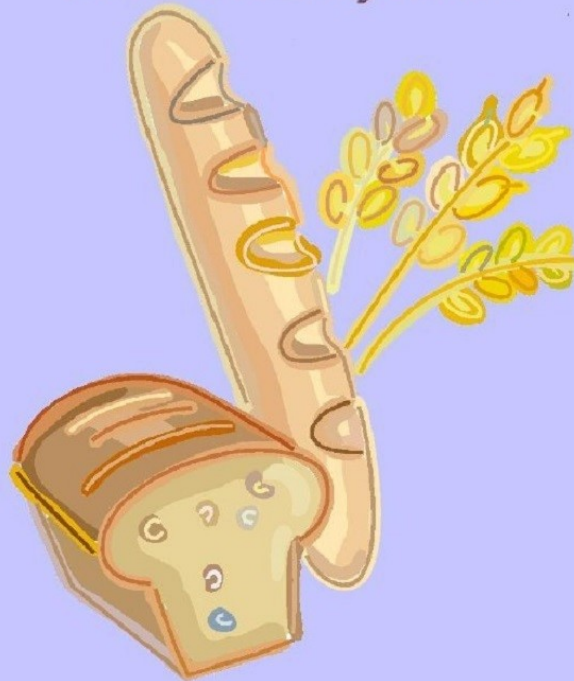


*Intra-Denominational
Christian Daily Bread*



By Rev. J. Mike Howington

Intra-Denominational Christian Daily Bread

52 Weeks of Biblical Messages

By
Rev. Dr. J. Mike Howington

Volume 1 Edition 2

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Introduction

This book contains pages for 52 weeks of Biblical inspiration or instructional messages. These messages were originally composed and sent as “Daily Bread” emails on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The Monday email message was intended to be read and contemplated on both Monday and Tuesday mornings. A second message was sent for reading on Wednesday and Thursday mornings. The week’s final Daily Bread message was intended to be read and contemplated on Friday and Saturday mornings. It was hoped that the readers would seek inspiration and scriptural input on Sundays from other sources such as the visitation or participation in a church worship service or Bible study.

No matter which day you start this book, that week is week #1. A year later you will finish. There are no dates, just week numbers. So, you can begin these messages any day, month, or year.

Daily Bread (“DB”) is an email ministry designed to be a form of Christian encouragement, using God’s Word, to assist in keeping a spiritual perspective and balance. DB tries to remain ecumenical and non-denominational in nature, rejoicing in the sharing of Christian beliefs with Protestants, Catholics, Mormons, other denominations and even some unbelievers. DB always contains a scripture verse, and a related commentary, explanation or quotation. The entire message is brief so that the time spent receiving and reading the email does not impact on-the-job productivity. Daily Bread attempts to be aware that there are a few subjects where Christians have varying beliefs, and it is not within DB’s purpose to totally avoid nor to resolve these differences, but every effort is made to **not** distribute material that is critical or only applicable to any particular denomination.

Rev. Howington continues to create new DB messages available free on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings – one need only to send an email requesting them to jmike.howingtonenterprises@gmail.com

Week 1

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

1 John 4:8 - Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. (NIV)

Only those who are to some degree like Him truly know Him. In general, God's love may be thought of as His eternal giving or sharing of Himself. Give of yourself, then ... 1 John 4:16: "Whoever lives in love lives in God and God in him." (NIV)

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

John 6:35 - Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty." (NIV)

In Biblical times bread was the basic item of one's daily diet and "bread" often means "food in general." In the Lord's prayer are the words "give us our daily bread" meaning "give us the basic materials we need today." Jesus referred to Himself as the "bread of life," the food that meets man's deepest needs.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 1:1 - In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (NIV)

The Gospel of John begins with this affirmation of Jesus' deity. In my personal study the notes on this one verse span several pages. One important point is that the Word of our God is constant and will never be bent, shattered or

broken, or - The grass withers and flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever. (NIV Isaiah 40:8)

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 2

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

John 11:35 – Jesus wept. (KJ)

Even the Lord felt the heartache, pains and mournings of this world. This is the shortest verse in the English translation of the Bible.

But the shortest verse in the Greek translation is: “Rejoice evermore.” (KJ, 1 Thessalonians. 5:16)

We should rejoice in the fact that we believers have the assurance of eternal joy.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

John 11:25, 26 – Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die." (NIV)

Jesus had experience raising the dead in the past, He can and will do it again. Remember this and the fact that eternity with Him lasts a very long, blissful, time.

Whenever you find yourself allowing the problems and concerns of today to become a major bother, remember the big picture - the long range picture, then laugh and rejoice.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 6:54 – Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.
(NIV)

When the analysis of this verse was combined with opinions about the Lord's Supper, it has caused splits in the churches and denominations. But most agree on some general principals such as: "eating" and "drinking" refer to internalizing by "believing" and "accepting." "His flesh" is the work and will of God that Jesus was sent to this earth to accomplish. Eating of His flesh means believing His divinity and His teachings. Drinking of His blood refers to the acceptance that His blood was used as the sacrificial lamb's blood that traditionally was paid for atonement to God, and our "drinking" of it means our acceptance of Jesus Christ as our redeemer, our conduit to the forgiveness from God.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 3

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

Romans 5:3-5 - Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance character; and character hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom He has given us. (NIV)

A Christian can find some joy in some sufferings because he knows that it is not meaningless. Part of God's purpose is to produce character in His children. The believer is not an unfounded optimist with a morbid view of life but the believer does not quit or give in to self-doubt. Instead, the believer finishes the job knowing that God's plan includes difficult lessons.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Romans 8:38, 39 - For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (NIV)

No matter what you're doing or have done, no matter what you're thinking or have thought, God's love for you is constant and eternal.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 8:12 - When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (NIV)

Light represents what is good, true and holy, while darkness represents what is evil and false. Follow Him by striving to live in what is good, true and holy. It is also true that "God is light" –

1 John 1:5, 6 - This is the message that we have heard from Him and declare to you: God is light; in Him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with Him yet walk in darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. (NIV)

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 4

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

Matthew 5:1 - Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (NIV)

Jesus is not saying that it is good to be poor. He is saying that those who fully realize that they have no way of buying, nothing of value to trade for, and no way to purchase a ticket into heaven are blessed and will inherit the free gift of heaven. Those who know their spiritual bankruptcy will not receive just some of the benefits of heaven - they will inherit all of the kingdom of heaven.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Matthew 5:2 - Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. (NIV)

This beatitude should not be taken out of context. It is the second in a series of blessings related to spiritual attitudes and the kingdom of heaven. Thus, Jesus is not saying that people mourning the death of another person are blessed. He is saying that those who mourn and are upset about their own sin-nature or their being "poor in spirit" - they will be comforted. If you truly regret and confess your sins, you will be comforted.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

Matthew 5:6 - Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. (NIV)

This beatitude is the fourth in a series of blessings related to spiritual attitudes and the kingdom of heaven. Jesus is not saying that it is good to be hungry or thirsty. He is saying that if you have a personal, internal need for righteousness - if you crave righteousness - if you seek righteousness, you will have your fill of it in the kingdom of heaven.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 5

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

Abraham Lincoln's creed was the quote of Micah 6:8: "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (KJV)

This is an excellent creed to live by, but to this I would add John 6:29 - Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the One He has sent." (NIV)

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Romans 1:6 - And you also are among those who are called to Jesus Christ. (NIV)

Many effective priests, pastors, and missionaries have been "called" or summoned by God to His service. The most dramatic is the calling of Paul documented in Acts 9. However, as this verse says, all Christians are called to be Christ's ambassadors on earth.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 8:31, 32 – To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (NIV)

The "truth" that Jesus is referring to is a philosophical truth in His teachings. As He explains in verse 35, if we adhere to those teachings, we will be set free from sin through His provided salvation.

John 8:34 – Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin." (NIV)

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 6

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

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

A few weeks back, I referenced this verse with a reminder of God's perpetual love. Now I use it as a reminder of the "big picture," in hopes that you will see that "once we have that assurance in our hearts and trust the One who died for us, the length of our life becomes far less important than its legacy, its duration far less significant than its donation." (Fred Bauer, in Daily Guideposts, April 21, 2001, p. 201)

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Isaiah 40:31- But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. (NIV)

Got a problem or task you can't seem to get resolved? The above text gives a hint. Sometimes I forget that every task should begin with the involvement of the Lord and when I find it nearly impossible to complete, I get this reminder. I receive a lot of compliments when the actual truth is that I had to ask His help and rediscovered that God is the most knowledgeable and best computer programmer I know.

Philippians 4:13 – I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. (KJV)

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 13:8 – "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me." (NIV)

Humility and pride sometimes make it difficult for us to accept service or help from others, even our loved ones or spouses. It is easier, more fun and "more blessed to give than to receive." But we need to afford others the opportunity and privilege to serve. Besides, just as Peter actually needed this spiritual cleansing, we may also need whatever gift God is delivering through someone else.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 7

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

Romans 8:15, 16 – For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by Him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. (NIV)

Paul reminds us that we are God's children and that we can run to Him with the same eagerness and excitement with which a well-loved young child races towards his earthly father. God takes us in His arms, loving and accepting us just as we are and we can enjoy the childlike assurance that we are welcomed and loved.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Mark 12:44 – They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything - all she had to live on. (NIV)

Having problems? Troubles keep cropping up? Finances down, but costly expenses keep turning up? Remember, there are those dealing with significantly greater losses and turmoils. This is the time to give, especially to those in need - not just money, but send a greeting card, flowers, a cheerful word, or, even better, a helping hand and your time. As has been said, "when you're feeling poorest, that's the time to give the most."

