was it wrong for the people to build the Tower of Babel?

Where did the different nations of the world come from?

Day 7: The Call of Abram

Genesis 11:26–12:20

Questions for Reflection

If God promised that Abram's descendants would inherit the land of Canaan forever, will he keep his promise?

What can Abram's response to God's covenant teach us about worship?

How have we non-Jews been blessed by the Abrahamic covenant?

Day 8: Lot

Genesis 13:1–14:16

Questions for Reflection

What do you think motivated Lot to choose the land that he did?

What is revealed about Abram when he allows Lot to choose the land first?

What is revealed about Abram in his successful rescue of Lot?

Day 9: Blessing and Promise

Genesis 14:17–15:21; 16:1–16

Questions for Reflection

How can you be sure God will keep his promises?

Why is it important to believe the promises of God, no matter how impossible they seem?

What promises has God made to you?

Day 10: The Birth of Isaac

Genesis 18:1–15; 21:1–7

Questions for Reflection

Are there any promises God has made to you that seem impossible?

Why do you think God makes promises to us that seem impossible?

What can you do to be sure that you trust in God's promises no matter what?

Week 3: Lot

Weekly memory verse:

Psalm 8:1 – "O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens."

Weekly hymn:

"Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above"

Weekly catechism:

How did God make you and all things?
God made all things out of nothing, by the Word of his power, in the space of six days, and all very good.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 11: God Rescues Lot

Genesis 18:16–19:29

Questions for Reflection

What did God's rescue of Lot and destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah reveal about the nature and character of God?

What did Lot's actions reveal about his character, both for good and for evil?

What did Lot's wife's actions reveal about her character?

Day 12: The Way of the Righteous and the Wicked

Genesis 20; Psalm 1

Questions for Reflection

What does it mean to walk in the counsel of the wicked, stand in the way of sinners, or sit in the seat of scoffers?

What does it mean to delight in God's law?

What do the tree and chaff metaphors tell us about the righteous and wicked?

Day 13: Trust in the Lord

Genesis 21:8–21; Psalms 4–5

Questions for Reflection

How does a proper fear of God motivate us not to sin?

How will trust in God give us rest and assurance?

What are some difficulties in your life for which you should trust the Lord?

Day 14: Confession and Grace

Psalms 6–7

Questions for Reflection

Why must God always judge sin?

Are difficult life circumstances always the result of personal guilt, or could there be other reasons?

Why does God delight in showing mercy to the penitent?

Day 15: God's Goodness and Greatness

Genesis 23; Psalm 8

Questions for Reflection

What do the heavens, the moon, and the stars tell us about God?

What role did God give to humanity ("man") in relationship to the rest of creation?

Why should we praise the Lord?

Week 4: A Just God Justifies

Weekly memory verse:

Romans 4:5 – "And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness."

Weekly hymn:

"Not What These Hands Have Done"

Weekly catechism:

What is special about God's creation of you?
God made me in his own image.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 16: Justified by Faith

Genesis 22:1–19; Romans 4

Questions for Reflection

Why did God test Abraham?

What important principle does the ram provided by God reveal?

What must each of us do in order to be declared righteous in God's sight?

Day 17: The Justice of God

Psalms 9–10

Questions for Reflection

What are some examples in your life of God rewarding good and judging evil?

What are some examples in your life of evil going unpunished?

What should be our response when we see wickedness go unpunished in this life?

Day 18: Isaac and Rebekah

Genesis 24

Questions for Reflection

Why did Abraham want Isaac to marry someone from among his people rather than from the Canaanites?

How does the blessing of Rebekah's sisters (v. 60) fit with the Abrahamic covenant?

What does this story reveal about love and marriage?

Day 19: Wisdom

Proverbs 2; Genesis 25:19–34

Questions for Reflection

How does wisdom lead to understanding and knowing God?

Why is it so important to pursue wisdom?

What does the pursuit of wisdom help us avoid?

Day 20: God's Promise to Isaac

Genesis 26

Questions for Reflection

How was Isaac's deception to Abimelech similar to and different from his father's deception?

In what ways did God use even unbelievers to bless his people?

What does this story tell us about the character and nature of God?

Week 5: Trust in the Lord

Weekly memory verse:

Proverbs 3:5–6 – "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths."

Weekly hymn:

"Blessed Jesus at Thy Word"

Weekly catechism:

Who is God?
God is a spirit and does not have a body like man. He is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 21: The One Who Finds Wisdom Is Blessed

Proverbs 3

Questions for Reflection

With a biblical understanding of "heart," what does it mean for our hearts to keep God's commandments?

What does God's discipline toward his people reveal?

How is wisdom more precious that material wealth?

Day 22: God's Sovereign Mercy

Genesis 27

Questions for Reflection

Why do you think Rebekah wanted Jacob to have the blessing from Isaac?

Was it right for Rebekah and Jacob to deceive Isaac since God had told Rebekah that Jacob would receive the blessing?

If circumstances seem to be going against what we know God has promised, what is our responsibility?

Day 23: Jacob Marries Leah and Rachel

Genesis 28:1–29:30

Questions for Reflection

Why do you think Laban deceived Jacob and gave him Leah instead of Rachel?

What does Jacob's willingness to work seven more years reveal about his love for Rachel?

Did Jacob deserve to receive God's blessing and covenant?

Day 24: Jacob's Children

Genesis 29:31–31:3

Questions for Reflection

On the basis of this story, do you think it is good for a man to have more than one wife?

What does the story of Jacob and the sheep reveal about the relationship between God's sovereignty and human responsibility?

What can this story teach us about the relationship between consequences of sinful action and the good promises of God?

Day 25: Jacob's Family Prepares to Leave

Genesis 31:4–55

Questions for Reflection

How important were the household idols to Laban? Why?

In what ways does deception continue to be a problem for Jacob?

How does God demonstrate his sovereign care for his people in this story?

Week 6: God's Good Plan

Weekly memory verse:
Genesis 50:20 – "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good."

Weekly hymn:
"What God Ordains is Always Good"

Weekly catechism:
What is God like?
God is the first and best of beings. He is holy, powerful, and good.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 26: Jacob Wrestles with God

Genesis 32–33

Questions for Reflection

What does Jacob's prayer to God in anticipation of meeting Esau reveal about him?

What does Jacob's wrestling with the representative of God all night signify?

Why do you think Esau forgave Jacob?

Day 27: God Renames Jacob

Genesis 35, 37

Questions for Reflection

Why do you think God changed Jacob's name?

What is the significance of the birth of Benjamin in what will later be Bethlehem?

What is important about the fact that both Jacob and Esau buried their father?

Day 28: Joseph Taken to Egypt

Genesis 39–41

Questions for Reflection

Can God use even unbelievers to accomplish his purposes?

What does Joseph's story teach us about trusting God in the midst of even terrible circumstances?

What are some bad circumstances in your life that you have seen God use for your good?

Day 29: Joseph's Brothers Go to Egypt

Genesis 42–43

Questions for Reflection

Why do you think Joseph tested his brothers?

What does Reuben's promise to Jacob reveal about him?

What does the way Joseph's brothers treated Benjamin reveal about them?

Day 30: God Meant it for Good

Genesis 44–46

Questions for Reflection

What are the implications of the phase, “God meant it for good”?

Why must we be patient and trust God when we are experiencing bad circumstances?

Will we always know what good God intends to accomplish through bad circumstances?

Week 7: God Raises Up a Deliverer

Weekly memory verse:

Psalm 77:11 – "I will remember the deeds of the Lord; yes, I will remember your wonders of old."

Weekly hymn:

"God Moves in a Mysterious Way"

Weekly catechism:

Are there more gods than one?
There is only one true and living God.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 31: A Father's Wise Instruction

Proverbs 4–5

Questions for Reflection

What kinds of things influence your heart?

How can you guard you heart from bad influences?

How can you know if your heart is being influenced in a negative way?

Day 32: The Birth of Moses

Exodus 1:1–2:10

Questions for Reflection

Do you think what the midwives did was right?

What did the midwives' action tell us about their respect for human life?

What value was it for Moses to be raised as the son of Pharaoh's daughter?

Day 33: God Hears the Cries of His People

Exodus 2:11–25; Psalm 90

Questions for Reflection

What did Moses's killing of the Egyptian reveal about his relationship with the nation of Israel?

Why do you think God wanted Moses to spend time out of Egypt in Midian?

What characteristics of God can give us hope and confidence, even when we don't understand his ways?

Day 34: The Burning Bush

Exodus 3:1–4:18

Questions for Reflection

Why do you think God commanded Moses to remove his shoes?

What does the name “I am who I am” reveal about God?

What does God reveal as the central purpose for the Exodus in 3:18?

Day 35: Moses and Aaron

Exodus 4:19–31; Psalm 77

Questions for Reflection

On what basis can you trust the Lord, even in distress?

What responsibility to do you have toward God in this life?

Why is it important to regularly remember all the good that God has done in the past for his people?

Week 8: God Saves His People

Weekly memory verse:

Exodus 15:1 – "I will sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea."

Weekly hymn:

"Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah"

Weekly catechism:

In how many persons does this one God exist?
God exists in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, equal in essence, power, and glory.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 36: Let My People Go

Exodus 5:1–6:13

Questions for Reflection

Why did God providentially arrange for his people to be put in bondage, for their deliverer to be someone who lacked eloquence, and for Pharaoh to be so defiant?

How do seemingly unsolvable circumstances lead us to trust in God?

Have difficult circumstances in your life ever tempted you to distrust God's promises?

Day 37: The First Seven Plagues

Exodus 7–9

Questions for Reflection

How did the plagues demonstrate that God is the one and only true and living God?

How did the failures of the magicians demonstrate the falsity of their pagan religion?

How did the responses of Pharaoh and his people increase their own guilt before God?

Day 38: The Passover

Exodus 10–12

Questions for Reflection

Of what significance was it that the final plague targeted the firstborn sons in Egypt, including Pharaoh's own son?

What did the first Passover foreshadow with relation to Christ?

What does reenacting a work of God on behalf of his people do for those who participate?

Day 39: Crossing the Red Sea

Exodus 13–15

Questions for Reflection

Why were the people so quick to complain against the Lord?

