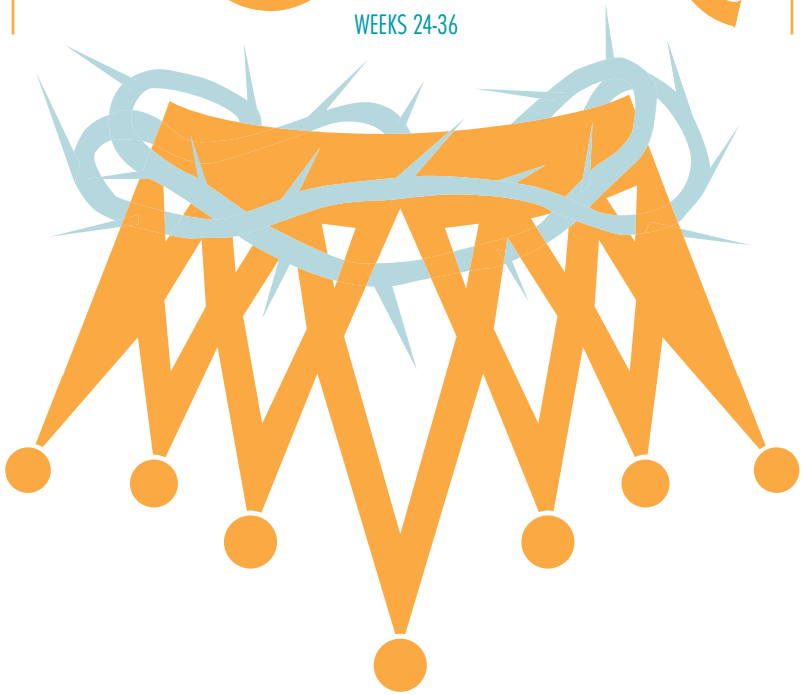


◆ **GOD** *And* **THE** ◆
MESSIAH

WEEKS 24-36



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BOOK

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to let us know you're reading along,
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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Part 3 of the Love This Book journal.

This year we'll take a journey through the entire story of scripture. This journal is designed to be our companion.

When we think of journaling, we might think of an English class project from years ago, or an empty notebook waiting to be filled with thoughts, dreams or random ponderings. This scripture journal is a bit different.

Each week, we'll focus on a set of scripture passages together. Once we've spent time reading God's Word, we can then reflect on what God is speaking into our lives. Taking the time to write our reflections can help us capture our thoughts and emotions. As these authors put it...

"As we journal [on God's Word] we pray to God, we ask ourselves probing questions, we think through issues, we put on paper the 'stuff' tumbling about in our heads. We become more connected with God, ourselves, and ultimately with others."

—Mindy & Jeff Caliguire, Write for your Soul: The Whys and Hows of Journaling

HOW TO USE THIS JOURNAL

Each week, you'll find four pages that contain the following sections:

Section 1: SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

In the first section, we'll give you an overview of the week's readings and you'll have space to read, reflect and respond to a set of Bible passages. Feel free to use this in any way that helps you connect with God. Perhaps you'll want to read all the passages in one day and reflect on those passages the next day. Or you could read one passage each day, reflecting and responding along the way.

READ: For each week, there are passages listed for each day (5x week). Begin by reading through the passage for that day. As you read, take notes about the words or phrases that stand out to you.

REFLECT: What main theme(s) is highlighted in the passage? What questions come to your mind? What insights do you have into God, His character or your own life as you reflect on this passage?

RESPOND: Thinking back over the passage, where do you sense God drawing your attention? Can you identify action steps to take in response? What can you offer back to God in prayer as a response to this passage? Take time to pray.

Section 2: PSALM

The Psalms are to be used for a time of prayer throughout each week. Sometimes they go along with the other readings, but often they're simply psalms that speak of God's character and the response of His people to who God is and what He has done. In this section, feel free to doodle, color, highlight or underline. Experiment—and see what helps you to connect with God!

"The Psalms are poetry and the Psalms are prayer... They are not provided to teach us about God, but to train us in responding to Him. We don't learn the Psalms until we are praying them."

—Eugene Peterson, *Answering God: The Psalms as Tools for Prayer*

Section 3: REVIEW

After the Scripture passages and Psalm pages, you'll find a third page with three questions that will prompt you to reflect on the readings for the past week. Take time to respond to these questions. Give yourself time to think over all the passages you've read for the week. What are the main themes God has impressed upon you in His Word?