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

Ephesians 3:14, 15 – For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom His whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. (NIV)

We want to make everything alright for our families and for their children. We want to shoulder their pain, pave over their rough spots and kiss away all the small injuries. But, we can't. The best we can do is show them that we care, and point them to a heavenly Father who is always there - even when we can't be. That's an important truth to impart to those we love.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 8

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

Deuteronomy 4:29 – But if from there you seek the Lord your God, you will find Him if you look for Him with all your heart and with all your soul. (NIV)

From wherever you are; but you really “gotta’ wanna’.”

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

John 8:51 – "I tell you the truth, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death." (NIV)

The "word" Jesus is referring to is the whole of Jesus' message, which when accepted brings deliverance from death. (John 5:24) The death that we will never see is the spiritual death, meaning separation from God.

John 5:24 – "I tell you the truth, anyone who hears my word and believes Him who sent me has eternal life, and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life. (NIV)

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

2 Thessalonians 1:7b-8 – This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with His powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. (NIV)

"Men may be able to dispute about God, yet may not know him. Such as know not God, and obey not the gospel of Christ, are put together (2 Thessalonians 1:8). All who rightly know anything of Christ, earnestly desire

to know more of him." - from Matthew Henry,
Commentary On the Whole Bible (Albany, OR: Sage
Software, 1995); commentary on John 8:55.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such
as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 9

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

Deuteronomy 31:6 – Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you. (NIV)

And Jesus said, "surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:20b)

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

James 5:11 - Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy. (KJV)

This translation of this verse has caused the phrase "patience of Job" to be a common part of our language. However, a more true translation of James' meaning would be "perseverance." Consider the newer translation:

James 5:11 - As you know, we consider blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy. (NIV)

The quality of Job which we should consider is the fortitude and reliance on God to endure tough times.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

"Work like it all depends on you and pray like it all depends on God." - No, that isn't scripture, but it is biblical. I heard that long ago at an Amway convention, and like many gems from that experience it has universal application that can bring you out of the despair of bad times and into the joys of the Lord's blessing. Scripture saying something similar:

Mark 9:23 - " 'If you can?' " said Jesus, "Everything is possible for him who believes."

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 10

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

Matthew 6:5 - And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. (NIV)

When we worship or witness but our true motive is our own pride and ego, our reward is stamped "paid in full" and our account at judgment will note that. - Chuck Swindol, "Beware Public Worship Ahead," Insight for Living radio program 7/23/2002.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Roman 12:12 - Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. (NIV)

A refrigerator magnet given out by the Peale Center for Christian Living, Rawling, NY (circula 1998) puts it this way, "Let your hope make you glad. Be patient in time of trouble and never stop praying."

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

Genesis 1:26 - Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, ..." (NIV)

At least some counterpart of some of God's attributes can be found in His human creations (these are called "communicable attributes"). The "image of God" includes the set of qualities that are required for the interacting with other persons, for thinking and reflecting, and for free

will. The image includes the elements that make man able to perform his function, or "telos" which is to know, love and obey God. It is God's intention that the attributes of fellowship, obedience and love similar demonstrated by Jesus should characterize man's relationship to God. It is also God's intention that humans be bound together with one another in love. Proper responses for those who bear the image of God include commitment, devotion, love, loyalty, and service to God.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 11

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

Hebrews 4:15 - For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are - yet was without sin. (NIV)

The image of God, including attributes found in us humans that allow us to perform our function to know, love and obey God, are dimmed by our sins. We should pattern ourselves after Jesus, who is the complete revelation of the image of God. He is the full image of God and He is the one and only person whose humanity was never spoiled by sinning.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Matthew 26:39 - Going a little farther, He fell with His face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will." (NIV)

We should pattern ourselves after Jesus, who is the complete revelation of the image of God. That image of God is passed on to us as attributes that allow us to perform our function of knowing, loving and obeying God. We can see the outworking of the image of God in the dedication of Jesus who made the above statement.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 9:4 - "As long as it is day, we must do the work of Him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work." (NIV)

We should pattern ourselves after Jesus, who is the complete revelation of the image of God with attributes that allow us to perform our function to know, love and obey God. We can see the outworking of the image of God in the determination of Jesus who made the above statement.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 12

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

John 15:13 - "Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." (NIV)

Jesus, the complete revelation of the image of God demonstrated the outworking of that image. That image of God is passed on to us in the attribute of love to allow us to perform our function to know, love and obey God. We can see the outworking of the image of God in the love of Jesus who made the above statement. We are to emulate the love manifested in Jesus' life and death.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Romans 8:29 - For those God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. (NIV)

For now, skip over the denominational separations related to the debates about this passage's beginning phrase and concentrate on the target of conformation. Notice that we should pattern ourselves after Jesus, who is the complete revelation of the image of God. This is the image of God in its purest sense, the forming of the likeness of Christ in us.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

2 Corinthians 3:18 - And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into His likeness, with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit. (NIV)

God will restore the damaged image to the image in which we were created, and perhaps even build upon and go beyond it. Meanwhile, we should pattern ourselves after Jesus, who is the complete revelation of the image of God. We experience full humanity only when we properly relate to God.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 13

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

Luke 24:5 - "Why do you look for the living among the dead?" (NIV)

On that first Easter morning, Mary Magdelene brought the news of the risen Christ to the disbelieving disciples. Christ **IS** risen and God brings life that death will not destroy. In Christ we can all experience life that transcends even physical death.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

John 9:6, 7 - Having said this, He spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. "Go," He told him, "wash in the pool of Siloam" (this word means Sent). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing. (NIV)

Reverend Adrian Rodgers reads symbolism into the name of this rock-cut pool plus the fact that Jesus used clay to cure the man's blindness. The clay is said to symbolize man (made from clay) and his nature of sin which blinds mankind to God's glory. The pool symbolizes Jesus, also known as the "one who has been sent" of God to be the "light of the world" and enable us to see God. We must go to Jesus who has been sent by God to wash away our sins in order to come home seeing.

(Adrian Rodgers, "Parade of Miracles." Love Worth Finding Radio Show. Bott Radio Network. KCCV, Kansas City, KS, 11 Aug. 2002)

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

Take comfort in the Lord Jesus' presence and blessing and care. Read the good news in John chapter 14:

- after going to prepare a place He will come and take His followers to be with Him (vv. 1-3);
- those who believe in Him will do greater works than He does (v. 12);
- He will do whatever they ask in His name (vv.13-14);
- He and the Father will come to those who believe (vv. 18-24);
- and He will give them His peace (v. 27).

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 14

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

John 9:39 - Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind." (NIV)

Jesus' judgment of the earthly people comes after His second coming. During His initial 35 years on this earth, Jesus did not come to judge us (John 3:17; 12:47). But, Jesus' teachings divided people, and this division is a form of judgment. Those who reject His gift end up "blind" and cannot see God.

John 3:17 - For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him. (NIV)

(Jesus said) John 12:47, 48 - As for the person who hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I have spoken will condemn him at the last day. (NIV, parenthetical note added)

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

John 9:40 - Some Pharisees who were with Him heard Him say this and asked, "What? Are we blind too?" (NIV)

The Pharisees found it incredible that anyone would consider them spiritually blind. Their claim to sight showed their complete unawareness of their spiritual blindness and need. And though they claimed to have sight, their actions were evidence of their blindness. Pray

to God asking Him to help us discern His word, especially when it is filtered through clergy that are unaware of their spiritual blindness.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

1 Corinthians 2:11 - For who among men knows the thought of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. (NIV)

1 Corinthians 2:14 - The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. (NIV)

The enlightenment does not occur without the aid of the Holy Spirit. Natural man does not accept the gifts of the Holy Spirit and finds the wisdom of God foolish. Furthermore, he is unable to understand them without the help of the Holy Spirit. Pray to God for guidance and ask for His Holy Spirit's enlightenment, then seek and you shall be shown much more.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 15

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

John 10:11 - "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. (NIV)

Jesus, as God, watches over His sheep, protects them, and even gives His life for them. God is personally concerned about those who are His. He knows each of us and each one matters to Him. God, Himself, is the shepherd (Ezekiel 34:11-16) and He knows the very hairs on the heads of those who are His (Matthew 10:30).