Does the fact that God used an east wind to make a path for Israel diminish the miraculous nature of the event?

What can we learn from Moses's song?

Day 40: Bread from Heaven

Exodus 16

Questions for Reflection

What do the people's perpetual complaints against the Lord reveal about them?

What does the fact that God provided for their needs, even in the midst of their complaints, reveal about him?

What did the fact that no bread fell on the seventh day reveal about this day?

Week 9: Worshiping God at Sinai

Weekly memory verse:

Deuteronomy 6:4–5 – "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might."

Weekly hymn:

"Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise"

Weekly catechism:

What are the decrees of God?
The decrees of God are his eternal purposes, whereby for his own glory he has ordained whatever comes to pass.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 41: Journey to Sinai

Exodus 17–19

Questions for Reflection

What do you think Moses's use of his staff to accomplish many miracles signified?

Why did God make such a big deal about consecrating the people before they approached his presence?

Why couldn't the people touch the mountain?

Day 42: Israel at Mount Sinai

Exodus 20; Deuteronomy 6

Questions for Reflection

What do the Ten Commandments reveal about God?

What is the difference between the first and second commandment?

Why is loving God central to our relationship with him?

Day 43: The Golden Calf

Exodus 24, 32

Questions for Reflection

What did the fact that the Hebrew leaders ate and drank in God's presence signify?

What do you think motivated the people to worship Yahweh through means borrowed from pagan worship?

Do you think God was too severe in his punishment of the people?

Day 44: Building the Tabernacle

Exodus 40

Questions for Reflection

What does the fact that so much attention and care was given to building the tabernacle reveal about its importance?

Why were the people required to go to the tabernacle in order to worship the Lord?

Does God dwell in a tabernacle or temple today?

Day 45: Unauthorized Fire

Leviticus 10; Psalm 11

Questions for Reflection

Why did God so dramatically punish Nadab and Abihu for offering unauthorized fire to him?

What does this incident teach about the negative effects of alcohol?

What can we learn from the fact that the earthly sanctuary was a picture of the true, heavenly temple?

Week 10: Wandering in the Wilderness

Weekly memory verse:

John 3:14–15 – "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life."

Weekly hymn:

"Be Thou My Vision"

Weekly catechism:

How do you know there is a God?
The light of nature and the works of God plainly declare that there is a God, but only his Word and Spirit effectually reveal him to me for my salvation.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 46: Complaints Against the Lord

Number 11–12

Questions for Reflection

What does complaining against God reveal about our hearts?

Why did God provide the people with meat even though they had complained against him?

What are some ways you complain against God?

Day 47: Cries of the Faithful

Psalms 12–13

Questions for Reflection

Have you ever felt that there were no other righteous people? How did you respond?

What about God gives us assurance and confidence that he will remain faithful to his people, even when it doesn't seem like it?

What should be our appropriate response in times of distress?

Day 48: Spies in Canaan

Numbers 13–14

Questions for Reflection

Why is the report of the ten spies called “bad” (13:32)?

Why is complaint against God such a terrible sin?

What did Joshua and Caleb’s report reveal about them?

Day 49: Korah's Rebellion

Numbers 16–17

Questions for Reflection

Why was rebellion against Moses and Aaron essentially a rebellion against God himself?

Do you think God was too harsh in his judgment of the rebels? Why or why not?

Why is a mediator necessary for a sinner to approach the presence of God?

Day 50: The Bronze Serpent

Numbers 20–21

Questions for Reflection

Why were Moses and Aaron not allowed to enter the promised land?

Why do you think God provided the bronze serpent?

What does this incident tell us about the character of God?

Week 11: Preparing to Enter the Promised Land

Weekly memory verse:

Joshua 1:8 – "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success."

Weekly hymn:

"How Firm a Foundation"

Weekly catechism:

What rule has God given to direct you how you may glorify and enjoy him?

The Word of God which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments is the only rule to direct me how I many glorify God and enjoy Him.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 51: Balaam and the Donkey

Numbers 22:1–23:12

Questions for Reflection

Why did Balak want Balaam to curse Israel?

Why do you think God chose to speak to Balaam?

Why do you think God used a donkey to speak truth to Balaam?

Day 52: The Wicked and the Righteous

Psalms 14–15, 105

Questions for Reflection

What results from the fact that no one seeks after God on their own?

What is required for some people to seek after God?

What is the result of seeking fellowship with God?

Day 53: The Death of Moses

Deuteronomy 34; Psalm 16

Questions for Reflection

Do you think God was too harsh to punish Moses for striking the rock instead of speaking to it?

In what ways was Joshua formally set apart as the new ruler of Israel?

What does it mean that in God's presence "there is fullness of joy"?

Day 54: Rahab and the Spies

Joshua 1:1–3:6

Questions for Reflection

Why was Joshua's admonition to meditate on God's Word so important?

What did Rahab's actions reveal about her?

What aspects of the Rahab story reveal God's control over the situation?

Day 55: Crossing the Jordan River

Joshua 3:7–5:12

Questions for Reflection

Why isn't God's command to kill all of the inhabitants of the promised land unfair?

Why are memorials, such as Israel's twelve stones by the river, important for passing on the history of what God has done for his people?

What did the ceasing of manna signify to the people?

Week 12: Invasion of the Promised Land

Weekly memory verse:

Job 19:25 – "For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth."

Weekly hymn:

"This is My Father's World"

Weekly catechism:

How can you glorify God?
I can glorify God by loving him and doing what he commands.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 56: The Fall of Jericho

Joshua 5:13–6:27

Questions for Reflection

Why do you think Christ appeared to Joshua?

Why do you think God commanded them to march around Jericho?

Why did God save Rahab and her family?

Day 57: The Sin of Achan

Joshua 7–8

Questions for Reflection

What did God's punishment of Achan signify to the people?

What did the initial defeat and eventual victory show about the true cause of victory and defeat?

Why is there value in God's people renewing their covenant with him?

Day 58: Treaty and Conquest

Joshua 9–10

Questions for Reflection

Why do you think Joshua made the treaty with the Gibeonites against God's commands?

What did God's sending of hail and stopping the sun reveal about him?

What are some ways you fail to trust God and instead trust in your own wisdom?

Day 59: Settling in the Land

Joshua 14, 23–24

Questions for Reflection

In what ways did the Israelites obey the commands of God? In what ways did they disobey?

What is the responsibility of one of God's people?

In what ways can you commit to God that you will serve him?

Day 60: Job

Job 1, 42; Psalm 49

Questions for Reflection

Why did God allow Satan to bring tragedy upon Job?

Is it ever right to question God?

Has any tragedy ever occurred in your life, and you didn't know why God allowed it? How should you respond in such situations?

Week 13: Judges

Weekly memory verse:

Judges 3:9 – "But when the people of Israel cried out to the Lord, the Lord raised up a deliverer for the people of Israel, who saved them."

Weekly hymn:

"He Who Would Valiant Be"

Weekly catechism:

What is the greatest commandment?
The greatest commandment is to love the Lord my God with all my heart, soul, and mind.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 61: God Raises Up Judges

Judges 1–3

Questions for Reflection

Why did the people forget God and worship false idols?

Is God's use of people to accomplish his purposes necessarily dependent upon whether they are personally righteous?

Why does God answer his people's cries for help, even when they have sinned against him?

Day 62: Deborah and Barak

Judges 4–5

Questions for Reflection

What did Deborah's leadership reveal about Barak's lack of character and courage?

Was Jael's action right and moral?

Why did God choose to bless something that was contrary to his moral will?

Day 63: The Call of Gideon

Judges 6

Questions for Reflection

When bad things happen, does this mean God is not present?

How should we respond when bad things happen to us?

Should we ask God for signs to prove that he will do what he has promised?

Day 64: Gideon's 300 Men

Judges 7–8

Questions for Reflection

Who won the battle against the Midianites, Gideon or God?

If we accomplish something great for the Lord, who actually deserves the credit?

When we boast for what we have done for God, what does that reveal about us?

Day 65: Abimelech

Judges 9

Questions for Reflection

Is there any indication in this passage that the people loved or desired to serve God?

Why did God continue to protect his people, even in the midst of their sinful lifestyles?

Why is God faithful to his promises?

Week 14: Samson

Weekly memory verse:
Psalm 17:8 – "Keep me as the apple of your eye; hide me in the shadow of your wings."

Weekly hymn:
"Jesus, Lover of My Soul"

Weekly catechism:
How can you come to know God and what he has made?
The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 66: Jephthah

Judges 10–12

Questions for Reflection

What did God mean by, “I will save you no more” (10:13)?

Why did God raise up Jephthah to save the people even though they had forsaken him?

What does Jephthah’s vow reveal about him?

Day 67: Samson's Birth

Judges 13–14

Questions for Reflection

Why was Samson set apart by the Nazarite vow?

What significance was it that the flame of the altar and the angel of the Lord went up toward heaven (13:20)?

Why shouldn't Samson have married a Philistine woman?

Day 68: In the Shadow of Your Wings

Psalm 17

Questions for Reflection

Why can we trust in God as our judge more than we can trust human judges?

What is communicated by the request, “hide me in the shadow of your wings” (v 8)?

Why do wicked people many times enjoy earthly benefits?

Day 69: Samson and the Philistines

Judges 15

Questions for Reflection

Was it right for Samson to burn the Philistine fields with the foxes?

Why did the men of Judah bind Samson?

Why did God anoint Samson with his Spirit?

Day 70: Samson's Defeat

Judges 16

Questions for Reflection

How did Samson's sinful desire for wicked women lead to his defeat?

How did Samson's sin contribute to the Philistine's false worship (see v. 24)?

Do you think Samson was truly repentant at the end? Why or why not?

Week 15: Ruth and Boaz

Weekly memory verse:

Psalm 19:14 – "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer."

Weekly hymn:

"The Heavens Declare Thy Glory, Lord"

Weekly catechism:

What is sin?
Sin is any transgression against the law of God.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 71: God's Revelation

Psalms 19–20

Questions for Reflection

What does creation tell you about God?

Is the knowledge of God revealed in creation enough to lead you to salvation?

What does the Bible tell you about what God requires, about your sin, and about how to receive forgiveness of sin?