Section 4: SERMON NOTES

Finally, we included a page for you to wrap up your week with sermon notes as you make your way through the Love This Book journey. Please consider bringing your journal with you to church each week!

We believe that this will be a useful tool to help you engage and grow as you read God's Word and as we commit as a church to Love This Book.

—Craig Gartland
Pastor of Spiritual Formation
Blackhawk Church

BIBLE READING

GOD *And* THE MESSIAH

Week 24

DANIEL 1-2; DANIEL 5-6; DANIEL 7-8; LUKE 1; PSALM 130

Overview: We'll start this week providing background for the New Testament, beginning in Babylon and moving into Rome. We'll look at the prayers of Zechariah and Mary, celebrating that God will revisit His people. We will use these two texts to look at the major theme of God's ultimate control, despite surface circumstances. This theme is demonstrated in the story of Daniel, a Jewish exile who rises to counsel the king. In his dreams, we see history through the lens of the coming kingdom of God.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

PSALM of THE *Week*

PSALM 130

1 Out of the depths I cry to you, LORD;

2 Lord, hear my voice.

Let your ears be attentive
to my cry for mercy.

3 If you, LORD, kept a record of sins,
Lord, who could stand?

4 But with you there is forgiveness,
so that we can, with reverence, serve you.

5 I wait for the LORD, my whole being waits,
and in his word I put my hope.

Review OF WEEK 24:

How does Daniel's vision in chapter seven foreshadow the coming of Jesus (son of man)? How is His reign and kingdom described?

Mary and Zechariah (Luke 1) offer up prayers in response to the news of the coming savior (Jesus). How do their words recount God's plan and response throughout history? What are their hopes and expectations?

Psalm 130 is a prayer for mercy. Where does the psalmist find hope and assurance? In light of God's redemptive plan through Jesus, how can you make this prayer your own?

MESSAGE NOTES
NEW TESTAMENT BACKGROUND

BIBLE READING

GOD *And* THE MESSIAH

Week 25

LUKE 1-2; MATTHEW 1-2; HOSEA 11-14; EXODUS 1-2; PSALM 46

Overview: It's Christmas in July! The first two chapters of Luke and Matthew each provide us a distinct look at the birth of Jesus. And then we will look back to Hosea to trace the narrative arc of the coming of the King. This contextual approach shows us what Matthew wants his audience to be reminded of from the prophet Hosea: that God loves them and invites them to turn to Him and away from their sin. The coming of Jesus also hearkens back to the Exodus, reminding us of the ongoing promise of the Kingdom's restoration, the promise that God saves and we are called to respond.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

PSALM *of THE Week*

PSALM 46

- 1 God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.
- 2 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,
- 3 though its waters roar and foam
and the mountains quake with their surging.
- 4 There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy place where the Most High dwells.
- 5 God is within her, she will not fall;
God will help her at break of day.
- 6 Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall;
he lifts his voice, the earth melts.
- 7 The LORD Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Review OF WEEK 25:

Reading the story of Jesus' birth with fresh eyes, what strikes you as expected? Unexpected? In reading it alongside the birth narrative of Moses (Exodus 1-2), what comparisons/contrasts do you find?

How are the themes of God's plan, resistance, response and promise highlighted in Hosea 11-14? In what ways do the words of this prophet foreshadow God's redemptive plan through Jesus?

Psalm 46 speaks of God being our refuge and strength and that He will be exalted on the earth. How is this ultimately brought to completion in Jesus? What encouragement does this bring you?

MESSAGE NOTES
THE BIRTH OF JESUS

BIBLE READING

GOD *And* THE MESSIAH

Week 26

JOHN 5-7; JOHN 8:12-10:42; 1 JOHN 1-3; 1 JOHN 4-5; PSALM 40

Overview: This week's readings give us a unique look at a collection of stories that appear only in the Gospel of John. Beyond that, they color the way we encounter the book of 1 John, a book that calls us to test ourselves as followers of Christ. In this book, true believers receive assurance of their salvation as they move toward obedience, love and right thinking, not only about who Jesus is but also about what that means for us.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

PSALM of THE Week

PSALM 40

4 Blessed is the one
who trusts in the LORD,
who does not look to the proud,
to those who turn aside to false gods.

5 Many, LORD my God,
are the wonders you have done,
the things you planned for us.
None can compare with you;
were I to speak and tell of your deeds,
they would be too many to declare.