Please read Ezekiel 34:11-16.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

John 10:10 - The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. (NIV)

Jesus' reference to giving life relates to the concept of regeneration of which He spoke to Nicodemus in John 3. Regeneration is God's transforming of individual believers to a new spiritual vitality and direction in their lives when they accept Jesus. None of us are good enough in our natural state, so we all need to undergo a metamorphosis in order to please God. (Millard J. Erickson, Christian Theology. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House Company, 1985, pp. 943-944) Regeneration is a whole reversal of natural tendencies and involves putting to death or crucifying existent qualities. (Galations 5:24-25, Romans 6:1-11) While it may not be possible to determine the precise time of the new birth, and there may be a whole series of antecedents, it appears the new birth itself is completed in an instant. (Augustus H. Strong,

Systematic Theology. Westwood, N.J.; Revell, 1907, pp. 826-827)

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 10:9 - I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. (NIV)

Christ is the Door. And what greater security have the people of God than knowing that the Lord Jesus is between them and all their enemies? He is a door open for passage and communication. Here are plain directions on how to come into this fold; we must come in via Jesus Christ as the Door; by faith in him as the great Mediator between God and man. Note also, that we have precious promises to those that observe this direction. (Matthew Henry, Commentary On the Whole Bible (Albany, OR: Sage Software, 1995))

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 16

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

1 Corinthians 10:13 - No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you bear. (NIV)

The provision, protection and deliverance of God will enable us to endure temptation. This relates to the concept that theologians call God's providence and preservation. Jesus references it when He explains that God's children are inseparable from His love and keeping (Luke 10:27 – 30). Jesus says His sheep recognize and respond to His voice, they shall never perish, no one can snatch them out of His hand or the Father's hand. Pray to God about your temptations, then take comfort in God's providence.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

John 10:18 - No one takes it (my life) from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father. (NIV, parenthetical note added)

Inasmuch as Jesus was God, Jesus Himself had power over His own life and death. He did not have to die if He chose not to. Jesus, being both the incarnate God and sinless human did not deserve death. Therefore, His offering of His life in behalf of the human race went beyond what was required of Him and served as a genuine satisfaction for the remission of punishment for man's sins. (Anselm, Saint, Cur Deus Homo (Latin: "Why God Became Man", 1098), vol. 2, pp. 8, 10)

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 1:14 - The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. (NIV)

God became a man, an act known as "the incarnation," in order to win us to Himself. "Incarnation" is from Latin meaning "being in the flesh." The word "incarnation" is not actually found in the Bible. The idea of incarnation is also explained in Paul's discussion of Christ in Philippians 2:5-11. God could have made people with an instinct to do His will, like He made the angels; but He chose to give us the power to decide for ourselves our relationship toward our creator.

Philippians 2:5-8 - Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death - even death on a cross! (NIV)

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 17

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

John 10:20. Many of them said, "He is demon-possessed and raving mad. Why listen to him?" (NIV)

Jesus suffered this reproach which was given to make the people distance themselves from Him. Satan ruins many, by putting them out of concert with the Word and God's ordinances. Men would not be laughed out of their necessary food, yet suffer themselves thus to be laughed out of what is far more necessary. "If our zeal and earnestness in the cause of Christ, especially in the blessed work of bringing His sheep into His fold, bring upon us evil names, let us not heed it, but remember our Master was thus reproached before us." (Matthew Henry, Commentary On the Whole Bible (Albany, OR: Sage Software, 1995))

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

1 Timothy 6:12 - Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made good your confession in the presence of many witnesses. (NIV)

Our word "athlete" come from the Greek "athlesis," meaning "fight" or "strive" or "contest." Paul used this word when referring to the good fight of faith, and in reference to praying fervently (Colossians 4:12), and when teaching on competing for the "prize," the "imperishable crown" given to Christians who endure (1 Corinthians 9:24-27). Paul made it clear that disciplining one's body to lead a moral Christian life was as strenuous, or more so, as being an athlete in training. Like an athlete in training, keep "fighting the good fight."

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 3:16 and John 10:10 - For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. - The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and have it to the full (NIV)

God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life. This is the first of the four spiritual laws formulated by Bill Bright and presented in tracts delivered by the Campus Crusade For Christ. The tracts are designed to present the essence of the gospel simply and convincingly to non-Christians. Stay tuned; in my subsequent messages, I'll pass on the other three spiritual laws

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 18

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

Romans 3:23 and 6:23 - For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God - For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (NIV)

The first of the four spiritual laws, formulated by Bill Bright and presented in tracts delivered by the Campus Crusade For Christ, stated that God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life. The above verses are quoted in that tract to illustrate the second spiritual law which is that man is sinful, separated from God, and cannot experience God's plan on their own.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Romans 5:8 - But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (NIV)

1 Corinthians 15:3-6 - For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. After that He appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. (NIV)

John 14:6 - Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

The Campus Crusade For Christ distributes tract that present the essence of the gospel simply and convincingly to non-Christians as a set of four spiritual laws. The

above verses are quoted as references for the third spiritual law that Christ is God's only provision for experiencing God's love and plan.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 1:12 - Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God (NIV)

Ephesians 2:8,9 - For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and it is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast. (NIV)

Revelation 3:20 - Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me. (NIV)

These verses reflect the final law in a tract entitled "The Four Spiritual Laws," distributed by the Campus Crusade for Christ. The four spiritual laws are: (1) God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life; (2) Man is sinful and separated from God, and thus cannot experience God's plan; (3) Jesus Christ is God's only provision for experiencing God's love and plan; (4) We must individually receive Christ as Savior and Lord in order to know and experience God's plan for our lives. I recommend reading Bill Bright's book A Handbook for Christian Maturity which contains the tract in its appendix.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 19

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

John 10:28 - I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. (NIV)

Not only did Jesus come to lead us into a new life "born of the Spirit" as He explained to Nicodemus (John 3:5-8), but He gives eternal life. This process, theologically labeled "regeneration," is the process of becoming a new creation: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation: the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Corinthians 5:17, NIV) This new life extends beyond death and into an eternal fellowship with God.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Matthew 7:18 - A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. (NIV)

Martin Luther, in his pamphlet The Freedom of a Christian Man (1520), said that "good works follow and proceed from the good person," and "The following statements are therefore true: 'Good works do not make a good man, but a good man does good works; evil works do not make a wicked man, but a wicked man does evil works.' "

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 10:38 - But if I do it (what my Father does), even though you do not believe me, believe the miracles, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father. (NIV, parenthetical note added)

From Matthew Henry's Commentary On the Whole Bible
(Albany, OR: Sage Software, 1995):

Christ's works of power and mercy proclaim Him to be over all, and God blessed for evermore. So that all may know and believe He is in the Father, and the Father in Him. He whom the Father sends, the Father sanctifies. The holy God will reward and employ, only such as He makes holy. The Father was in the Son, so that by Divine power He wrought His miracles. The Son was so in the Father, that He knew the whole of His Father's mind. Although we cannot fully search out these truths, we may know and believe these declarations of Christ.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 20

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

John 6:38 - For I have come down from heaven, not to do my will, but the will of Him who sent me. (NIV)

Jesus was sanctified. Jesus emphatically states that He was set apart for His work. Jesus had a profound sense that the Father had sent Him and that He had to do the Father's work. (John 3:17) The Son was sent by the Father and the Son's work is not independent of, or in contrast to, what the Father does. (Millard J. Erickson, Christian Theology .Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House Company, 1985. p. 806)

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

In John 10:37-38, Jesus said, "Do not believe me unless I do what my Father does. But if I do it, even though you do not believe me, believe the miracles, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father." (NIV)

The underlying Greek words for "great miracles" used to record what Jesus said mean "good deeds". Although the reference includes Jesus' miracles, the Greek words refer to works in general that are fine and noble in character. The miraculous deeds were a part of Jesus' works but it was Jesus' quality of life, not the people's inability to explain His marvels, that Jesus primarily spoke of in these verses.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 11:9, 10 – "So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened." (NIV)

John 11:13 – "If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" (NIV)

The Bible mentions the salvation of "the elect" a few times. Entire dominations have split over the debate of who is elected and who is not. This Daily Bread distribution is not the forum for denominational differences, but is the place for the Good News directly from the words of Jesus. Even if the religions administered by men should seem to be correct in eliminating a soul from "the elect," Jesus gave a formula in Luke 11:5-13 for overriding any elimination and gaining salvation. If there be any such elimination it is overridden by the Holy Spirit when you persistently pray and petition for salvation.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 21

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

"I tell you: Love your enemies . . . that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. . . . Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:44-45, 48)

J. I. Packer, in his book "Knowing God," gives three principles of conduct which were laid down by Jesus in the Sermon On the Mount. The first, quoted above, is the principle of imitating the Father. We children are to show our adopted family likeness in our conduct. Jesus is stressing here, in family terms, that we should, "Be holy, for I am holy."

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Matthew 5:16 - Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

J. I. Packer, in his book "Knowing God," gives three principles of conduct for the children of God which were laid down by Jesus in the Sermon On the Mount. The first is the principle of imitating the Father. The second is the principle of glorifying the Father, referred to in the above verse. Christians must seek to behave in public in a way that brings praise to their Father in heaven.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

Mathew 6:1 - Beware of practicing your piety before men in order to be seen by them; for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

We need to be single-minded God-pleasers in our religion. Jesus reminds us that our heavenly Father will notice, and show special pleasure, when we concentrate our efforts on pleasing Him and Him alone. This is the third principle of conduct for God's adopted children given by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, according to J. I. Packer's book "Knowing God." The first two principles of conduct are: the principle of imitating the Father and the principle of glorifying the Father.

This last principle is not a contradiction of the plea to publicly give thanks. Remember: it's all about motives. Establish a personal, private, deep relationship with our LORD and live a life of thanksgiving and witness to the world.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 22

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

Isaiah 40:25 - "To whom will you compare me? Or who is my equal?" says the Holy One. (NIV)

God's question to the disillusioned rebukes wrong thoughts about the majesty of God. Most of us go astray because our thoughts of God are not great enough; we fail to reckon with the reality of His limitless wisdom and power. Because we ourselves are limited and weak, we imagine that at some points God is too. As Martin Luther told the theologian Erasmus, "Your thoughts of God are too human." We should learn to acknowledge the full majesty of our incomparable God and Savior.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Matthew 6:11, 12 – Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. (NIV)

This pattern prayer is for believers who have already been forgiven for their sins, now and forever. (Hebrews 8:12) But Jesus teaches that we must seek daily forgiveness for our daily sins in order to restore broken communion with God.