Day 72: Warnings Against Sin

Proverbs 6–7

Questions for Reflection

What are lessons we can learn from ants?

In what ways can you apply the command to "bind" your parent's instructions on your heart?

How can you avoid the seven abominations to God?

Day 73: Wisdom's Call

Proverbs 8

Questions for Reflection

What is wisdom?

Why do you think Solomon chose to personify wisdom as a person in this proverb?

In what ways can you pursue wisdom?

Day 74: Naomi and Ruth

Ruth 1–2

Questions for Reflection

Was it right or wrong for Mahlon and Chilion to marry Moabite women?

What did Ruth's loyalty to Naomi reveal about her?

Was it only coincidence that Ruth "happened" (2:3) to come upon Boaz's field?

Day 75: Ruth and Boaz

Ruth 3–4

Questions for Reflection

Why do you think God chose famine, unlawful marriages, death, and a Moabite woman to accomplish his plan?

What do Boaz's actions reveal about him?

When something terrible happens that seems to contradict God's promises, what should be your response?

Week 16: Samuel and Saul

Weekly memory verse:

Luke 1:46–48 – "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed."

Weekly hymn:

"O Worship the King"

Weekly catechism:

Can you keep the law of God perfectly?
No. I am inclined by nature to hate God and my neighbor.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 76: Samuel's Birth and Calling

1 Samuel 1–3

Questions for Reflection

What did Hannah's oath and prayer reveal about her?

Why do you think Eli allowed his sons to continue their sinful lifestyles?

What did Samuel's response to God's call reveal about him?

Day 77: The Philistines Capture the Ark

1 Samuel 4; Psalm 21

Questions for Reflection

Why do you think Hophni and Phinehas brought the ark with them into battle?

Why do you think Eli died at the news of the deaths of his sons and the ark's capture?

Had God really left Israel as the people assumed with the ark's capture?

Day 78: The Ark Returned to Israel

1 Samuel 5:1–7:2

Questions for Reflection

Did the Philistines' repentance and offering to God reveal their true belief in him, or something else? How do you know?

Why did God kill the men of Beth-shemesh?

Why do you think the ark remained in Kiriath Jearim for such a long time?

Day 79: The People Want a King

1 Samuel 7:3–8:22

Questions for Reflection

Why do you think the people refused to obey Samuel?

Why did the people want a king?

What results did Samuel say would come from choosing a king?

Day 80: Saul Chosen to Be King

1 Samuel 9–10

Questions for Reflection

Why do you think God granted the people's request and gave them a king?

In what ways does Saul demonstrate humility in this passage?

Why was it important for Saul to receive an anointing from the Holy Spirit?

Week 17: Saul's Rise and Fall

Weekly memory verse:

1 Samuel 15:22 – "Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams."

Weekly hymn:

"Jesus Shall Reign"

Weekly catechism:

What are the results of sin?
Because of sin, all mankind lost communion with God and are under his wrath and curse, resulting in the miseries of this life, death itself, and the pains of hell forever.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 81: Saul's Coronation

1 Samuel 11–12

Questions for Reflection

Why do you think Saul refused to kill the people who had rejected him as their king?

What significance was Samuel's statement "Here I am" (12:3) at the beginning of his address?

Why did Samuel recount the history of Israel?

Day 82: Saul's Disobedience

1 Samuel 13; Psalm 72

Questions for Reflection

Why do you think Samuel commanded Saul to wait for him for seven days before offering a sacrifice?

Why do you think Saul disobeyed Samuel's command?

Why is a king who is both God and man the only successful fulfillment of God's promise to reign over his people on earth?

Day 83: Jonathan Defeats the Philistines

1 Samuel 14

Questions for Reflection

Why did Jonathan decide to fight the Philistines on his own?

How do we know that God won the battle on Jonathan's behalf?

What did Saul's oath reveal about him?

Day 84: God Rejects Saul

1 Samuel 15; Psalm 28

Questions for Reflection

What did Saul's refusal to kill all the people reveal about him?

What evidences in this passage show that Saul was concerned primarily for himself?

Why was Samuel so grieved?

Day 85: David is Anointed King

1 Samuel 16

Questions for Reflection

Did God tell Samuel to lie about his reason for going to Bethlehem in order to protect himself from Saul? Is it ever right to lie, even to protect life?

Why did the elders of Bethlehem tremble when they saw Samuel (v. 4)?

Why did Samuel assume God had chosen Eliab to be king (v. 6)?

Week 18: David and Saul

Weekly memory verse:

Psalm 18:1–2 – "I love you, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold."

Weekly hymn:

"Holy Trinity, Thanks and Praise to Thee"

Weekly catechism:

Is there any way to escape the punishment of God and be again received into communion with him?
God's justice demands that I make full payment, either through myself or through a Redeemer.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 86: David and Goliath

1 Samuel 17

Questions for Reflection

Why was Saul afraid of Goliath?

Why was Eliab angry at David?

What gave David confidence that he could defeat Goliath?

Day 87: David and Jonathan

1 Samuel 18; Psalm 18

Questions for Reflection

Why did Jonathan love David? How did he show his loyalty and support for David?

Why was Saul jealous of David?

What was David's response when he was in danger?

Day 88: Saul Tries to Kill David

1 Sam 19; Psalm 59

Questions for Reflection

In what ways does God display his rejection of Saul?

How does Michal show loyalty to David?

What did God's final anointing of Saul cause him to do?

Day 89: David Flees Saul

1 Samuel 20; Psalm 52

Questions for Reflection

In what ways did David and Jonathan display their close friendship?

Why do you think God made David's ascendency to his rightful throne so difficult?

How does David display trust in God even in the midst of threats upon his life?

Day 90: Saul Pursues David

1 Samuel 21–22; Psalms 34, 56

Questions for Reflection

Was it right for David to lie to Ahimelech?

What was the result of this lie?

How could David demonstrate such trust in God's goodness even when he was being pursued by both Saul and the Philistines?

Week 19: The Pursuit of David

Weekly memory verse:

2 Samuel 22:2–3 – "The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold and my refuge, my savior; you save me from violence."

Weekly hymn:

"Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"

Weekly catechism:

What kind of Redeemer must you seek?
I must seek a Redeemer who is a true and righteous human and who is at the same time true God.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 91: David Spares Saul

1 Samuel 23–24; Psalm 57

Questions for Reflection

Would David have been right to kill Saul?

Was David right to cut off a portion of Saul's robe?

What did David's oath to Saul reveal about him?

Day 92: David and Abigail

1 Samuel 25; Psalm 54

Questions for Reflection

Did David have the right to be compensated for his protection of Nabal's flocks?

Why do you think Nabal refused to pay David?

Would David have been right to kill Nabal and his men?

Day 93: David Lives Among the Philistines

1 Samuel 26–27; Psalm 37

Questions for Reflection

In what ways did God reward David for his trust and faithfulness?

Why do you think Achish gave David a city and trusted him?

What are some difficult circumstances you have faced in which you should trust God?

Day 94: Saul and the Medium of En-dor

1 Samuel 28; Psalm 83

Questions for Reflection

What did the fact that Saul trembled in fear at the approaching Philistine army reveal about the effects of God's anointing earlier in his reign?

Why do you think God allowed Samuel to appear before Saul?

What did Samuel mean by "tomorrow you and your sons shall be with me" (v. 19)?

Day 95: David Fights the Philistines

1 Samuel 29–30

Questions for Reflection

Would it have been right for David to fight with Achish against Israel?

Would it have been right for David to pretend to fight with Achish, only to betray him?

What does it say about David's character that he distributed his spoils of war among the elders of Judah?

Week 20: David Becomes King

Weekly memory verse:

Psalm 20:7 – "Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God."

Weekly hymn:

"Rejoice, the Lord is King"

Weekly catechism:

Why must the Redeemer be a true and righteous human?
The Redeemer must be a true and righteous human because the justice of God requires that only one with a human nature who has not sinned may pay for my sin.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 96: The Death of Saul

1 Samuel 31; Psalms 76, 110

Questions for Reflection

Why should Saul have trusted in the Lord rather than take his own life, even when he feared mistreatment by the Philistines?

Why do you think God allowed for such a terrible defeat?

How had God protected David by not allowing him to be part of this battle?

Day 97: David Anointed King of Judah

2 Samuel 1–2; Proverbs 9

Questions for Reflection

Why did David grieve over the death of Saul, despite the fact that Saul had wanted to kill him?

How did David's inquiry of the Lord contrast with Saul's?

How did David try to persuade the people to follow him rather than force them?

Day 98: David Anointed King of Israel

2 Samuel 3:1–5:4

Questions for Reflection

How did David show character and nobility in how he gradually gained rule over Israel?

Why did David request that Michal be brought to him?

What reasons do the elders of Israel give for why they have chosen to submit to David's rule?

Day 99: David Becomes King in Jerusalem

1 Chronicles 11:1–25

Questions for Reflection

Was it good for David to make the criterion for choosing his general whomever killed the Jebusites?

Why was David's choice of Jerusalem as his capital wise?

Why was every battle in Israel considered holy? Can the same be said of war today?

Day 100: David Brings the Ark to Jerusalem

1 Chronicles 13, 15:1–16

Questions for Reflection

What was David's motivation for bringing the ark to Jerusalem?

Was it harsh for God to kill Uzzah?

How did David demonstrate more care and commitment to God's commands the second time he brought the ark to Jerusalem?

Week 21: The Davidic Covenant

Weekly memory verse:

Luke 1:68–69 – "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David."

Weekly hymn:

"Good Christians All, Rejoice and Sing"

Weekly catechism:

Why must the Redeemer be at the same time true God?
The Redeemer must be true God so that by the power of his divine nature he might bear the burden of God's wrath and restore to me righteousness and life.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 101: God's Promise to David

2 Samuel 7–8

Questions for Reflection

What indications are in the covenant that God intends for it to be unconditional?

What promises to David does God make that will be fulfilled after David's death?

What promises have yet to be fulfilled?

Day 102: David Shows Mercy and Vengeance

2 Samuel 9–10; Psalm 23

Questions for Reflection

Why did David show mercy to Mephibosheth?