Review OF WEEK 26:

What characterizes Jesus' teaching and ministry in these chapters - which are unique to the Gospel of John? What does Jesus want people to understand about His identity and being His disciple? What resistance does He face?

What connections do you find between 1 John and the Gospel of John readings? How is the message of 1 John - with its call to obedience, love (mentioned 43 times) and right thinking - both a challenge and encouragement to you?

Psalm 40 is a cry to the Lord for help in time of trouble. What characterizes this psalm? What challenges do you face in which you can make this psalm your own prayer?

MESSAGE NOTES
THE MINISTRY OF JESUS

BIBLE READING

GOD *And* THE MESSIAH

Week 27

MARK 1:1-13, MATTHEW 3:1-4:11; LUKE 3:1-4:13, JOHN 1:19-34; ISAIAH 40;
DEUTERONOMY 1-2, 6; PSALM 143

Overview: Our readings in the New Testament provide a twist on the Old Testament stories of the Israelites' exodus. While the first return from the Babylonian exile was incomplete, all four Gospels confirm the true return of the people from exile, with Jesus's baptism being a fulfillment of Isaiah 40. John the Baptist offers a new and symbolic way for the people of God to enter the Promised Land, with Jesus at the center of that hope. Not only do we see Jesus' baptism but also His forty days in the wilderness, reminding us of the forty years of wandering. This time, however, Jesus Himself is the new Israel.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

PSALM *of THE Week*

PSALM 143

6 I spread out my hands to you;
I thirst for you like a parched land.

7 Answer me quickly, LORD;
my spirit fails.

Do not hide your face from me
or I will be like those who go down to the pit.

8 Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love,
for I have put my trust in you.

Show me the way I should go,
for to you I entrust my life.

9 Rescue me from my enemies, LORD,
for I hide myself in you.

10 Teach me to do your will,
for you are my God;
may your good Spirit
lead me on level ground.

Review OF WEEK 27:

How are the words and actions of John the Baptist a fulfillment of Isaiah 40? How did he understand himself and his ministry in relationship to Jesus?

Jesus' temptation in the desert for 40 days echoes the 40 years of Israel in the desert. How does Jesus face His temptations? What might be the significance of His quoting from Deuteronomy?

The words of Psalm 143 are a prayer from someone facing challenges and distress. In the areas of your life where this is true for you, how can you make this psalm your own prayer?

MESSAGE NOTES
JESUS' BAPTISM

BIBLE READING

GOD *And* THE MESSIAH

Week 28

MARK 1, MATTHEW 4; LUKE 4, ISAIAH 58, 61; JOHN 3-4; EPHESIANS 1-3; PSALM 145

Overview: This week we see Jesus embody His kingdom's ideals. The Israelites are looking for a kingdom but the kingdom Jesus proclaims deviates from their expectations. He proclaims the Kingdom of God, one not based on self-distinction but on ethnic inclusion. Jesus models this to his audience, and to us as readers, in His treatment of the Samaritan woman, which we read in contrast with the actions of the Pharisee. He offers an invitation into a new life, a kingdom of heart transformation rather than legal observation, in both the text and our world today.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

PSALM *of THE Week*

PSALM 145

- 3 Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise;
his greatness no one can fathom.
- 4 One generation commends your works to another;
they tell of your mighty acts.
- 5 They speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty—
and I will meditate on your wonderful works.
- 6 They tell of the power of your awesome works—
and I will proclaim your great deeds.
- 7 They celebrate your abundant goodness
and joyfully sing of your righteousness.
- 8 The LORD is gracious and compassionate,
slow to anger and rich in love.

Review OF WEEK 28:

In the beginning of the gospels, Jesus proclaims the “good news” as the coming of the kingdom of God. What is it? How does Jesus’ quoting of Isaiah 61 in Luke 4 help shed light?

As you read John 3-4 what characterizes Jesus’ teaching and ministry? Do you think it was what was expected? Why or why not? As you read Paul in Ephesians 1-3, what does he emphasize about the “good news”?

Psalm 145 is a Psalm of praise to God. For what is the psalmist thankful? Coupled with Paul’s prayers in Ephesians 3, take time to make these prayers your own.