Hebrews 8:12 – For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more. (NIV – This verse in Hebrews is a quote from Jeremiah 31:34, where God promised the new covenant would come.)

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

Luke 11:8-10: I tell you, though he will not get up and give him the bread because he is his friend, yet because of the man's boldness, he will get up and give him as much as he needs. "So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened." (NIV)

The word "boldness" in verse 8 could be translated "persistence." The imperatives in verse 9 (ask, seek, and knock) and the participles in verse 10 are in the present tense: keep asking, keep seeking, keep knocking. Persistent prayer makes it apparent that our petition is important to us.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 23

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

Isaiah 40:27 - Why do you say, O Jacob, and complain, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the LORD; my cause is disregarded by my God"? (NIV)

God's question to the disillusioned rebukes our wrong thoughts about ourselves. God has not abandoned us. He never abandons anyone on whom He has set His love; nor does Christ the Good Shepherd, ever lose track of His sheep. It is false and irreverent to accuse God of forgetting or overlooking, or losing interest in, the state and needs of His children. When you wonder if God has left you high and dry, seek grace and be ashamed of yourself. Such unbelieving pessimism deeply dishonors our great God and Savior.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Ephesians 1:3 - Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. (NIV)

We believers may rejoice to know that our conversion was no accident, but an act of God which had its place in an eternal plan. The plan was God's from the beginning. Paul goes on to explain that the plan continues through the redemption and remission of sins in Christ (v. 7), and to the hope of glorification in Christ (vv. 11-12) and the gift of the Spirit in Christ to seal us as God's possession forever (vv.13-14).

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 3:14,15 - Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. (NIV)

This is an announcement at the opening of Jesus' ministry that His Messianic throne on the cross "must be done. Jesus had a profound sense of necessity concerning what He must do; the Father's plan to have His death on the cross provide the "new birth" needed to be completed. Just as Moses lifted up a bronze serpent for the people to look up to (Numbers 21:6-9), so Jesus will be lifted up on cross for the people to look up to.

Jesus Christ's death is an absolute necessity if man is to be saved. A righteous God should not pardon sin merely on the ground of the sinner's repentance. The penalty had to be paid and Christ paid the sinner's penalty. No other human being was without blemish, so no other human besides Jesus could have been the sacrificial lamb to pay the penalty.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 24

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

John 3:16 - For God so loved the world that he gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. (NIV)

The love of God is the perfection of His divine nature by which He is eternally moved to communicate Himself to us. His love is a rational and voluntary affection that has its ground in truth and holiness and its exercise in free choice. The fact that God grieves over the sins of His people (Isaiah 63:9f; Ephesians 4:30) implies His love for His people. God loves the world (John 3:16; Ephesians 2:4), His ancient people Israel (Deuteronomy 7:6-8, 13; Jeremiah 31:3) and His true children (John 14:23).

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

John 3:18 - Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. (NIV)

God does not annihilate what He has created. Eternal life is a quality of life, not merely a quantity. Death and destruction are punishment. Non-believers are not merely let off the hook to a state of lifeless non-existence, they are condemned to an eternity without God. (Matthew 25:46; Romans 2:5-10; Romans 2:12; Revelation 20:11-15)

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 3:18 - Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. (NIV)

This is the last of the four times that John says, in the first three chapters of his Gospel, that Jesus was the one and the only Son of God: "THE" Son, not "A" Son. (John 1:14, John 1:18, John 3:16 and John 3:18) He was the Son of God, or as Christian theology regularly expresses it, God the Son. John makes quite sure that his readers understand the uniqueness of Jesus. Christians often confess, "I believe in God the Father . . . and in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord . . ." – Not only is He the only begotten Son of God, He is the only begotten God.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 25

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

Revelation 4:11 – You are worthy, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being. (NIV)

God wills to impart life to His people (John 5:26) and He stands apart as independent from all others. "And He is not served by human hands, as if He needed anything, because He Himself gives all men life and breath and everything else." (Acts 17:25) God is self-existent. God does not look to any other source for His meaning and being. His very name "Yahweh" is a statement that "He is and will continue to be." God is not dependent on anyone to counsel or teach Him (Isaiah 40:14). The Lord has not needed any other being to assist Him in creation or providence (Isaiah 44:24). Thus we creatures, none of whom can make any similar such claims, are left to declare the above in our worship.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

John 5:19 - Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; He can do only what He sees His Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does." (NIV)

There is no schism, divisiveness, carnal pride, self-glorification, one-upmanship, or usurping of another's territory in the triune God. Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, do not do what they want, but what they see God doing. The persons of the Godhead have different roles, yet work together, blending into a perfect unity. Shouldn't Christians witness likewise?

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 3:36 - Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him. (NIV)

The condemnation of those who reject Jesus is a result of the continuation of the universality of sin, compounded by the rejection of God's provision for atonement. Scripture certainly teaches the universality of sin (1 Kings 8:46; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:10, 12, 23; and many more passages). This verse is one among many which teach that while the anger of God presently rests upon the sin of rebellion or rejection and those who commit it, this anger will be converted into action at some future time. The "has" eternal life is a present possession; not something the believer will only obtain later. God's wrath is a strong expression meaning that God is opposed to everything evil. God's opposition to evil is both total and permanent. A sinner cannot expect God's wrath to eventually fade away.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 26

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

John 3:16 – For God so loved the world that he gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. (NIV)

“God so loved the world” is the great truth that motivated God’s plan of salvation (1 John 4:9-10). Note that this passage does not indicate a quantity (“so much”) of God’s love, but instead a quality (“so loved”). The Greek adverb “*boutis*” is used by John to mean “manner,” “type,” or “in this way.” It is not that God loved so much that it motivated Him to give a lot, but more like God loved in such a sacrificial manner that He gave His only begotten Son. This is the supreme demonstration of love that assures us that the same love will provide everything necessary to see us all the way through eternal glory. (Romans 5:8-10)

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

John 3:19-20 – This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. (NIV)

The New Testament gives increased attention to the defeat of the forces of darkness that had relatively scant attention in the Old Testament. The increased attention to the defeat of demons in the Gospel is due to the prior revelation of the fullness of truth and grace in the coming of Jesus Christ (John 1:14) – the coming of the light clarified the works of darkness. The demise of darkness is understood in the light of God’s grace and deliverance.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 4:6 – Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour. (NIV)

This occurred around noon, in Samaria. Jesus was tired from walking all morning. Jesus, being fully man, was subject to the same physical limitations as other men. He experienced hunger (Matthew 4:2; 21:18) and thirst (John 19:28); He slept (Matthew 8:24); He was tempted (Hebrew 2:18). “Christians have in heaven a high priest with an unequalled capacity for sympathizing with them in all the dangers and sorrows and trials which come their way in life, because He Himself, by virtue of His likeness to them, was exposed to all these experiences.” (Frederick Fyvie Bruce, The Epistle to the Hebrews in New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co. 1967), p.85)

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 27

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

John 3:16 – For God so loved the world that he gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. (NIV)

The love of God is the perfection of His divine nature by which He is eternally moved to communicate Himself to us. His love is a rational and voluntary affection that has its ground in truth and holiness and its exercise in free choice. The fact that God grieves over the sins of His people (Isaiah 63:9f; Ephesians 4:30) implies His love for His people. God loves the world (John 3:16; Ephesians 2:4), His ancient people Israel (Deuteronomy 7:6-8; Jeremiah 31:3), and His true children (John 14:23).

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

1 Peter 3:18 – For Christ died for sins once and for all, the righteous and for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. (NIV)

Jesus Christ loved people so much that He laid down His life for them. He died in our stead as the true Passover lamb and was the true sin-offering. Christ died for the benefit of the sinner and in the sinner's stead. It may be argued that it is immoral for God to punish an innocent one, thus Christ's death cannot be substitutionary, but the error in this view lies in the assumption that God and Christ are two beings as distinct from each other as two human individuals. Since Christ is God incarnate, the substitute is God Himself. It is not unjust for God to pay the penalty Himself, especially given that Jesus volunteered to be the substitute.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 5:26 – For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself. (NIV)

Life belongs to God and is His gift. The Son has been given the same authority over life as the Father, for the benefit of man. As the Son of God, Jesus is said to execute all judgment (John 5:22), to have life in Himself, to give life to whom He will (John 5:21), and to give eternal life. (John 10:10)

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 28

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

John 4:23 – Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. (NIV)

Man's chief purpose is to glorify God (Ephesians 1:5,6,12,14; 1 Peter 4:11). We glorify God by worshipping Him. We glorify God by prayer and praise. And we glorify God by living a godly life (John 15:8). We are to proclaim His excellencies (1 Peter 2:9, Titus 2:10). We are to build ourselves up and "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 3:18).

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Hebrew 4:15 – For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been emptied in every way, just as we are – yet was without sin. (NIV)

There are a considerable number of didactic (directly declaratory) passages in the Bible that indicate Jesus was capable of, but did not sin. This complete lack of sin is another indication that Jesus was God.

Since Jesus is sinless, then it is evident that Christ did not die for His own sin but that He died for the sins of others. "The sufferings of Christ were not just the sympathetic sufferings of a friend, but the substitutionary sufferings of the Lamb of God for the sin of the world." (Louis Berkhof, Systematic Theology; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1953, p. 376.)