Why did Hanun disgrace David's men?

In what ways is God like a shepherd?

Day 103: David and Bathsheba

2 Samuel 11; Proverbs 10

Questions for Reflection

In what ways did David try to cover his sin?

Was Bathsheba guilty of sin as well?

In what ways does David demonstrate folly instead of wisdom?

Day 104: David's Confession

2 Samuel 12; Psalm 51

Questions for Reflection

In what ways does David demonstrate true repentance?

What does David's response after his son's death reveal about him?

What are characteristics of true repentance as modeled in Psalm 51?

Day 105: Absalom Murders Amnon

2 Samuel 13; Proverbs 11

Questions for Reflection

Was Absalom right to have Amnon killed?

How did the death of Amnon resemble the death of Uriah?

What truths from Proverbs 10 are illustrated in the account of 2 Samuel 13?

Week 22: Absalom's Rebellion

Weekly memory verse:

Romans 3:23–24 – "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

Weekly hymn:

"How Sad Our State"

Weekly catechism:

Who is that Redeemer who at the same time is true God and a true and righteous human?
My only Redeemer is the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, who became human and died to pay the penalty for sin.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 106: Absalom's Return to Jerusalem

2 Samuel 14; Proverbs 12

Questions for Reflection

What was Joab's motivation for persuading David to allow Absalom to return?

Why did David allow Absalom to return but require that he live in a separate house?

What was Absalom's motive for wanting to be accepted into the king's presence?

Day 107: Absalom's Plot

2 Samuel 15; Psalm 3

Questions for Reflection

How did Absalom win the loyalty of many of the people of Israel?

What people displayed continued loyalty to David?

What was David's plan for Hushai?

Day 108: Absalom Takes Jerusalem

2 Samuel 16–17

Questions for Reflection

Was it right for Hushai to deceive Absalom?

How is God's providential hand clearly evident in what happens?

Why did Ahithophel kill himself?

Day 109: Absalom Is Killed

2 Samuel 18; Psalm 45

Questions for Reflection

Was Joab right to disobey the king and kill Absalom?

Was David's response to the death of Absalom right?

How do kings in David's line parallel the future reign of Christ?

Day 110: David Returns to Jerusalem

2 Samuel 19; Psalm 24

Questions for Reflection

Was Joab's condemnation of David's mourning correct?

Why did David replace Joab with Amasa?

What seeds of dissention between the northern tribes and Judah are seen in this account?

Week 23: David's Reign

Weekly memory verse:

Psalm 27:1–2 – "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When evildoers assail me to eat up my flesh, my adversaries and foes, it is they who stumble and fall."

Weekly hymn:

"Sun of My Soul"

Weekly catechism:

How did Christ, being the Son of God, become human?
Christ, the Son of God became human by taking to himself true human nature, being conceived by the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 111: Sheba's Rebellion

2 Samuel 20; Psalm 25

Questions for Reflection

Why would the northern tribes have had animosity toward Judah?

What are some evidences that Joab intended all along to regain control as general of David's army?

What are some reasons David is experiencing so much difficulty in his reign?

Day 112: David's Final Battles

2 Samuel 21; Psalm 26

Questions for Reflection

What does God think about covenants and promises?

How does Saul's actions toward the Gibeonites, breaking the covenant with them, contrast with David's protection of Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth?

Why do you think God allowed the Gibeonites to kill these descendants of Saul?

Day 113: David's Census

1 Chronicles 21; Psalm 27

Questions for Reflection

Was David responsible for numbering the people even though both God and Satan were involved?

What do you think motivated David to number the people?

Describe David's repentance for what he had done.

Day 114: Solomon Anointed King

1 Kings 1; Proverbs 13

Questions for Reflection

Why do you think God chose Solomon to be king?

In what ways did God protect Solomon and the Davidic line through him?

How does Solomon reflect David's own heart of mercy in how he treats Adonijah?

Day 115: David's Death

1 Kings 2; Proverbs 14

Questions for Reflection

Why did David advise Solomon to kill those who had been disloyal?

What was Adonijah's motivation in asking for Abishag to be his wife?

Was Solomon wise in following David's counsel?

Week 24: Solomon's Reign

Weekly memory verse:

2 Chronicles 7:14 – "If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land."

Weekly hymn:

"Holy, Holy, Holy"

Weekly catechism:

How did Christ satisfy God's just wrath for sin?
Christ suffered the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 116: Solomon Prays for Wisdom

2 Chronicles 1; Proverbs 15

Questions for Reflection

On what basis did Solomon make his request to the Lord?

What is wisdom?

What is foolishness?

Day 117: Solomon Builds the Temple

2 Chronicles 3–5

Questions for Reflection

Why did Solomon give such careful attention to how God wanted the temple constructed?

What did the veil signify?

Why were sacrifices necessary?

Day 118: The Temple Dedication

2 Chronicles 6–7

Questions for Reflection

What were some of the main themes of Solomon's prayer of dedication?

How did God demonstrate his approval?

Did God's promise to punish the nation if they disobeyed him nullify the Davidic Covenant?

Day 119: Solomon's Reign

1 Kings 10–11

Questions for Reflection

Why did God bless Solomon and the nation of Israel under his reign?

Why was it wrong for Solomon to marry pagan wives?

What does Solomon's sin later in his life reveal about wisdom?

Day 120: The Kingdom Divides

1 Kings 12–13

Questions for Reflection

Why was Rehoboam responsible for his sin even though it was part of God's sovereign plan to punish the nation?

Would God have blessed Jeroboam if he had allowed the people to offer sacrifices in Jerusalem?

Why is it wrong to worship God in ways that he has not prescribed?

Week 25: Elijah

Weekly memory verse:

Philippians 2:8 – "And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."

Weekly hymn:

"All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name"

Weekly catechism:

Why was it necessary for Christ to humble himself even unto death?
Christ humbled himself unto death because the justice of God required that satisfaction for my sins could be made in no other way than by the death of the Son of God.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 121: The Fear of the Lord

Proverbs 16–18

Questions for Reflection

How can the fear of the Lord help us turn away from evil (16:6)?

What are some ways you have returned evil for good (17:13)?

Why is it important to listen before giving an answer (18:13)?

Day 122: Egypt Invades Judah

2 Chronicles 11–12; Proverbs 19

Questions for Reflection

How is Rehoboam's reign evidence of the lasting results of his father's sins?

How is God's mercy displayed in this account?

In what ways does the Egyptian invasion foreshadow what is to come for the nation?

Day 123: Kings of Judah and Israel

1 Kings 15–16; Proverbs 20

Questions for Reflection

What is required for a king to be considered good?

Why are there no good kings in Israel?

What does Israel's downfall reveal about the dangers of religious syncretism (mixing true worship with false worship)?

Day 124: Elijah

1 Kings 17; Psalm 29

Questions for Reflection

Why did God send Elijah?

In what ways did God prove that he was God and Baal is not through Elijah?

Why did God allow Elijah to raise the widow's son from the dead?

Day 125: Elijah and the Prophets of Baal

1 Kings 18

Questions for Reflection

How did Elijah contrast with Obadiah?

Why did Elijah choose Mount Carmel?

How was the pagan worship different from how Elijah approached God?

Week 26: King Ahab

Weekly memory verse:

1 Corinthians 15:3–5 – "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve."

Weekly hymn:

"Christ the Lord is Risen Today"

Weekly catechism:

Did Christ stay dead?
No. Christ rose again from the dead on the third day.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 126: The Call of Elisha

1 Kings 19; Psalm 30

Questions for Reflection

Was Elijah right to be discouraged?

Why did Elijah travel to Mount Sinai?

Why do you think Elisha killed his oxen?

Day 127: Ahab's Wars

1 Kings 20

Questions for Reflection

Why do you think God chose to help Ahab?

How did God demonstrate that he is truly the only God?

What did Ahab's actions reveal about him?

Day 128: Naboth's Vineyard

1 Kings 21; Proverbs 21

Questions for Reflection

What did Ahab's actions reveal about him?

What did Jezebel's actions reveal about her?

Why did these acts finally bring judgement upon Ahab and Jezebel?

Day 129: Alliance Between Israel and Judah

2 Chronicles 18; Proverbs 22

Questions for Reflection

Why did Jehoshaphat establish peace with Ahab?

Was it right for Jehoshaphat to arrange for his son to marry Ahab's daughter?

Why does God allow Ahab to be killed in battle?

Day 130: Jehoshaphat's Reforms

2 Chronicles 19–20; Psalm 118

Questions for Reflection

Why didn't God judge Jehoshaphat for his wrong alliances?

In what ways does Jehoshaphat's prayer reveal his heart for God?

How do Jehoshaphat and the people respond when he delivers them from their enemies?

Week 27: The Start of Elisha's Ministry

Weekly memory verse:

Romans 10:9 – "If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

Weekly hymn:

"My Faith Looks Up to Thee"

Weekly catechism:

How are you made a partaker of the redemption purchased by Christ?

I am made a partaker of the redemption purchased by Christ through repentant faith in him and his substitutionary atoning death.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 131: Trust and Penitence

Psalms 31–32

Questions for Reflection

Why can we trust God?

When we sin, what should we do?

How can we find forgiveness from God?

Day 132: Elisha Succeeds Elijah

2 Kings 2; Psalm 33

Questions for Reflection

Why do you think God took Elijah to heaven the way that he did?

What did Elijah's miracle at Jericho signify?

Why did God punish the young men so severely?

Day 133: Prayers of Lament and Praise

Psalms 35–36

Questions for Reflection

How should we view strong prayers in the psalms requesting that God destroy the psalmist's enemies?

Is it right to question God?

What is God's response toward sin?

Day 134: Elisha's Miracles

2 Kings 4; Psalm 38

Questions for Reflection

Why do you think God chose to meet the needs of these otherwise seemingly insignificant people?

In what ways did Elisha's miracles resemble Elijah's?

How did God make clear that he was the one accomplishing the miracles and not Elisha himself?

Day 135: Naaman

2 Kings 5; Psalm 39

Questions for Reflection

In what ways did Naaman's view of Israel change after he was healed?

Why do you think God healed Naaman?

How were Gehazi's attitude and acts representative of the nation of Israel as a whole?