MESSAGE NOTES

PROCLAMATION OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

BIBLE READING

GOD *And* THE MESSIAH

Week 29

MATTHEW 5-7; JAMES 1-3; JAMES 4-5; PROVERBS 1-4; PSALM 73

Overview: This week's reading of the Sermon on the Mount shows us the superiority of Jesus, a prophet a lot like Moses, but even better. We meet Jesus as the new lawgiver, building on and improving the Torah. The book of James and our chapters from Proverbs then echo these moral teachings, giving us strong instruction and high calling as we seek to follow Christ.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

PSALM of THE *Week*

PSALM 73

- 23 Yet I am always with you;
you hold me by my right hand.
- 24 You guide me with your counsel,
and afterward you will take me into glory.
- 25 Whom have I in heaven but you?
And earth has nothing I desire besides you.
- 26 My flesh and my heart may fail,
but God is the strength of my heart
and my portion forever.

Review OF WEEK 29:

In Matthew 5-7, Jesus delivers what is referred to as the Sermon on the Mount. In what ways is this a new law? How does it define the values and characteristics of the kingdom of God?

The theme of James is, "faith without action is no faith at all." How do we prevent this from becoming legalism - doing good to earn God's favor? Like Proverbs, James focuses on the need for wisdom. How are we to attain that?

Psalms 73 is an honest prayer confessing envy of those who seem to be prospering without God. Where does the psalmist find hope and strength? Can we also pray, "Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire beside you."

MESSAGE NOTES
JESUS AS THE NEW LAWGIVER

BIBLE READING

GOD *And* THE MESSIAH

Week 30

LUKE 5-6; MARK 3:13-34, MATTHEW 10, JOHN 1:35-2:12; EPHESIANS 4-6;
REVELATION 4-5, 7; PSALM 111

Overview: Today, and even more so in the time of the Jews, primary allegiance is pledged to the family unit. However, Jesus shook this up a bit. Our readings focus on the new community of followers of Christ. Jesus calls for self-identification with this community to take precedence over both family and nation. Our readings reflect this calling, with Jesus considering His followers “my mother and my brothers,” and Revelation revealing a new and better nation, one of a great multitude from every people, tribe, tongue and nation.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

PSALM *of THE Week*

PSALM 111

- 7 The works of his hands are faithful and just;
all his precepts are trustworthy.
- 8 They are established for ever and ever,
enacted in faithfulness and uprightness.
- 9 He provided redemption for his people;
he ordained his covenant forever—
holy and awesome is his name.
- 10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;
all who follow his precepts have good understanding.
To him belongs eternal praise.

Review OF WEEK 30:

In these Gospel chapters, we read about the calling of Jesus' disciples. What kind of people was Jesus looking for as His disciples? What did He want them to understand about following Him and His ministry?

In Ephesians and Revelation, we get a bigger perspective on what it means to follow Jesus and His ultimate identity. How does this perspective both challenge and encourage you?

Psalm 111 is a song or prayer of praise for God's unfailing goodness and faithfulness - into eternity. What encouragement does this bring you as you make this psalm your own prayer?

MESSAGE NOTES
A NEW ISRAEL

BIBLE READING

GOD *And* THE MESSIAH

Week 31

MARK 4:1-34, MATTHEW 13; LUKE 15-16; ISAIAH 6, 20, EZEKIEL 12; JOHN 2,
MARK 4:35-6:56; PSALM 112

Overview: This week's readings cover Jesus' coming as a prophetic figure, one of God's spokespeople. Jesus is a subtler carrier of God's message than Old Testament prophets, using parables to demonstrate His story. In Matthew and Mark, Jesus explains why He uses a storytelling format that is intentionally vague to divide the Jewish people. We'll also look at stories of a few other prophets and how they chose to share God's truths with the people.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

PSALM of THE *Week*

PSALM 112

6 Surely the righteous will never be shaken;
they will be remembered forever.

7 They will have no fear of bad news;
their hearts are steadfast, trusting in the LORD.

8 Their hearts are secure, they will have no fear;
in the end they will look in triumph on their foes.

9 They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor,
their righteousness endures forever;
their horn will be lifted high in honor.

6 It rises at one end of the heavens
and makes its circuit to the other;

Review OF WEEK 31:

What connections do you see between the parable of the sower (Mark 4) and Isaiah 6? How does Jesus use the analogy of a seed to help people understand the nature of the kingdom of God?