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 7:38 – Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him. (NIV)

Streams of Living Water will flow from believers. Our faith makes us a constant blessing to others; it leads us to put forth an effort in behalf of others (Mark 2:3-5); it induces perseverance in service (Matthew 15:28) and it obtains help for others (Acts 27:24f).

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 29

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

John 7:38, 39 – Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him. By this He meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified. (NIV)

Under the right circumstances even water could become unclean (Leviticus 11:33-35). Water from a spring or underground cistern was always considered clean (Leviticus 11:36). The grammatical translation of “living water” means “water that moves or flows” but theologically it means “water that can never be made unclean.” Jesus described Himself as the source of the “living water” and He provides unlimited cleansing from every kind of sin. Jesus taught that this mighty river of living water for cleansing was actually the Spirit of God.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Luke 11:23 – “He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me, scatters. (NIV)

Neutrality is impossible. The one who does not intentionally support Jesus opposes Him. Now that we know that Jesus is the incarnate God, if we fail to accept and believe, then we condemn ourselves.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 8:31 – To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. (NIV)

Discipleship is not recognized in those that experience a partial and temporary emotional acceptance of the truth of God. Emotional faith is the awakening of the soul to its personal needs and is the personal applicability of the redemption provided in Christ combined with an immediate assent to the truths of God's word. Jesus teaches that we need more than emotional faith, deeper than "the one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away." (Matthew 13:20-21, NIV)

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 30

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

John 5:17 – Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working." (NIV)

Jesus told us that His Father is always at work, even on the Sabbath, even on Sunday. God did not create the world and mankind and then move on to ignore His creation. God sustains, or maintains, the universe. Paul tells us that, "in Him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28). Numerous scriptural passages point to God's constant superintendence and preservation of His creation.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Luke 15:2 – But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them." (NIV)

Though Jesus was equal with God, He emptied Himself, took on the form of the servant, was made in the likeness of men, and humbled Himself. He came to serve. (Matthew 20:28) He who was rich, for our sakes became poor. (2 Corinthians 8:9)

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 8:31-34 – To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." They answered him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?" Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. (NIV)

Jesus is referring to a philosophical truth. The "truth" is His teachings and if we adhere to those teachings, we will be set free from sin through His provided salvation. He alludes to the fact that a sinner is a slave to sin because the sinner cannot break free by his own strength. (Romans 6:16) Sin envelopes the sinner in a demanding dependency, becoming a wicked law within. (2 Peter 2:17)

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 31

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

John 5:39 – You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me (NIV)

For many centuries God progressively made Himself known through the words of the Old Testament. He gradually made His plan for our salvation known (Colossians 2:16,17). Scripture revelation prior to Jesus' first coming pointed to and foreshadowed His coming. After His first coming Scripture magnifies and explains why He came. God's revelation of Himself progressed through time and climaxed with the coming of Jesus Christ. Jesus was not just a source of revelation, like the prophets and apostles, Jesus Himself is the radiance of God's glory and exact representation of His being (Hebrews 1:3). The Scriptures testify of Jesus and lead to the salvation He died to provide.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Luke 15:7 – I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent. (NIV)

Repentance is something in which all of heaven is supremely interested. The Scriptures place a lot of emphasis on the preaching of repentance, in both the Old and the New Testament. The biblical writers frequently describe humanity as sinful creatures in need of redemption. There are no persons who do not need to repent (Romans 3:23). Therefore, Jesus extends a universal call to repentance. "God has placed human beings at the focus of His attention, to redeem them for

Himself and to dwell with them forever.” (H. Wayne House, “Creation and Redemption: A Study of Kingdom Interplay”, Journal of Evangelical Theological Society 35 (March, 1992): p. 7)

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 6:63 – The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. (NIV)

It is through the ministry of the Holy Spirit that a person is born again (John 3:3-8), for, as Jesus said, it is the Spirit who gives life. In Titus 3:5, Paul speaks of the renewing “by the Holy Spirit.” The regenerating ministry of the Holy Spirit is closely related to His indwelling (John 14:17). Those in whom the Holy Spirit indwells belong to Christ (Romans 8:9, 11) and are guaranteed the resurrection.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 32

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

John 6:62 – What if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before! (NIV)

Jesus' ascension into heaven, witnessed by the apostles and perhaps many others, was another indication of His divinity. Although others (like Elijah) may have been taken up to heaven, Jesus went on His own power. His remarks here, in 6:62, and His claim to have descended from heaven (John 3:13) are examples of His claim to divine qualities and acts. The Book of John does not contain a narrative description of the ascension but Mark, Luke and Acts do, and John's Gospel has seven references of Jesus' predicting His ascension. Paul spoke of the ascension (Ephesians 4:8-10; Philippians 2:9; 1 Timothy 3:16) as did Peter (1 Peter 3:22) and the writer of Hebrews (4:14). The early church regarded the ascension as historical fact.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Luke 15:32 - But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found. (NIV)

Spiritual death is the separation of the soul from God. This spiritual death is the penalty that was proclaimed in Eden and has fallen upon the human race. With that penalty man lost the presence and favor of God as well as the knowledge of and desire for God. Because of this penalty man needs to be made alive from death. This return and coming alive again is a picture of a Christian conversion.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 8:26-28 – “I have much to say in judgment of you. But He who sent me is reliable, and what I have heard from Him I tell the world.” They did not understand that He was telling them about His Father. So Jesus said, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am the one I claim to be and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me.” (NIV)

Jesus claimed emphatically that His teachings are from God: that He was always His Father’s messenger. Thus, we must accept them and ascribe full divine authority to all that He taught.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 33

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

John 8:58 – "I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I AM!" (NIV)

The Greek verb used here (translated "am") relates two entities, it is a formula denoting existence and is probably alluding to the "I AM" formula by which the LORD identified himself in Exodus 3:14-15. Jesus did not say "I was" but "I AM," expressing the eternity of His being and His oneness with the Father. With this climatic statement Jesus concludes His speech that began with the related claim (in John 8:12), "I am the light of the world." With this statement Jesus claimed to be God.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Luke 15:19 - "I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men." (NIV)

In God's family, the condition felt by this prodigal son should not exist. God receives us like sons and loves us with the same steadfast affection with which He eternally loves His only begotten Son. There are no distinctions of affection in the divine family into which we have been adopted. We are all loved just as fully as Jesus is loved.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 13:3 and 5 – I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish (NIV)

Fallen humans are incapable of choosing God, so God gives grace so that they may respond to the Holy Spirit's leading. God wants humans to respond of their own free will. Thus, God enabled humans with the capacity to reject or accept Him. We humans must, out of our own free will, decide to repent from our sins. The unsaved will spend eternity without God. When we accept Jesus as our savior, out of our own decision, we have found salvation. But we saved must also, out of our own free decisions, repent from sin for the sake of our coming judgment. For the saved, we must not forget that there are degrees of punishment and degrees of reward.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 34

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

Psalm 14:1-3 – The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good. The LORD looks down from heaven on the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God. All have turned aside, they have together become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one. (NIV)

No earthly person is good enough to be an unblemished lamb to pay for our sins (Romans 3:10-12) – not even one, only God is that good. So, God Himself is the only one that could atone for our sins. The Father and the Son are one (John 10:30), so Christ's work is also the Father's. Thus, God the Father did not place the punishment upon someone other than Himself. God, as Jesus, paid the penalty for our sins as prescribed in God's law. He did not pay any ransom demanded by Satan or any person. The price was paid by the triune God in full payment of the triune God's justice.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

1 John 3:24 - Those who obey His commands live in Him, and He in them. And this is how we know that He loves us: We know it by the Spirit He gave us. (NIV)

I pray that the Holy Spirit, that is in us believers because He sent the Spirit to us, will continue to guide and direct you through the opportunities and challenges of this earthly life.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

Hebrews 7:23-25 – Now there were many of those priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office, but because Jesus lives forever, He has a permanent priesthood. Therefore He is able to save completely those who come to God through Him, because He always lives to intercede for them. (NIV)

Not only did Jesus offer intercession prayers for others at Lazarus' tomb (John 11:42), but He constantly makes intercession for us. And not only is Christ interceding at the right hand of the Father, but the Holy Spirit also intercedes for us (Romans 8:26). Thus, even when we do not know how to pray or what to pray for, prayer is being offered for us.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 35

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

Matthew 6:6 - But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. (NIV)

We should address our prayers to God, Almighty. While Scripture specifically teaches us, in many places, to address our prayers to the Father, it also has examples of addressing the Son (Acts 7:59 is one of many examples), but there is no clear indication in Scripture of prayer to the Holy Spirit. However, there is also no scriptural prohibition of prayer to the Spirit. There is mention of "fellowship of the Holy Spirit" (2 Corinthians 13:14) that some take as an implication of prayer. The Holy Spirit's primary part in our prayer, however, is that of praying in us (Romans 8:26; Jude 20). The normal manner seems to be to pray to the Father, in the name of and on the merits of the Son, in or through the Holy Spirit. Our Lord Jesus gave us an EXAMPLE of the words to use in prayer in the well-known "Lord's Prayer" found in Matthew 6:9-13.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Mark 11:25 – And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins. (NIV)