Week 28: Elisha's Continuing Ministry

Weekly memory verse:

Ephesians 2:8–9 – "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast."

Weekly hymn:

"God, Be Merciful to Me"

Weekly catechism:

What is faith in Jesus Christ?
Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, by which I receive and rest upon him alone for my salvation.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 136: Battle Against Syria

2 Kings 6:1–23; Psalms 40–41

Questions for Reflection

Why do you think God allowed Elisha to help recover the lost ax head?

How important are angels in God's plan?

Why did Elisha not allow Israel to kill the Syrian army?

Day 137: Siege by Syria

2 Kings 6:24–7:20

Questions for Reflection

Why did the king want Elisha dead?

What are some indications in this story of the absolute apostacy of Israel?

Why do you think God delivered Samaria despite their sin and distrust?

Day 138: The Shunamite Woman

2 Kings 8

Questions for Reflection

Why do you think God blessed the Shunamite woman?

What purpose did Elisha's trip to Damascus serve?

Why didn't God destroy Judah, despite its perpetual rebellion (8:19)?

Day 139: Hope in God

Psalms 42–44

Questions for Reflection

Is it wrong to question God during times of trouble?

What should always be our response when something bad happens?

What does it mean to hope in God?

Day 140: Cast Your Burden Upon the Lord

Psalms 50, 53, 55

Questions for Reflection

How many people are sinners?

What does it mean to be an enemy of God?

What are some burdens that you should cast upon the Lord?

Week 29: Turn to God

Weekly memory verse:

Acts 3:19 – "Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out."

Weekly hymn:

"How Blest Is He Whose Trespass"

Weekly catechism:

What is repentance unto life?
Repentance unto life is a saving grace, by which I turn from my sin to God, promising to strive after new obedience.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 141: The Judge of the Earth
Psalms 58, 78

Questions for Reflection
Are all people sinners from birth?

What does sin deserve?

What is the only way to escape judgment from God?

Day 142: Cry for Salvation

Psalms 60–61

Questions for Reflection

In Psalm 60, why did the people think God had abandoned them?

What is meant by the phrase, "vain is the salvation of man" (60:11)?

Does God hear us when we cry to him? Why?

Day 143: Seeking God
Psalms 62–63

Questions for Reflection
What does it mean to wait for God?

How is seeking after God like thirsting for water in a dry land?

What are some ways that you can seek God?

Day 144: Joash Repairs the Temple

2 Chronicles 24; Psalm 64

Questions for Reflection

What kind of influence did Jehoiada have on Joash?

Why did Joash turn evil after Jehoiada's death?

How was Joash repaid for his evil choices?

Day 145: The Death of Elisha

2 Kings 13; Psalm 65

Questions for Reflection

Did God deliver Israel because of the goodness of the people?

Has God's promise to Abraham been completely fulfilled yet?

When will God complete the promise he made to Abraham?

Week 30: Jonah

Weekly memory verse:

Romans 6:23 – "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Weekly hymn:

"Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness"

Weekly catechism:

What benefits in this life come from repentant faith in Jesus Christ?
Those who repent and believe in Jesus Christ partake of justification, adoption, and sanctification.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 146: Jonah Flees God

Jonah 1–2

Questions for Reflection

Why do you think God wanted Jonah to preach salvation to Nineveh?

Why did Jonah run?

In what ways did God show Jonah mercy in this account?

Day 147: Jonah Goes to Nineveh

Jonah 3–4

Questions for Reflection

Why did God withhold his judgment from Nineveh?

In what ways did the response of Nineveh contrast with Israel's current condition?

What did Jonah's response reveal about his heart?

Day 148: Let All Things Praise the Lord

Psalms 66–68

Questions for Reflection

In what ways does God rule over all things now?

In what unique ways will God rule over all things in the future?

What should be the response of God's people to the promise that one day all things will worship God?

Day 149: Uzziah Reigns in Judah

2 Chronicles 26; Isaiah 6; Psalm 87

Questions for Reflection

What caused Uzziah to grow proud?

Why was the fact that God only gave Uzziah leprosy actually an act of mercy?

On what basis were Isaiah's sins forgiven?

Day 150: Save Me, O God!

Psalms 69–70

Questions for Reflection

In what ways does the New Testament apply Psalm 69 to Jesus Christ?

How can Jesus's life and death give us confidence in the midst of trouble?

What should we do when we are in the midst of trouble?

Week 31: The Fall of Israel

Weekly memory verse:

Romans 5:1 – "Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Weekly hymn:

"O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing"

Weekly catechism:

What is justification?
Justification is an act of God's free grace in which he pardons all my sins and accepts me as righteous in his sight only because of the righteousness of Christ imputed to me.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 151: God Is My Strength

Psalms 71, 73

Questions for Reflection

In what ways has God been continually faithful to you?

How can the testimony of God's faithfulness to a person of old age be encouraging to us?

In what ways does God give us strength when we face difficult circumstances?

Day 152: Israel Falls

2 Kings 17; Psalm 74

Questions for Reflection

What led the people of Israel into idolatry?

In what ways do the problems of Israel resemble problems with Christian worship today?

Was God's punishment of Israel just?

Day 153: Hezekiah Destroys the High Places

2 Kings 18–19; Psalm 75

Questions for Reflection

What differentiated Hezekiah's reign from the kings of the northern kingdom?

Why was Assyria successful in defeating Israel but unsuccessful in conquering Judah?

How does God's protection of Judah in this account give us hope for the establishment of the future messianic kingdom?

Day 154: God Delivers Jerusalem

2 Chronicles 32

Questions for Reflection

Why is it important to learn from the tragic mistakes of previous generations?

What does God's deliverance of Jerusalem from the Assyrians reveal about him?

In what ways have the previous generations of our own day forsaken God?

Day 155: Hezekiah Prays for Longer Life

2 Kings 20; Psalm 79

Questions for Reflection

Why did God agree to extend Hezekiah's life?

Why did Hezekiah show the Babylonians all of his wealth?

Will God keep his promise and send Judah into Babylonian captivity?

Week 32: Jeremiah

Weekly memory verse:

Jeremiah 23:5 – "Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land."

Weekly hymn:

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

Weekly catechism:

What is adoption?
Adoption is an act of God's free grace in which I am received as a child of God with all its rights and privileges.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 156: Manasseh and Amon

2 Kings 21; Psalm 80

Questions for Reflection

Why do you think Manasseh forsook God, even though his father raised him to be righteous?

In what ways did Manasseh's sin reach a point of horror unlike any king before him?

Did Judah's sin and God's promise of judgment nullify God's promises of future blessing for Israel?

Day 157: Josiah Repairs the Temple

2 Kings 22; Psalm 81

Questions for Reflection

In what ways did Josiah reveal his sincere desire to follow God's commands?

Why did the nation deserve judgment?

What did God's withholding judgment until Josiah's death reveal about him?

Day 158: Josiah's Reforms

2 Kings 23; Psalm 82

Questions for Reflection

Why was Josiah so concerned to eliminate and even desecrate every remaining pagan high place and worship element?

Was Josiah just to execute false priests?

Why did God judge Judah despite Josiah's righteous reforms?

Day 159: The Call of Jeremiah

Jeremiah 1; Psalm 84

Questions for Reflection

Why did God send Jeremiah to call the people to repentance, even while they were being defeated and exiled?

Why did Jeremiah's words have authority, despite his youth and inexperience?

What is significant about God's message that he knew Jeremiah even before he formed him (v. 5)?

Day 160: Jeremiah's Prophecy

Jeremiah 18–19

Questions for Reflection

What images do God and Jeremiah use to describe the people's sin and coming judgments?

Why did they use images to communicate the message to the people?

Who was ultimately responsible for the judgement upon the people's sin?

Week 33: Babylon Invades Judah

Weekly memory verse:

Psalm 86:11 – "Teach me your way, O Lord, that I may walk in your truth; unite my heart to fear your name."

Weekly hymn:

"Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken"

Weekly catechism:

What is sanctification?
Sanctification is the work of God's Spirit by which I am renewed after the image of God and am enabled more and more to die to sin and live to righteousness.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 161: Daniel Taken to Babylon

Daniel 1; Psalm 85

Questions for Reflection

Was it right for Daniel to allow himself to be educated in the language and literature of the Chaldeans?

Would it have been right for Daniel to eat the king's meat and wine?

What makes some activities of unbelieving people acceptable for Christians, and other activities of unbelievers not acceptable?

Day 162: Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

Daniel 2; Psalm 86

Questions for Reflection

How many of the empires prophesied in Nebuchadnezzar's dream have already come and gone? Which are yet to come?

Has Christ yet definitively crushed Gentile rule and established his kingdom on earth?

What hope do we have that Christ will indeed one day rule on the earth?

Day 163: Jeremiah's Warning and Imprisonment

Jeremiah 24, 37

Questions for Reflection

Why do the people continue refusing to repent, even as some of them are taken into captivity?

Was Jeremiah's ministry a failure?

How do we know God will keep his promise that one day a remnant will return, and he will establish his kingdom?

Day 164: The Fiery Furnace

Daniel 3

Questions for Reflection

What may have motivated Nebuchadnezzar to construct the golden image and demand worship?

If only three Jews refused to bow to the image, what were other Jews who were present doing?

Why did God protect Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?

Day 165: The Fall of Jerusalem

Jeremiah 38–39

Questions for Reflection

Why did the people put Jeremiah in a cistern?

What evidence is in this passage demonstrating King Zedekiah's weakness and lack of character?

What in this passage shows God's care for his prophet?

Week 34: Babylonian Captivity

Weekly memory verse:

Ezekiel 37:27–28 – "My dwelling place shall be with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Then the nations will know that I am the Lord who sanctifies Israel, when my sanctuary is in their midst forevermore."

Weekly hymn:

"Jerusalem, My Happy Home"

Weekly catechism:

What do you believe about the Holy Spirit?
The Holy Spirit is true and eternal God together with the Father and the Son.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 166: Jeremiah Taken to Egypt

Jeremiah 43; Psalm 88

Questions for Reflection

Why did the people want to go to Egypt?

Why didn't God want them to go to Egypt?

What was the result of the people's escape to Egypt?