From parables of the kingdom of God what do you learn about its character? How does it grow and what resistance does it face? Where have you seen this in your own life?

Psalm 112 speaks of the person who trusts in the Lord. What characterizes their faith? Their actions? In what aspects do you resonate and in what ways are you challenged - and can you bring that to God in prayer?

MESSAGE NOTES
JESUS AS THE NEW PROPHET

BIBLE READING

GOD *And* THE MESSIAH

Week 32

MARK 8:1–9:13; JOHN 11–12; 1 CORINTHIANS 1–2; MATTHEW 14–17; LUKE 9–10; PSALM 116

Overview: The focus this week is on Peter’s recognition of Jesus as king. These broad passages capture the moment in Matthew, Mark and Luke when Jesus asks the central question, “Who am I?” It is a major turning point when Jesus moves from being an ambiguous figure to making a Messianic claim. He connects kingship with suffering and death and then reinforces that idea by repeatedly paralleling death and kingship imagery. We also look at the triumphal entry, the plot to kill Jesus and the importance of the crucifixion in the story of the Gospel and the church.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

PSALM of THE *Week*

PSALM 116

5 The LORD is gracious and righteous;
our God is full of compassion.

6 The LORD protects the unwary;
when I was brought low, he saved me.

7 Return to your rest, my soul,
for the LORD has been good to you.

8 For you, LORD, have delivered me from death,
my eyes from tears,
my feet from stumbling,

9 that I may walk before the LORD
in the land of the living.

Review OF WEEK 32:

For the disciples, how does their understanding of Jesus unfold as they follow and engage in ministry with Him? How do they answer Jesus when He asks, "Who do you say I am?" How is their understanding still incomplete?

In 1 Corinthians 1-2, how does Paul continue this idea that Jesus' death and resurrection is unexpected (even "foolishness"), and yet is at the center of God's plan of salvation - the "wisdom" and "power" of God?

Psalms 116 focuses on the Lord who is gracious and able to save. As we understand the "cup of salvation" (v. 13) as completed in Jesus' death and resurrection, give thanks for the gracious gift of salvation we have in Jesus Christ.

MESSAGE NOTES
JESUS AS THE NEW KING

BIBLE READING

GOD *And* THE MESSIAH

Week 33

MARK 9-10; PHILIPPIANS 1-4; MATTHEW 18-20; LUKE 11-13; PSALM 17

Overview: “Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant,” Jesus tells James and John. We see Him offer these brothers the opportunity to join Him as disciples, trading worldly greatness for righteous servanthood. We read parallel stories across the Gospels, along with a Christ Hymn from Philipians. This week, our readings emphasize the upside-down nature of the kingdom of God. Jesus empties Himself for His people, leaders submit as servants. Following Jesus looks different, and it’s all for the glory of God.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

PSALM of THE *Week*

PSALM 17

6 I call on you, my God, for you will answer me;
turn your ear to me and hear my prayer.

7 Show me the wonders of your great love,
you who save by your right hand
those who take refuge in you from their foes.

8 Keep me as the apple of your eye;
hide me in the shadow of your wings

9 from the wicked who are out to destroy me,
from my mortal enemies who surround me.

Review OF WEEK 33:

In our gospel readings, what do you learn from Jesus' teachings about the nature of the kingdom of God/heaven? In His kingdom, who are the greatest? What kingdom parables encourage/challenge you most in Jesus' teachings?

Where do you find the above themes from Jesus' teachings echoed in Paul's letter to the Philippians? Reflect on 2:1-11. How should our lives be characterized if we are followers of Christ?

Psalm 17 is a prayer of David. What themes characterize this honest prayer? Can you use these themes as a guide to write your own prayer to God?

MESSAGE NOTES
THE WAY OF THE CROSS

BIBLE READING

GOD *And* THE MESSIAH

Week 34

MARK 11-13; MATTHEW 21-23, LAMENTATIONS 1-2; MATTHEW 24-25,
LAMENTATIONS 3-5; LUKE 19:28-21:38; PSALM 27

Overview: The readings for this week focus on the narrative of Jesus versus the temple in Jerusalem. In these passages, there is a clear sense of opposition from the temple, which has perverted the worship of Yahweh into a money-making strategy for sustaining power. Jesus enters the scene and declares himself the new authority who has power not only to cleanse the temple, but even to destroy the temple. Now that He is here, prayer no longer needs to take place in a temple and so the old way must go to make way for the new kingdom of God.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

PSALM *of THE Week*

PSALM 27

4 One thing I ask from the LORD,
this only do I seek:
that I may dwell in the house of the LORD
all the days of my life,
to gaze on the beauty of the LORD
and to seek him in his temple.