From Scripture we can glean not only example addresses of prayer but also examples of other factors involved in the method and manner of prayer, such as the posture in which to pray. However, the Scriptures do not prescribe any one particular posture for prayer and in fact the Bible illustrates many postures. Scripture has examples of prayer while standing, kneeling, lying prostrate on the

ground, lying down in bed, walking on water, sitting down, and hanging on the cross. Thus, it is not the posture of the body that is important, but the attitude of the individual. Scripture most often indicates standing or kneeling during the approaches to God.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

Ephesians 6:18 – And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. (NIV)

The Scriptures teach that we should pray always (Luke 18:1; Ephesians 6:18), but the Bible also has many examples of the practice of particular times for prayer (some are: Psalm 55:17; Daniel 6:10; Acts 3:1). These examples seem to indicate the desirability of regularity of prayer. The Scripture illustrates prayer before meals (Matthew 14:19; 1 Timothy 4:4; and many more), and for special occasions (Luke 6:12; Luke 22:39-46 and others), and in time of need (Hebrews 4:16). The Lord is available at any time to receive our prayers.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 36

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

1 Timothy 2:8 – I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing. (NIV)

Just as we should pray at all times, we should pray everywhere. Jesus taught that we should pray in secret, in the closet, away from all the disturbing elements around us (Matthew 6:6, Daniel 6:10). Scripture has examples of Jesus withdrawing for prayer in a solitary place, a desert place, or a mountain top (Mark 1:35; Matthew 14:23). Scripture also has examples of united prayer, prayer-fellowship with those who agree with us (Acts 1:14; Acts 12:5; Acts 20:36). There are also examples of prayer before the unsaved, for instance: Paul and Barnabas prayed before the rest of the prisoners (Acts 16:25), and Paul prayed before the passengers on a trip to Rome (Acts 27:35). In fact, there is no place where prayer cannot be made. Not even in our schools - our government may forbid us to **lead** a prayer in school, but we individuals in America are free to pray everywhere.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Matthew 22:11-13 – But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. "Friend," he asked, "how did you get in here without wedding clothes?" The man was speechless. Then the king told the attendants, "Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (NIV)

The king provided wedding clothes for those that were brought in off the street and from the fields, but the failure to assume the proper decorum was an insult to the king.

Decorum in prayer has been mentioned by Jesus. He taught that we should not be of a sad or gloomy countenance even when fasting, but we should anoint our heads and wash our faces. (Matthew 6:16-18) Jesus objected to prayer that was all pretense with no reality. Likewise, He taught that we must not employ meaningless repetition (Matthew 6:7). The order that is required in public assembly (1 Corinthians 14:40) applies to prayer and to the use of tongues. Orderliness and group prayer sessions are implied throughout the Book of Acts, as an example: Acts 13:1-3. Prayer is communication with God, our Father, thus, it should reflect the respect and love we have for Him

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 15:7 – If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you. (RSV)

The most important condition as to the manner of prayer is the condition of the heart of the one praying. "Abiding in Jesus" is the all-inclusive condition for prayer. To abide in Him implies freedom from known sins (Psalm 66:18; Proverbs 28:9, Isaiah 59:1), unselfishness in our requests (Romans 15:1-2; 1 Corinthians 10:24), asking according to His will (1 John 5:14), forgiveness of those who have wronged us (Matthew 6:12; Mark 11:25), asking in Christ's name (John 14:13,14; 15:16; 16:23), praying in the Spirit (Ephesians 6:18; Jude 20), asking in faith (Matthew 21:22; James 1:6-8) and earnestness and perseverance in our supplications (Luke 18:1-8; James 5:16).

Week 37

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

Hebrews 8:13 – By calling this covenant "new" He has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear. (NIV)

God promised, in Jeremiah 31:31-34, that He would establish a "new covenant" - the Latin for "New Covenant" is where we get the title "New Testament." The new covenant fulfilled and superseded the old law given on Mount Sinai ("The Law" in Exodus 20 - Exodus 24, which includes the Ten Commandments). Yes, the Ten Commandments was part of that covenant that was superceded. But although they were superceded, nine are basically still in force because the new covenant includes Jesus' teachings that restate all but the 4th commandment "Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy." Jesus explained that the "making of the way for the Lord" done by John the Baptist was the dividing line between the new and the old (Luke 16:16). Jesus summarized the new covenant in John 3:16. But the new covenant is in addition to, and does not replace the Abrahamic covenant of Genesis 17:1-8, which was a promise to Abraham.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

1 Timothy 1:17 – Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen. (NIV)

God is immortal. Only God is totally immortal (1 Timothy 6:16). Man lives in a physical body that will die, but his soul is immortal. Jesus told a parable in Luke 16:19-31 that not only demonstrates the ongoing life of man's soul after his physical death, but also has some

important implications of final, unchanging conditions.
Read the parable and reflect about "for ever and ever."

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

Mathew 25:46 – Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life. (NIV)

"Science, with its belief in the indestructibility of matter and the conservation of energy, cannot say that the Christian belief [in existence after death] is unreasonable; and philosophy, with its recognition of the inequities of life, cannot well avoid postulating a life after death, when the wrongs of this life will be righted. This possibility and necessity is converted into certainty in the Scriptures." - Henry C. Thiessen (revised by Vernon D. Doerksen), Lectures in Systematic Theology (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1981) pp. 380-381.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 38

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

Luke 16:23 – In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. (NIV)

Today's message is a little grim, but contains a necessary bit of knowledge. Jesus knew, and taught that hell was a reality. In presenting basic principles of Christianity, John Stott wrote:

"Further, if in this world we deliberately reject Jesus Christ through whom alone we may find eternal life, we will die externally in the next world. Hell is a grim and dreadful reality. Let no man deceive you. Jesus Himself spoke of it. He called it 'outer darkness' because it is an infinite separation from God who is light. It is also called in the Bible 'the second death' and the 'lake of fire', terms which describe symbolically the forfeiture of eternal life and the ghastly thirst of the soul which are involved in irrevocable banishment from God's presence." (John R. W. Stott, Basic Christianity (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1971), p. 73)

See also Matthew 8:11; Matthew 25:30 and Revelation 20:14, 15

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

John 8:44 – You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. (NIV)

Jesus' reference to the devil's activities from the beginning is a reference to the devil's activities in the account of the fall recorded in Genesis 3:1-7. This account of the fall is historical fact. In addition to Jesus, the apostles treat the account as historical (2 Corinthians 11:3; Romans 5:12-19; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22; Revelation 12:9).

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 8:44 – You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. (NIV)

Satan, the devil, does exist! A summary of the biblical references and empirical evidence that support that fact involves many pages. Jesus tells us, here, that his (the devil's) motive is murder (his revenge on God is to condemn you to an eternal death) and that his method is lying. His greatest deception is the promotion of the belief that he does not exist. A subtle tool for such a deception is the encouragement of games, folly and entertainment about him and his demons, making him a laughing matter. So, tell me: just how harmless is Halloween?

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 39

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

Luke 16:31 – He said to him, "If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead." (NIV)

Many will refuse to believe no matter what the evidence indicates. Collin Brown retells the C. S. Lewis story of a determined agnostic who finds himself in the lake of fire at the end of the world. "He doggedly continued to regard his experiences there as an illusion, looking for explanations from psychoanalysis and cerebral pathology." (Collin Brown, That You May Believe: Miracles and Faith Then and Now (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, Pub. Co., 1935), p. 35)

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

2 Thessalonians 1:9 – They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of His power (NIV)

Life's decisions have eternal consequences. Jesus told of a great chasm that no one can cross which implies the permanence of the burning punishment for the wicked (Luke 16:26). He contrasted the eternal punishment with the eternal life of the righteous (Matthew 25:46).

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

Romans 2:15,16 - They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness and their conflicting thoughts accuse or perhaps excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus. (RSV)

God knows the condition of all moral creatures and the final judgment will only be a revelation of the righteous judgment of God that does not require evidence or testimony. Our own memory and conscience are preparation and show our character justifying the judgment. Strong's theology textbook say, "The object of the final judgment is not the ascertainment but the manifestation, of character, and the assignment of outward conditions corresponding to it." (Augustus H. Strong, Systematic Theology (Westwood, NJ:Revell, 1907), p. 1025)

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 40

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

Luke 6:13-15 – When morning came, He called His disciples to Him and chose twelve of them, whom He also designated apostles: Simon (whom He named Peter), his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot, Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor. (NIV)

The Bible frequently mentions Jesus telling parables or explaining things to His disciples. These were a group of men who regularly followed and came to hear Jesus and were committed to His teachings. These disciples were more than just the twelve. At least 72 men were included in the group of disciples when Jesus sent them out on an evangelistic campaign (Luke 10:1, 17). Later, 120 believers waited and worshipped in Jerusalem following His ascension (Acts 1:15). From this large group of disciples, Jesus chose twelve men to be His apostles. An apostle is one with a title meaning "ones sent on a special commission." Later the title became reserved for those personally taught by Jesus and personally commissioned by Jesus and thus, reserved for the original twelve named above, minus Judas Iscariot, plus Saul (Paul). We are called to be disciples (Matthew 28:19).

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Luke 17:5 – The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" (NIV)

The apostles asked Jesus to increase their faith but there is both a divine and a human side of faith. Jesus is "the author and the perfecter of faith" (Hebrews 12:2). Faith is a gift of God (Romans 12:3; 2 Peter 1:1). Faith is

sovereignly given by the Spirit of God (1Corinthians 12:9; Galatians 5:22). The spoken and the preached word of God produce faith (Romans 10:17; Acts 4:4). Prayer is also a means of faith (Luke 22:32). The exercise of the faith we have will be a means whereby our faith will grow (Matthew 25:29).