Day 167: Jerusalem Captured and Burned

Jeremiah 52; Psalm 89

Questions for Reflection

Was God just in judging Israel and Judah?

How was God able to both fulfill his promise of judgment upon Israel's rebellion while at the same time fulfill his promises to David?

How do we know God would continue to keep all of his promises?

Day 168: Israel in Exile

Ezekiel 37; Psalm 137

Questions for Reflection

How would this vision give hope to Israel in Exile?

How does Jesus Christ begin to fulfill these promises in his first coming?

Which of these promises have yet to be fulfilled? When will they come to pass?

Day 169: Nebuchadnezzar's Conversion

Daniel 4; Psalm 91

Questions for Reflection

Why did God show mercy even to Nebuchadnezzar?

What are indications in Nebuchadnezzar's account of what happened that reveal he was likely truly converted?

What would this account have revealed to captive Israelites?

Day 170: The Handwriting on the Wall

Daniel 5, 9

Questions for Reflection

How did Belshazzar demonstrate that he did not, like his father, convert to the worship of Yahweh?

Why did God allow Persia to defeat Babylon?

How does Daniel's vision give Israel hope?

Week 35: Return from Exile

Weekly memory verse:

Romans 8:5 – "For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit."

Weekly hymn:

"Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart"

Weekly catechism:

What does the Holy Spirit do for you?
The Holy Spirit unites me to Christ, convicts me of sin, comforts me, and sanctifies me.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 171: Daniel and the Lion's Den

Daniel 6; Psalm 92

Questions for Reflection

Why was Daniel made an important leader in Persia?

Why were the other officials jealous of Daniel?

Why did God protect Daniel from the lions?

Day 172: The Exiles Return and Rebuild the Temple

Ezra 1, 3; Psalm 93

Questions for Reflection

What does the fact that God used Cyrus to fulfill his promises reveal?

What shows that the returning exiles learned lessons from God's judgment?

How does God display his steadfast love in this account?

Day 173: The Temple is Dedicated

Ezra 6; Psalms 94–95

Questions for Reflection

What does Cyrus's self-serving decision to allow the people to return to their land reveal about the sovereignty of God?

Why was it important that the first thing the people did was to rebuild the temple?

What does this event reveal about God's faithfulness to his promises?

Day 174: Ezra Restores Israel's Worship of Yahweh

Nehemiah 8–9

Questions for Reflection

In what ways had the people of Israel learned their lesson for why they had been in exile?

How does this passage serve as a model for expositional preaching?

How does this passage serve as a model for corporate worship services?

Day 175: Worship the Lord in the Splendor of Holiness

Psalms 96–98

Questions for Reflection

What does the rule of God on earth mean for the wicked?

What does the rule of God on earth mean for the righteous?

How might these psalms apply to us as we still await the coming of the Lord?

Week 36: The Birth of Jesus Christ

Weekly memory verse:

Psalm 100:1–2 – "Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth! Serve the Lord with gladness! Come into his presence with singing!"

Weekly hymn:

"All People That on Earth Do Dwell"

Weekly catechism:

Since you have been saved by grace alone through Christ, without any merit of your own, why must you yet do good works?
I must do good works because Christ also renews me by his Holy Spirit to be his image, so that I might show thankfulness to God for his mercy.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 176: Worship the Lord Who Reigns

Psalms 99–101

Questions for Reflection

What does it mean that the Lord reigns?

What should be our response to the faithful reign of God?

What does it mean to “walk with integrity of heart” (Ps 101:2)?

Day 177: The Birth of John the Baptist

Luke 1

Questions for Reflection

Why do you think God chose to deliver the news about John the Baptist to Zechariah in the temple?

What does Mary's *Magnificat* reveal about her?

How do both Mary's *Magnificat* and Zechariah's *Benedictus* connect Old Testament prophesies to what was beginning to happen?

Day 178: The Birth of Jesus Christ

Luke 2:1–39; John 1:1–18

Questions for Reflection

Why was it important that Jesus be of the tribe of Judah and born in Bethlehem?

What does the angel's song (*Gloria*) reveal about Christ's coming?

What does Simeon's song (*Nunc Dimittis*) reveal about Christ's coming?

Day 179: The Visit of the Magi

Matthew 2; Psalm 102

Questions for Reflection

Why do you think God led the magi to Jesus?

What did the gifts of the magi signify about who they thought Jesus was?

In what ways do these events fulfill Old Testament prophecies?

Day 180: Jesus in the Temple

Luke 2:40–52; Psalm 103

Questions for Reflection

Why did Jesus go to Jerusalem?

Was Jesus being disobedient to his parents by remaining in Jerusalem? How do you know?

What did Jesus's response to Mary reveal about him?

Week 37: Jesus's Early Ministry

Weekly memory verse:

John 3:16 – "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

Weekly hymn:

"Of the Father's Love Begotten"

Weekly catechism:

What is prayer?
Prayer is an offering up of my desires to God for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of my sins and thankfulness for his mercies.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 181: The Baptism and Temptation of Jesus

Matthew 3:1–4:11; Psalm 104

Questions for Reflection

What Old Testament prophet would have come to mind in the Jewish people when they saw John and how he lived?

What was John's essential message?

What does Jesus's baptism and temptation reveal about him?

Day 182: The Wedding at Cana

John 1:19–2:12

Questions for Reflection

How did Jesus's disciples know that he was the Messiah?

What did the fact that Mary went to Jesus for help reveal about what she thought of him?

How did the miracle at Cana confirm that Jesus was the Messiah?

Day 183: Jesus Speaks with Nicodemus

John 2:13–3:21; Psalm 106

Questions for Reflection

Why did Jesus cleanse the temple?

Why must we be born from above?

What brings spiritual cleansing from sin?

Day 184: The Woman at the Well

John 4:1–42

Questions for Reflection

Why was the fact that Jesus asked the woman for a drink so unusual?

Why did the woman ask Jesus about the proper way to worship?

What does it mean to worship in spirit and truth?

Day 185: Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

Luke 4:14–44; Isaiah 61

Questions for Reflection

What did Jesus mean when he said that Isaiah 61:1-2a was being fulfilled?

Why did Jesus mention Elijah helping the widow of Zarephath and Elisha healing Naaman?

Why did the people want to kill Jesus?

Week 38: Jesus's Ministry in Galilee

Weekly memory verse:

Colossians 1:18 – "And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent."

Weekly hymn:

"When Morning Gilds the Skies"

Weekly catechism:

What is the church?
The church is a community of believers in which the gospel is truly preached and the ordinances are rightly administered.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 186: Jesus Heals Many in Galilee

Mark 1:21–45; Psalms 108–109

Questions for Reflection

What do the demon's statements reveal about demons' beliefs concerning Jesus?

Why did Jesus heal people while he was on earth?

Why do God's works on behalf of his people deserve praise?

Day 187: The Sermon on the Mount

Matthew 5–7

Questions for Reflection

What message did this discourse present for the Pharisees?

What message does this discourse present for those who wish to enter Christ's Kingdom by obeying the Law?

What is the only way to enter the Kingdom of Christ?

Day 188: Jesus Heals a Paralytic

Mark 2:1–12; Psalms 111–112

Questions for Reflection

What did the paralytic's friends' actions reveal about what they thought of Jesus?

Why did Jesus heal the paralytic?

Why did the people think Jesus had blasphemed God?

Day 189: Praise the Lord for Delivering Us

Psalms 113–116

Questions for Reflection

Why did the people of Israel regularly recount the events of the Exodus?

How does the Exodus from Egypt display the power of God?

How does the Exodus from Egypt display the grace and mercy of God?

Day 190: Jesus Raises the Dead to Life

Luke 7:1–17; Psalm 117

Questions for Reflection

What do the centurion's actions reveal about him?

Based on the centurion's actions, what is faith?

Why did fear seize the people after Jesus raised the boy to life?

Week 39: Jesus Heals and Forgives

Weekly memory verse:

Romans 1:16 – "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes."

Weekly hymn:

"Jesus! What a Friend for Sinners"

Weekly catechism:

What is the gospel?
The gospel is the good news that those who repent and believe in the death and resurrection of Christ for their sins will be forgiven.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 191: Jesus Forgives a Sinful Woman

Luke 7:36–50; Psalm 120

Questions for Reflection

Why were the Pharisees upset about what the woman did?

In what ways did the woman demonstrate repentance and faith in Jesus?

Why does forgiveness from great sins result in great love for Christ?

Day 192: Jesus Speaks in Parables

Mark 4:1–34; Psalm 121

Questions for Reflection

Why did Jesus speak in parables?

Does high emotion and outward enthusiasm prove that someone is truly a follower of Christ?

What proves that someone has truly accepted the gospel?

Day 193: Jesus Displays His Power

Luke 8:22–39; Psalm 107

Questions for Reflection

What was the disciples' response when Jesus calmed the storm?

What was the response of the demon-possessed man when Jesus cast out the demons?

What was the response of the people of Gerasenes?

Day 194: Worshiping in God's House

Psalms 122–124

Questions for Reflection

What characterized a Jew's attitude as he ascended to Jerusalem for worship?

What are similarities between Jewish worship in the house of the Lord and Christian worship in the church, the house of God?

In what ways should we demonstrate worship in the church as a priority and joy?

Day 195: Jesus Restores Life and Heals the Sick

Matthew 9:18–32; Psalms 125–126

Questions for Reflection

What healed the woman?

Why did Jesus restore the girl's life?

What healed the blind men?

Week 40: True Repentance and Faith in Christ

Weekly memory verse:

John 6:40 – "For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day."

Weekly hymn:

"I Sought the Lord"

Weekly catechism:

To whom should you preach the gospel?
I should preach the gospel to all people in all nations to the end of the earth.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 196: Jesus Declares His Deity

John 5

Questions for Reflection

Why were the Jews upset with Jesus?

What are some ways Jesus declared his deity?

What are some ways Jesus displayed his deity?

Day 197: Jesus and His Apostles are Rejected

Mark 6:1–29; Psalm 127–128

Questions for Reflection

Why did the people of Nazareth reject Jesus even though they were astonished by his teaching?

What did the response of the people to the apostles' message reveal about most of the people of Israel?