5 For in the day of trouble
he will keep me safe in his dwelling;
he will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent
and set me high upon a rock.

Review OF WEEK 34:

The temple was at the center of worship for the religious leaders of Jesus' day. What words does Jesus have about the temple and its leaders? As His authority is challenged, how does Jesus respond?

As Jesus sees what has become of the faith that God established as it is lived out in the religious leaders of His day, He laments. As you read Lamentations, what are similar themes that stand out?

In Psalm 27, how does David speak of the temple, the "house of the Lord"? What are his greatest passions and deepest desires in this prayer? Read the words of this psalm as a prayer back to God.

MESSAGE NOTES
JESUS VS. THE TEMPLE

BIBLE READING

GOD *And* THE MESSIAH

Week 35

MARK 10:41-45, 14-15; 2 CORINTHIANS 4-5; JOHN 18-19; HEBREWS 9-10; PSALM 31

Overview: The focus this week is on the various meanings of the death of Jesus. These passages deal with what the death of Jesus accomplishes: reconciliation. We are reconciled to God and transformed through His death. It covers the ideas of both participation and substitution. We also cover the system of sacrifice discussed in the book of Hebrews.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

PSALM of THE *Week*

PSALM 31

1 In you, LORD, I have taken refuge;
let me never be put to shame;
deliver me in your righteousness.

2 Turn your ear to me,
come quickly to my rescue;
be my rock of refuge,
a strong fortress to save me.

3 Since you are my rock and my fortress,
for the sake of your name lead and guide me.

4 Keep me free from the trap that is set for me,
for you are my refuge.

5 Into your hands I commit my spirit;
deliver me, LORD, my faithful God.

Review OF WEEK 35:

As you read the account of Jesus' death with fresh eyes, what stands out to you? What questions do you have? Spend time reflecting on the costly, intentional sacrifice Jesus made through His death on the cross.

How does the writer of Hebrews connect the death of Jesus with the sacrificial system that goes back to Exodus? How is Jesus' sacrificial death seen as a final completion of that system? What results does that have for us?

Psalm 31 speaks of God's mercy and wonderful, unfailing love. In light of the ultimate act of love in Jesus Christ's sacrifice on our behalf, spend time giving thanks to the Lord.

MESSAGE NOTES
THE MEANING OF THE DEATH OF JESUS

BIBLE READING

GOD *And* THE MESSIAH

Week 36

MATTHEW 26-27, EZEKIEL 37; LUKE 22-24, DANIEL 12:1-4; JOHN 20-21;
1 CORINTHIANS 15; PSALM 86

Overview: What does the resurrection mean? We start this week considering again the crucifixion and Christ's burial. The books of Ezekiel and Daniel provide us with Old Testament accounts of collective resurrection of a people, whereas Luke and John give historical perspectives of Jesus' resurrection. We then turn to 1 Corinthians for Paul's beautiful exposition of what all of this means, the synthesis of prophesy and history.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

PSALM *of THE Week*

PSALM 86

- 11 Teach me your way, LORD,
that I may rely on your faithfulness;
give me an undivided heart,
that I may fear your name.
- 12 I will praise you, Lord my God, with all my heart;
I will glorify your name forever.
- 13 For great is your love toward me;
you have delivered me from the depths,
from the realm of the dead.

Review OF WEEK 36:

Even Jesus' disciples did not expect His resurrection from the dead. How is it foreshadowed in Ezekiel and Daniel? What does Jesus want His disciples to know after His resurrection?

In 1 Corinthians 15, how does Paul explain the importance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ for those who are followers of Christ? In your life of faith, what stands out to you as you reflect on this passage?

A prayer of David, Psalm 86 reflects his great confidence that God will hear and answer his prayers. As you reflect on the resurrection of Jesus, how might that increase your confidence and bring renewed significance to this psalm?

MESSAGE NOTES

THE MEANING OF THE RESSURECTION OF JESUS