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

Luke 17:24, 25 – For the Son of Man in His day will be like the lightning, which flashes and lights up the sky from one end to the other. But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. (NIV)

Many theologians make the statement that it would be impossible for God to just forgive men, therefore someone had to pay for their sins. However, the truth of the matter is that there is nothing impossible for God Almighty and it is incorrect for us to set any sort of limitations on Him. But God is just and righteous, and in His righteousness He does extract a penalty for sins. From the beginning, He established a pattern of punishment and set sacrifices to be paid for sins in "The Law". God does not pardon a sinner merely on the ground of the sinner's repentance; again, in His righteousness and justice, God exacts a penalty for sin. Christ paid the penalty for our sins (Romans 3:24-26). From the standpoint of God's righteous penalty, the death of Christ was a necessity (Acts 17:3).

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 41

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

Luke 10:9, 10 – Would he thank the servant because he did what he was told to do? So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, "We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty." (NIV)

Jesus explained that there is no absolute entitlement to reward. God has decreed to reward some (Isaiah 62:11; Matthew 6:4), but God is under no obligation to reward even the most perfect and constant observance of His commandments. In other words, God is entitled to absolute obedience in all things and at all times, but in His great goodness and grace, He has decreed to reward those of His children who serve Him.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Hebrews 2:14-17 – Since the children have flesh and blood, He too shared in their humanity so that by His death He might destroy him who holds the power of death - that is, the devil - and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. For surely it is not the angels He helps, but Abraham's descendants. For this reason He had to be made like His brothers in every way, in order that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that He might make atonement for the sins of the people. (NIV)

Christ was born into this world for this very purpose. God did not cruelly appoint Jesus at random to suffer for our sins. No mortal being is good enough to be a sacrificial lamb for our sins. So God came to earth himself, in the form of Jesus, to pay the necessary penalty for our sins.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

Luke 10:3, 4 – So watch yourselves. If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him. If he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times comes back to you and says, “I repent,” forgive him. (NIV)

The number seven had a significant meaning in the Hebrew culture. The number seven implied completeness or entirety. Jesus expected complete and unending forgiveness. In Matthew 18:22 Jesus said we must forgive “seventy times seven” and He then went on to tell a parable outlining the penalty for a lack of forgiveness (Matthew 18:23-35). Jesus illustrated that unwillingness to forgive can have eternal consequences.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 42

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

Psalm 19:1 – The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands. (NIV)

King David wrote that about 3,000 years ago and it is used as an introduction in a sermon presented in the 12th book of the "Left Behind" series that depicts a scene in the future. The sermon continues, "My king is a sovereign king. No means of measure can define His limitless love. No far-seeing telescope can bring into visibility the coastline of His shoreless supply. No barrier can hinder Him from pouring out His blessings. He's enduringly strong. He's entirely sincere. He's eternally steadfast. He's immortally graceful. He's infinitely powerful. He's impartially merciful. Do you know Him?"

- Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins, "Glorious Appearing: The End of Days" (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2004), pp. 10-11

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Luke 17:23, 24 – Men will tell you, "There he is!" or "Here he is!" Do not go running off after them. For the Son of Man in His day will be like the lightning, which flashes and lights up the sky from one end to the other. (NIV)

Do not leave your work in order to pursue predictions of Christ's second advent. If you hear that He has come and feel you should go see Him, then it is not Him. If there is any doubt at all, or if He arrived and you did not know it, then it wasn't Him. We believers will know without a doubt (Matthew 24:30; Luke 21:27-28; Revelation 1:7) and His coming will be like lightening: sudden, unexpected and very public.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

Luke 9:24 – "For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it." (NIV)

No other saying of Jesus is given as much emphasis as this one: it is found in every gospel and in two Gospels it is found more than once. This saying is found in Luke 9:24; Luke 14:26-27; Luke 17:33; Matthew 10:38-39; Matthew 16:24-25; Mark 8:34-35; and John 12:25.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 43

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

Luke 17:34. I tell you, on that night two people will be in one bed; one will be taken and the other left. (NIV)

Jesus is saying that one could be taken to one place and the other to the opposite. One could be taken to the kingdom, salvation, reward and blessing or to condemnation and destruction. No matter how close the two may be in life, they have no guarantee of the same eternal destiny.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Luke 18: 7 – I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it. (NIV)

A little child is teachable, trustful, free from mental pride, unsophisticated, and loving - unlike the pompous Pharisee in the parable immediately preceding this teaching. "Like a little child" means with total dependence, full trust, unpretentious, frank openness and complete sincerity. The kingdom of God belongs to those who, like little children, are prepared to receive the kingdom as a gift of God. The kingdom must be received with the usual openness and receptivity of children; it cannot be achieved by human effort. It may be entered only by those who know they are helpless, without claim or merit.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

Luke 18:24 – Jesus looked at him and said, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! (NIV)

The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is found only in the Gospel of Matthew, where it occurs 33 times. Mark and Luke refer to the "kingdom of God" while Matthew only uses the phrase "kingdom of God" four times. The "kingdom of heaven/God" in the preaching of Jesus is the reign of God that He brings about through Jesus Christ – i.e., the establishment of God's rule in the hearts and lives of the people, the overcoming of all the forces of evil, the removal from the world of all the consequences of sin (including death and all that diminishes life), and the creation of a new order of righteousness and peace

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 44

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

Luke 18:1 – Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. (NIV)

The parable goes on through verse eight to teach that we should always pray. Beginning with the conversations with God in the beginning of the Old Testament, throughout the Old Testament and continuing throughout the New Testament, Scripture indicates that prayer is not just a privilege but a command. Note especially God's words to Solomon in the verse below.

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

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Luke 18:13 – But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, "God, have mercy on me, a sinner." (NIV)

In this very familiar parable about the tax collector with the prayer that is more acceptable than the proud Pharisee, there is a common unfortunate selection of English words. Actually the Greek words originally used to record this sinner's prayer were not really for "mercy" but for propitiation. Propitiation is the term used to mean appeasement. The sin is covered, removed and appeased by Christ's death and thus, God's wrath is satisfied. God set Christ forth as public propitiation for our sins (Romans 3:25; Hebrews 2:17; 1 John 2:2; 1 John 4:10). The tax

collector's prayer was literally, "God be propitious to me, the sinner."

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

Luke 18:19 – "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good - except God alone. (NIV)

Jesus was not denying His own goodness. Jesus was forcing the man to recognize that his only hope was in total reliance on God, who alone can give eternal life. Jesus may also have been encouraging the man to consider the full identity and nature of the One he was addressing.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 45

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

Matthew 20:19,20 – Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. (NIV)

I receive emails that encouraged me to mail to every one I know the messages against those that would block any mention of God and ban public prayers. But I will not broadcast any chain correspondences, no matter how good their intention or message. I will, however, now share this personal belief: As God desires, I am opposed to evil. But God does not instruct me to fight all evils, only the ones within me. Scriptures say that evil will always exist until He comes back to personally dispose of it and sit on His white throne. Scripture says I am to establish my own personal relationship with Him and follow Him and not busy myself judging others or forcing my views about Him on others. My commission is to make disciples. Disciples learn because they want to, not because I force them to or brow beat them into it. Disciples believe and follow whom they believe. To "make disciples" means to give them Daily Bread and teach them. Disciples don't need emails from me telling them how wrong it is to end prayers.

P.S. I do, however, appreciate the emails. Although I won't send them out, I do agree with the underlying current of resentment and disappointment about the bans.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Matthew 6:6 - But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father who is unseen. (NIV)

But -

Psalm 105:1 - Give thanks to the LORD, call on His name; make known among the nations what He has done. (NIV)

When communicating with God, keep it private, just between you and your Father. But when giving thanks to God, let the world know. Exalt him before everyone. Your praising might be a witness to a non-believer. It might give you more motivation to draw nearer to Him. Abraham Lincoln proclaimed the third Thursday in November as a national day of thanksgiving, while the Bible exhorts us to constantly thank and give praise to God. Don't just be thankful - GIVE thanks.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

Mark 16:15 – He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach to gospel to all creation.” (NIV)

Make disciples by helping people to see Him. A Catholic saint, Francis of Assisi, said to "...share the Good News always...use words if necessary.”