How are Herod's acts further illustrative of the rejection of the Jews?

Day 198: Jesus Feeds the Multitudes

John 6:1–21; Psalms 129–130

Questions for Reflection

In what ways did the people demonstrate that they did not truly believe in Jesus as the Son of God?

Why were the people attracted to Jesus?

What are some aspects of true repentance found in Psalm 130?

Day 199: Jesus Is the Bread of Life

John 6:22–71

Questions for Reflection

How did the people demonstrate that they did not truly believe in Jesus?

What did Jesus mean by insisting that his people must eat his flesh and drink his blood?

How did the apostles' own reactions demonstrate the fact that God must work to bring people to faith in him?

Day 200: Jesus Predicts His Death and Resurrection

Mark 8:27–38; Psalms 131–132

Questions for Reflection

How did Peter's confession clearly demonstrate faith in Christ?

Why did Jesus need to suffer and die?

How is true belief in Christ described in this passage?

Week 41: The Light of the World

Weekly memory verse:

2 Corinthians 4:6 – "For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

Weekly hymn:

"O Splendor of God's Glory Bright"

Weekly catechism:

What are the ordinances of the church?
Baptism and the Lord's Supper were specially instituted by Christ to represent the benefits of union with him by visible and outward signs.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 201: The Transfiguration

Mark 9:1–29; Psalm 133

Questions for Reflection

Why did the disciples need reassurance at this point in Jesus's ministry?

What did the Transfiguration confirm for the disciples?

How can this story help give us confidence in promises for the future that have yet to come to pass?

Day 202: Teachings of Jesus

Matthew 17:24–27; Luke 9:37–50

Questions for Reflection

Why was Jesus willing to pay the tax, even though he was technically exempt from paying it?

What stimulated the debate among the disciples about who would be greatest in the Kingdom?

In what ways did Jesus himself exemplify the kind of humility he requires of his followers?

Day 203: Temptation and Forgiveness

Matthew 18:7–35; Psalm 134

Questions for Reflection

What are some areas in your life where you need to be careful about temptation to sin?

What are some areas in your life where you might cause others to sin?

How much should you be willing to forgive others who sin against you?

Day 204: Opposition to Jesus Increases

John 7:1–8:30

Questions for Reflection

Why did Jesus enter Jerusalem secretly?

In what ways did Jesus use the occasion of the Feast of Booths to teach about who he was?

Why did Jesus's teaching cause some to believe and some to reject him?

Day 205: Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind

John 9

Questions for Reflection

Why were the religious leaders upset about Jesus healing the blind man?

In what ways did Jesus use this healing to teach important spiritual truths?

How is blindness an accurate picture of unbelief?

Week 42: Parables of the Kingdom

Weekly memory verse:
Luke 19:10 – "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

Weekly hymn:
"Come, Christians, Join to Sing"

Weekly catechism:
What is baptism?
Baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament, instituted by Jesus Christ, to be a sign of the believer's fellowship with Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 206: Traveling to Jerusalem

Luke 17:11–18:14

Questions for Reflection

What was significant about the fact that the thankful leper was a Samaritan?

Why did Jesus need to suffer in order to bring complete deliverance for his people?

What was Jesus's point in the parable of the unjust judge?

Day 207: The Parable of the Good Samaritan

Luke 10:25–42

Questions for Reflection

Is it possible to perfectly keep all of God's Law?

Why were the Samaritan's actions so remarkable?

Does focus upon loving Christ mean we do not need to serve others?

Day 208: Invitation to Christ's Banquet

Luke 14; Psalm 135

Questions for Reflection

Why were the Pharisees watching Jesus closely?

Why did the Jews think that they alone would enjoy God's blessings?

What did Jesus say was required to receive God's blessings?

Day 209: Parables of the Lost Sheep, Coin, and Son

Luke 15; Psalm 136

Questions for Reflection

What do the parables of the lost sheep and coin reveal about God's desire to save lost sinners?

What does the parable of the lost son reveal about what is necessary in order to receive salvation?

What does the illustration of the elder son reveal about the Pharisees?

Day 210: Parables about the Kingdom

Matthew 13:44–52, 25:1–46

Questions for Reflection

How valuable is the Kingdom of God?

Does God judge based on how much we have or how faithful we are with what he has given us?

What determines who will inherit Christ's Kingdom?

Week 43: Holy Week

Weekly memory verse:

John 11:25 – "Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live.'"

Weekly hymn:

"My Song Is Love Unknown"

Weekly catechism:

What is the duty of those who are rightly baptized?
It is the duty of those who are rightly baptized to join themselves to some visible and orderly church of Jesus Christ.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 211: Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead

Luke 16:19–31; John 11

Questions for Reflection

How does the raising of Lazarus confirm what Abraham said to the rich man in Jesus's parable about the fact that if people don't believe the Scriptures, then they will not believe even if someone rises from the dead?

Why did Jesus wait before traveling to Bethany?

Why did Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead?

Day 212: Zacchaeus and Blind Bartimaeus

Matthew 20:20–28; Mark 10:46–52; Luke 19:1–10

Questions for Reflection

Why did James and John desire great honor in the Kingdom?

According to Jesus, what is required for those who wish to follow him?

How do we know that Zacchaeus was truly repentant?

Day 213: The Triumphal Entry

John 12:1–11; Matthew 21:1–11; Luke 19:39–40

Questions for Reflection

How did Mary's act unintentionally predict Christ's coming death?

What did the people's acts reveal about what they thought of Jesus?

What did the Pharisees' rebuke reveal about what they thought of Jesus?

Day 214: Jesus Cleanses the Temple a Second Time

Mark 11:12–12:12

Questions for Reflection

Why did Jesus drive out the money changers from the temple?

What did Jesus teach about the power of prayer in faith?

How would the rejection of the Jews actually accomplish God's plan of salvation?

Day 215: The Last Supper

Matthew 26:14–29; 1 Corinthians 11:17–34

Questions for Reflection

Why did Paul give careful instructions about the Lord's Supper?

What do the bread and cup represent in the Supper?

What does the whole meal represent?

Week 44: Jesus's Death and Resurrection

Weekly memory verse:

Isaiah 53:5 – "But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed."

Weekly hymn:

"Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted"

Weekly catechism:

What is the Lord's Supper?
The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of the New Testament, instituted by Jesus Christ, to be a sign of the believer's communion with Christ and his church through his broken body and shed blood.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 216: Judas Betrays Jesus

Matthew 26:30–56; Psalms 46–48

Questions for Reflection

Why did Jesus ask that the cup pass from him?

How did Jesus demonstrate submission to his Father?

Why was Peter's action wrong?

Day 217: Jesus Tried by the Religious Leaders

John 18:12–27; Mark 14:53–65; Matthew 27:1–10

Questions for Reflection

Why did the religious leaders put Jesus to trial at night?

What is the difference between Peter's denial and Judas's betrayal?

Why did Caiaphas tear his garments?

Day 218: Jesus Tried by the Political Leaders

Luke 23:1–25; Isaiah 53

Questions for Reflection

Why was Jesus silent during much of his trial?

Why did the people demand Jesus's crucifixion?

In what ways did the events of Jesus's trial and crucifixion fulfill Isaiah's prophecy?

Day 219: The Death of Jesus

Matthew 27:27–61; Psalm 22

Questions for Reflection

In what ways did Psalm 22 foretell aspects of Christ's crucifixion?

How do we know that Jesus died voluntarily?

What did the tearing of the veil indicate about Christ's death?

Day 220: The Resurrection of Jesus

Matthew 27:62–28:15

Questions for Reflection

Why did the religious leaders want to seal and guard the tomb?

Why was it important that Jesus be seen after his resurrection?

Why was Jesus's resurrection important?

Week 45: Jesus Ascends and Sends the Holy Spirit

Weekly memory verse:

1 Corinthians 15:21–22 – "For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive."

Weekly hymn:

"Jesus Lives, and So Shall I"

Weekly catechism:

What benefits do believers receive from Christ at their death?
Believers are at their death made perfect in holiness and immediately pass into the presence of God forever.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 221: Jesus Appears to His Disciples

Luke 24:13–45; Psalms 138–139

Questions for Reflection

Why did Jesus need to appear to people between his resurrection and ascension?

How were Jesus's death and resurrection prophesied in the Old Testament?

What are evidences that the risen Christ had a physical body?

Day 222: Jesus Appears to Thomas and Other Followers

John 20:24–21:25; Psalm 140

Questions for Reflection

How did Jesus's response to Thomas's doubts reveal his compassion?

How did Jesus's challenge to Peter reveal his compassion?

According to John, why did he write his Gospel?

Day 223: Christ Ascends to Heaven

Matthew 28:16–20; Luke 24:44–53; Acts 1:1–11

Questions for Reflection

How could some of Jesus's followers doubt even though they saw him risen?

What elements are included in Jesus's Great Commission to his followers?

According to Jesus and the angels, what will happen when he comes again?

Day 224: The Coming of the Holy Spirit

Acts 1:12–2:47

Questions for Reflection

Why did Jesus send the Holy Spirit?

What did it mean that the disciples spoke in tongues?

What were the core commitments of the early church?

Day 225: The Apostles Preach the Gospel and Are Persecuted

Acts 3:1–4:31; Psalm 2

Questions for Reflection

What was the content of the apostles' sermons?

Why did the religious leaders arrest them?

What was the apostles' response to the persecution?

Week 46: The Persecution of the Early Church and Spread of the Gospel

Weekly memory verse:

Acts 1:8 – "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Weekly hymn:

"The Church's One Foundation"

Weekly catechism:

What will be done to the wicked at death?
The wicked will at their death be cast into the torments of hell.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 226: The Fellowship of the Early Church

Acts 4:32–5:16

Questions for Reflection

What led the early Christians to care for each other's needs?

Why were Ananias and Sapphira punished?

What was the purpose of signs and wonders?

Day 227: The Church Chooses Deacons

Acts 5:17–6:7

Questions for Reflection

What was the response of the apostles to their imprisonment?

What was Gamaliel's advice to the council?

What is the purpose and role of deacons within the church?

Day 228: Stephen, the First Christian Martyr

Acts 6:8–8:3

Questions for Reflection

Why were the Jews upset with Stephen?

What was Stephen's primary message to the people?

What was the response of the people?

Day 229: The Conversion of Samaritans and the Ethiopian Eunuch

Acts 8:4–40

Questions for Reflection

Why would it have been surprising for a Samaritan to join Jews in becoming Christians?

Why did God delay baptizing the Samaritan converts with the Holy Spirit?

Why would it have been surprising for an Ethiopian eunuch to become a Christian?

Day 230: The Conversion of Saul

Acts 9:1–31

Questions for Reflection

Why did Saul want to persecute Christians?

What are some evidences that Saul was completely transformed?

To what ministry did God uniquely call Saul?

Week 47: The Gospel Spreads to the Gentiles

Weekly memory verse:

Romans 10:12 – "For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him."

Weekly hymn:

"How Sweet and Awful Is the Place"

Weekly catechism:

Where is Christ now?
Christ ascended into heaven and sits at the Father's right hand.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 231: Peter's Early Ministry

Acts 9:32–43; Psalm 141

Questions for Reflection

How were Peter's miracles similar to miracles Jesus performed?

Why was it remarkable that Peter stayed in Joppa with Simon, a tanner?

What should be our prayer when we find ourselves in trouble?

Day 232: Gentiles Are Added to the Church

Acts 10:1–11:18

Questions for Reflection

Why did God give Peter the vision of the animals?

Why was it so significant that the Holy Spirit came upon the Gentile converts?

Why were the Jewish Christians upset with Peter?

Day 233: The Church in Antioch

Acts 11:19–30; Psalm 142

Questions for Reflection

Why was the church in Antioch important?

Why did the followers of Christ welcome the term “Christians”?

What does the growth and significance of this church reveal about the apostles’ obedience to Christ’s commission to them?

Day 234: James Killed and Peter Imprisoned

Acts 12; Psalm 143

Questions for Reflection

Why did Herod kill James and imprison Peter?

Why did God allow James to be killed but freed Peter?

What did Herod's death reveal about God's control of it all?

Day 235: Paul Begins His First Missionary Journey

Acts 13

Questions for Reflection

Why did Paul visit Jewish synagogues in each town first?

Why did most Jews continue to reject Jesus as their Messiah?

Why did Paul shift his ministry attention to the Gentiles?

Week 48: The Gospel Moves into Europe

Weekly memory verse:

Romans 8:38–39 – "For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Weekly hymn:

"And Can It Be"

Weekly catechism:

How does Christ's resurrection benefit you?
Christ's resurrection is a certain promise of my glorious resurrection.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 236: Paul Completes His First Missionary Journey

Acts 14; Psalm 144

Questions for Reflection

Why did Paul and Barnabas perform signs and wonders?

Why did the people of Lystra think Paul and Barnabas were Zeus and Hermes?

Why did the people stone Paul?

Day 237: The Jerusalem Council

Acts 15; Psalm 145

Questions for Reflection

Why was the Jerusalem Council necessary?

What did the council decide about the relationship between saving faith and good works?

Do you think either Paul or Barnabas were wrong in their opinions about Mark?

Day 238: Wise Words

Proverbs 23–24

Questions for Reflection

Why must we be careful when sitting with a powerful person?

What are the negative effects mentioned that come with drinking "wine when it is red"?

What should be our attitude toward our enemies?

Day 239: Paul Begins His Second Missionary Journey

Acts 16

Questions for Reflection

Why did Paul circumcise Timothy?

Why did God send the vision of man from Macedonia to Paul?

What did Paul tell the Philippian jailer when he was about to take his own life?

Day 240: Paul in Thessalonica and Athens

Acts 17; Proverbs 25

Questions for Reflection

How did the Bereans prove to be more noble than the Thessalonicans?

Why was Paul provoked when he entered Athens?

What was the varied response to Paul's message?

Week 49: Paul Begins His Final Missionary Journey

Weekly memory verse:

Philippians 2:9-11 – "Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Weekly hymn:

"Look, Ye Saints, the Sight Is Glorious"

Weekly catechism:

How does Christ's ascension into heaven benefit you?
Christ is my advocate in heaven before his Father and my certain promise that he will take me up to himself.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 241: The Fool's Folly

Proverbs 26–27

Questions for Reflection

What kinds of pictures does the Proverb use to describe the fool?

What are characteristics of a wise person?

What are some blessings a wise person can expect to enjoy?

Day 242: The Wicked Condemned

Proverbs 28–29

Questions for Reflection

What are specific acts of injustice described in these proverbs?

How do wicked acts result in condemnation for the wicked?

How are the actions of righteous people contrasted with those of the wicked in these proverbs?

Day 243: Paul Completes His Second Missionary Journey

Acts 18; Proverbs 30

Questions for Reflection

Why did Paul choose Corinth and Ephesus to minister in?

How were Aquilla and Priscilla helpful in Paul's missionary work?

How do the events in this chapter illustrate human responsibility and God's sovereignty in evangelism?

Day 244: Paul's Third Missionary Journey

Acts 19

Questions for Reflection

Why was it important for God to confirm that the Ephesian converts were truly part of the church?

What are some evidences that the new Ephesian converts were truly saved?

Why were the unbelieving people of Ephesus upset?

Day 245: Paul's Letter to the Corinthian Church

1 Corinthians 1–2, 13

Questions for Reflection

Why was Paul thankful for the Corinthian believers?

Why does God choose to use weak things to bring unbelievers to faith in Christ?

What is the nature of true, biblical love?

Week 50: Life by the Spirit and Word

Weekly memory verse:

Titus 2:11–13 – "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ."

Weekly hymn:

"Savior of the Nations, Come"

Weekly catechism:

Will Jesus Christ come again?
Jesus Christ will come a second time in power and glory, which is the joy and hope of all believers.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 246: The Word of the Lord

Psalm 119

Questions for Reflection

What kinds of images does the psalmist use to describe the Word of God?

Why is the Word of God worthy of delight?

What benefits does the Word of God deliver to those who love it?

Day 247: Living Filled by the Spirit

Ephesians 5:18–6:20

Questions for Reflection

What does it mean to be Spirit-filled?

How does being Spirit-filled manifest itself in the church assembly?

How does being Spirit-filled manifest itself in the Christian's life?

Day 248: Christian Living

Philippians 3–4

Questions for Reflection

How is the Christian life like a race?

What kinds of actions and attitudes should characterize a Christian's life?

How can the list in Philippians 4:8 apply to what a Christian enjoys in life?

Day 249: The Gospel of Christ

Romans 1, 3

Questions for Reflection

Why is Paul not ashamed of the gospel of Christ?

What does God's general revelation accomplish?

How can God justly justify the unjust?

Day 250: Life in the Spirit

Romans 8, 12

Questions for Reflection

What does it mean that Christians are spiritually minded?

What are the benefits of the Spirit dwelling within believers?

In what ways should Christians present their bodies as living sacrifices to God?

Week 51: Paul on Trial

Weekly memory verse:

Revelation 20:12 – "And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done."

Weekly hymn:

"Joy to the World"

Weekly catechism:

What will happen to believers after Christ comes again?
Believers will live with Christ forever in a new heaven and a new earth.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 251: Paul Heads Toward Jerusalem

Acts 20:1–21:16

Questions for Reflection

Why did Paul want to go to Jerusalem?

Why did the Jews hate Paul?

On what basis did Paul tell the Ephesian elders that he was innocent of the blood of all (v. 26)?

Day 252: Paul Is Arrested in Jerusalem

Acts 21:17–22:29

Questions for Reflection

Why was it important for Paul to report to James and the Jerusalem elders about what God did among the Gentiles?

Why did the Jews arrest Paul?

How did Paul respond to the charges against him?

Day 253: Paul Before the Jewish Council

Acts 22:30–23:35; Proverbs 31

Questions for Reflection

Why did Paul back down his rhetoric once he realized he was speaking to the high priest?

In what ways did Paul insist that his missionary activity was a fulfillment of the Jewish Scriptures?

How would the Lord's visit to Paul have encouraged him?

Day 254: Paul on Trial

Acts 24–26

Questions for Reflection

What defense did Paul give in response to the charges against him?

Why did Paul preach about the resurrection of Christ, even though he knew his audience would not believe?

Did any of the political leaders find Paul guilty of the charges against him?

Day 255: Paul Sails for Rome

Acts 27; Psalm 146

Questions for Reflection

In what ways did God protect Paul on his journey to Rome?

How did Paul take leadership, even as a prisoner among unbelievers?

How did the events of this journey further confirm Paul and his mission?

Week 52: Jesus Comes Again

Weekly memory verse:

Revelation 22:17 – "The Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come.' And let the one who hears say, 'Come.' And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price."

Weekly hymn:

"Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending"

Weekly catechism:

What is your only hope in life and death?
My only hope in life and death is that I am not my own but belong to God and to my Savior Jesus Christ.

Prayer focus this week:

Day 256: The Coming of Christ

Galatians 4:4–7; Titus 3:3–7; 1 Timothy 1:15–17

Questions for Reflection

Why did Jesus come into the world?

Why will Jesus come again?

How do both comings of Christ give hope to the Christian?

Day 257: Paul Arrives in Rome

Acts 28; Psalms 147–148

Questions for Reflection

How did Paul faithfully fulfill his mission even during his imprisonment?

What was the central message of Paul's defense of Christianity to the Jewish leaders?

How can God's providential work in Paul's ministry give us confidence today?

Day 258: The Second Coming of Christ

Revelation 1, 4–5

Questions for Reflection

What should anticipation of the coming of Christ cause us to do?

What does John's vision of the worship of heaven teach us about our worship?

Why is Jesus the only one worthy of opening the title deed to the Kingdom of God?

Day 259: The New Heaven and the New Earth

Revelation 21; Psalm 149

Questions for Reflection

In what ways does the new heaven and earth bring to remembrance God's plan for Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden?

Why will there be no tears in the new earth?

What does the description of the New Jerusalem teach us about the eternal dwelling of God's people?

Day 260: Jesus Is Coming

Revelation 22; Psalm 150

Questions for Reflection

When could Jesus come again?

What should this letter cause Christians to do?

What is our only hope in life and death?