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 46

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

Acts 3:18 – But this is how God fulfilled what He had foretold through all the prophets, saying that His Christ would suffer. (NIV)

Within the Old Testament there are a large number of prophecies about the Messiah to come. While some are ambiguous, more than four dozen of those prophecies are commonly recognized. The odds against any one person fulfilling all 48 such prophecies involves a number so large that we cannot fathom it. The odds for fulfilling just 8 have been figured at one in one hundred million billion which is a number millions of times greater than the total number of people on the earth. Yet for each and every prophecy there is the fact that one person, Jesus of Nazareth, fulfilled them all. Jesus is the promised Messiah, the Christ.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

John 20:30, 31 – Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name. (NIV)

Jesus performed miracles as another proof of His divinity and Messiahship. John recorded some of them in his Gospel so that we would believe. John's evangelistic purpose was to bring about faith that leads to life. Read, then re-read the Gospel According to John and every now and then, read it again. Believe and have life in His name.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 11:25, 26 – Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" (NIV)

This is perhaps Jesus' most emphatic statement indicating that He has power over life and death. The Jews knew that only God has the power to kill and make people alive (Deuteronomy 32:39; 1 Samuel 2:6). Yet Jesus claimed this power for Himself (John 5:21). Jesus also demonstrated His power by raising dead people. There are four recorded raisings 1) the raising of Jairus' daughter in chapter 9 of Matthew; 2) the raising of the widow's son in chapter 7 of Luke; 3) the raising of Lazarus in chapter 11 of John; 4) His own resurrection recorded in all the Gospels.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 47

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

John 11:26 – and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this? (NIV)

These are true words spoken by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. The Bible clearly and unequivocally teaches that that Christ died for all. (1 Timothy 2:6; 4:10; Hebrews 2:9; 1 John 2:2; 4:14) God does not desire "for any to perish but for all to come to repentance" (1 Peter 3:39; Ezekiel 18:32). Here is a universal invitation to salvation to all, to "whoever" believes. Jesus also repeated this in the preamble to the well know John 3:16.

John 3:14, 15 – Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life. (NIV)

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

John 11:25, 26 – Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" (NIV)

Jesus conveys life to believers so that death will never triumph over them (1 Corinthians 15:56, 57). Believers may die physically but, since they have eternal life, then physical death is not our ultimate end.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 12:44-46 – Then Jesus cried out, "When an man believes in me, he does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me. When he looks at me, he sees the one who sent me. I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness."
(NIV)

Jesus shouted these words to the crowd during His last public message. Once again, He proclaimed His ministry to each and every one, to ALL "who so ever" believe.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 48

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

John 14:6 – Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (NIV)

One of the most striking features of the teaching of Jesus is that He constantly talks about Himself. The self-centeredness of the teachings of Jesus sets Him apart from other religious teachers. While others are pointing to "that" as a truth, Jesus is self-effacing and self-advancing saying, "I am the truth; follow me." None of the founders of other ethnic religions dared to say the same thing. (John R. W. Stott, Basic Christianity (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1971), p. 23

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

John 18:38 – "What is truth?" Pilate asked. With this he went out again to the Jews and said, "I find no basis for a charge against Him." (NIV)

What is truth? Hank Hanegraaff, known as "The Bible Answer Man," says that the truth is "the Bible is divine rather than human in origin, that Jesus Christ is God in human flesh, and amid the religions of the ancient world, Christianity is demonstrably unique." (Hank Hanegraaff and Paul L. Maier, The DaVinci Code: Fact or Fiction (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2004), p. 43)

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

Acts 2:21 – And every one who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. (NIV)

God's words to Joel (Joel 2:32) were quoted by Peter in his Pentecost sermon. Once again affirming that "whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (Jesus' own words in John 3:16 (KJV))

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 49

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

John 11:3 – So the sisters sent word to Jesus, "Lord, the one you love is sick." (NIV)

The Incarnate Jesus was not only God who came to earth, He was also truly human. Being a true human being, He was also fully and genuinely human in the psychological sense. This is seen in the fact that Scripture attributes to Him the same sort of emotional and intellectual qualities that are found in other men. He thought, reasoned, felt and loved. (See also John 11:33; 13:23; 15:11; 17:13; Mark 3:5; 10:14; 10:21; Matthew 9:36; 14:14; 15:32; 20:34; 26:37)

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

John 12:27 – Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? "Father, save me from this hour"? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. (NIV)

Jesus was about to face a fearsome, awful, gruesome, painful death that would have a normal man trembling. But Jesus was God incarnate, He knew of its necessity and its eventual glorification. But Jesus was also a human, so He was troubled by the upcoming events.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 12:28 – "Father, glorify your name!" Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again." (NIV)

God is a transcendent being, that is: He is outside our sensory experience. God is unlimited in His knowledge and power; He is not subject to the confines of space and time. Consequently, He condescends to reveal Himself to us in human languages and human categories of thought and action that we mere humans can comprehend. His revelations come from the Bible, come in dreams, and come in miracles. But on rare occasions He has used extraordinary means such as direct speech and the incarnation of Jesus.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 50

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

Matthew 16:16 – Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God." (NIV)

The Greek word used here is the word for the "Christ" or the "Messiah." "Christ" actually translates to "The Anointed One" and the equivalent Old Testament word is "Messiah" which is used of anyone who is anointed with the holy oil, such as the priests and kings of Israel. The word carries the idea of being chosen by God and consecrated to His service to the point of being endowed with His power to accomplish the assigned task. Toward the end of the Old Testament the word assumed the special meaning of the ideal king anointed and empowered by God to rescue His people from their enemies and establish His righteous kingdom. (Daniel 9:25-26) Jesus seldom used the word to describe Himself, probably because the word took on a political and national nature during His time on earth.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Matthew 7:24 – Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. (NIV)

Jesus said believing in Him was the same as believing in God the Father (John 12:44) and seeing Him was seeing God the Father (John 12:45) and He spoke with the authority of God because He was quoting God the Father (John 12:49). Jesus' teachings are from God and His words carry all the authority of God's words (John 12:50), therefore, we should hear them and put them into practice.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 13:1 – It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, He now showed them the full extent of His love. (NIV)

The love of Christ is so great that it surpasses knowledge (Ephesians 3:19). Jesus' love goes out, in the first place, toward God the Father (John 14:31). Jesus also loved the Scriptures and people. He loved the rich young ruler (Mark 10:21), tax-gatherers and sinners (Matthew 11:19) and the lost (Romans 5:8). He loved His disciples as much as the Father loved Him (John 15:9). More particularly, He loves us enough to do what it took to release us from our sins (John 10:11; 15:13; Revelation 1:5; Ephesians 5:2, 25; Romans 8:37-39).

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 51

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

John 1:14 – The Word was made flesh and made His dwelling among us.

Mankind cannot possibly meet the requirements for the blood sacrifice needed to atone for their sins. So God took care of it Himself. He came to earth for that purpose, to be our Messiah. He came in the form of a newly born human. We Christians celebrate His coming every year on December 25th. Have a blessed and merry Christmas.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

Luke 2:11 – For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. (KJV)

Jesus was not God because he was born of a virgin. He was born of a virgin because He was God. I hope that your celebration of our savior's first coming to earth is blessed and merry.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

Acts 2:32 – God has raised this Jesus to life, that He was not abandoned to the grave, nor did His body see decay. (NIV)

...

Acts 2:36 – Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ. (NIV)

To us Christians, the annual celebration of the day we call “Easter” marks the pivotal point in our faith. The fact that

the Lord arose after death, exactly as the Old Testament predicted, was a large proof of Christ's being the Messiah and of God's plan for our salvation. Annually we celebrate the birth of Jesus at "Christmas" to mark God's coming to earth and growing to teach us the Easter lesson.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Week 52

Daily Bread for Mon & Tues

John 13:35 – By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another. (NIV)

In this commandment Jesus gave us specific directives regarding our conduct as His representatives and He tells us of the “identification marker” in our conduct. The world will recognize us NOT by the cleverness of our speech or the depth of our knowledge or the brilliance of our theological arguments, but rather, by the love we demonstrate for one another as believers.

Daily Bread for Wed & Thurs

2 Timothy 3:16,17 - All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (NIV)

Deuteronomy 4:29 - But if from there you seek the LORD your God, you will find Him if you look for Him with all your heart and with all your soul. (NIV)

Matthew 7:7 - Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. (NIV)

Whenever one is seeking the knowledge of God's Word, one should pray to God to open his ears and mind to the leading and council of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit can and will help every believer to properly interpret and understand the Word of God and His continuing work in the world. Although the Holy Spirit will lead us into all truth, this requires work on our part as well – we must read carefully, and prayerfully study the Bible under His

guidance. God never intended the Bible to be a difficult book for His people to understand.

Note: in the introduction to my book on the study of the Gospel of John I wrote down my 6 basic rules of hermeneutics, the science and art of determining the meaning of Biblical text. That takes about a full page of text (too large for a DB email), but if anyone wants to see the rules, send me an email and I'll forward the page.

Daily Bread for Fri & Sat

John 12:25 – The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. (NIV)

To love one's life here and now – to concentrate on one's own success – is to lose the ultimate success. One must cease to make self the object of life and all actions in order to obtain eternal life. (Mark 8:34-37) Love for God must be such that all other loves are, by comparison, hatred. Jesus requires a love for Himself that is greater than the love one might have for his own family (Luke 14:26).

But what if one is not sure his love for Jesus measures up to that degree? Then, remember, "as everyone knows, love grows." Just as love grows with maturity in a marriage between a man and a woman, so it will grow in your relationship with Jesus if you tend to it as you would your marriage. Become a disciple, study, seek the Lord and your love for Him will grow.

On Sunday seek nourishment from other sources such as church worship or a Bible study.

Reader responses to Intra-Denominational Christian Daily Bread:

Dr. Mike: What a great message! Somedays here at work are so difficult, but you are so right. Thanks for the encouragement and keep the messages coming. It is through you that God is talking to me. I love it.

Nice job on one of those touchy subjects. I'm sure the Spirit was working in you when you wrote it.

Good morning Dr. Mike: Wow! I enjoyed your message today. Thanks for enriching my faith.

Dr. Mike: Good! Good! Good! I have had to learn this often and still sometimes forget who is in charge.

Dr. Mike: This is oh so true. Thank you.

