

THE CHURCH HAS LEFT THE BUILDING: Stop Going To Church

July 5, 2020

Week 1 Reading Plan

Day 1-

READ: [Acts 16:25-34](#)

REFLECT: In what ways did Paul & Silas lead a worship service in prison? How did their worship and their response to the earthquake affect the jailer? How does the way you worship through your everyday life affect those around you? When someone asks you “What must I do to be saved?” how will you answer?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Read this brief explanation on “[One Verse Evangelism](#)” from the Navigators and ask God to both prepare you and give you the chance to share it with someone.

Day 2-

READ: [Colossians 3:11-24](#)

REFLECT: What examples do you see in these verses of ways to “be the church” to your family, coworkers and community? If you are part of a Life Group, how is your group “teaching and admonishing one another”?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: There is really no way to live out the commands in this chapter without the power of the Holy Spirit in you. Pray and confess that you can’t live this life on your own and ask Him to teach you and empower you to live in obedience.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

WATCH: This short video on Right Now Media teaches how we can be the church “[In Here Out There](#)” -- (If you do not yet have a FREE Right Now Media account, you can register for one [here](#).)

REFLECT: Why is the “in here” work of the church (teaching, training, and encouraging believers) so important?

PRACTICE: Stop and pray for the leadership of Grace Church as they make hard decisions about how to minister both “in here” and “out there” in this difficult season.

Day 3-

READ: [Ephesians 2:11-22](#); [1 Peter 2:1-6](#)

REFLECT: Jesus brought together Jews and Gentiles and made us both one in Him. As the Cornerstone He is the foundation of a figurative temple that is created from 'living stones' – that's of all of us who put our faith in Him! How is this 'temple' different from an actual church building? How is it better? Why is it sometimes so hard to maintain our unity as the Church of Christ?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Make it a point today to look at the buildings you pass and use them as reminders to pray for God to help us preserve our unity as 'living stones' in His temple.

Day 4-

READ: [1 Corinthians 12:4-26](#)

REFLECT: How are the gifts given to us by the Holy Spirit used by God to do the work of the Church in the world? Why is it so important for every believer to use his or her gifts to build up the Church and to bless others?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Take some time to ask God to show you if there are other ways you could be using the gifts He has given you to love those around you.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

READ: [1 Corinthians 13](#)

REFLECT: Paul says that love is the most important gift to share with others. Which of the characteristics of love listed in this chapter is the hardest for you to implement?

PRACTICE: Listen to this crazy and joyous rendition of "[Build Your Kingdom Here](#)" by Rend Collective-- and pray God will show you new ways to build His kingdom in your area of influence.

Day 5-

READ: [James 2:8-17](#)

REFLECT: One definition of mercy is not getting what one deserves. How has God been merciful to you? What do you think it means that "mercy triumphs over judgment?" How can you extend mercy to the people in your life today? How does meeting the needs of those around you reveal your faith?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Ask God to lead you today to someone who has a need you can meet and watch how He answers.

The Church Has Left the Building: Missional Movement

July 12

Week 2 Reading Plan

Day 1-

READ: [Romans 12:1-2](#)

REFLECT: Sin has had a hold on humanity since [Genesis 3](#). Across the story of scripture sin continues to plague the people and cause pain and destruction. Some 2,000 years later, not much has changed. Especially now, we are acutely aware of the pain and suffering in our country and the world around us. Jesus' suffering on the cross provides us the chance for forgiveness and salvation. What insight does this scripture give you about living out a life on mission for Jesus? What do you have to do?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Read [Psalm 32:5](#). In your prayer time today, use it as a time of confession. Say the words as David did, *"I will confess my transgressions to the Lord."* Let His forgiveness wash over you and cleanse you.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

READ: "[Groaning, Waiting, Hoping: How to Live in a Fallen, Fragile World](#)" from Desiring God.

REFLECT: This article gives us a biblical insight to living in a broken world. What is one takeaway that gives you hope?

PRACTICE: Pray and ask God to fill you with His hope in the midst of the turmoil circling the globe. In a journal, your bible, or the notes app in your phone, write down those spots of hope that you see, feel, and experience.

Day 2-

READ: [Ephesians 2:8-10](#)

REFLECT: None of us deserves the gift of salvation offered to us through Jesus, yet it's available to everyone. Regardless of our past, our mistakes, and our sin, Jesus still loves us and wants a relationship with us. When you read this passage what stands out to you the most? How does it give more urgency to living your life on mission for Jesus?

PRAY: The Lord pours His blessings over his children. Read [Numbers 6:22-27](#) and receive the blessings of the Lord for your life.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

LISTEN: "[The Blessing](#)" with Kari Jobe and Cody Carnes

REFLECT: The Lord's Blessing covers all of our lives. In good times and bad times, He is with us and for us. In what areas of your life do you need to receive the Lord's blessing?

PRACTICE: Live in the truth this week that He is with you and for you! Bookmark the link to this song or add it to your playlist on spotify for itunes so you can listen to it when you need an uplifting reminder of God's love.

Day 3-

READ: [Matthew 16:24-25](#)

REFLECT: Living out the mission Jesus has called us to begins with our own surrender to his will. What are the three things Jesus is asking the disciples to do in this passage? Have you done those things in your own life? What cross do you need to take up?

PRAY: In your prayer time, ask God to help you continue to deny yourself for His sake. Pray that the cry of your heart would be carrying your cross to follow Jesus.

Day 4-

READ: [Acts 26:12-18](#)

REFLECT: In this passage, Paul is telling the story of his conversion. From hater and persecutor, to forgiven, redeemed, and called. Paul is called to be a witness for Jesus based on his experiences and what he has seen and heard. When you think about your own conversion story, what details stand out the most? What did Jesus show you and teach you that He has now called you to share?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Use this prayer time as a time of thanksgiving. Thank Jesus for His sacrifice that allows salvation and redemption to be part of your story. Thank Him for taking your brokenness and using it for His glory. [If you haven't received salvation through Jesus yet, text "I Want to Follow Jesus" to 94090 for resources to help guide you on this journey.]

Day 5-

READ: [Acts 20:24-29](#)

REFLECT: Throughout his ministry, Paul often talks about his willingness to suffer for Christ. Danger was ever present for him as he traveled to spread the good news of the gospel. While we don't live with every day fears of persecution and death, we should be sharing the good news of Jesus with the same zeal and confidence as Paul. What stands out to you in this particular passage? How does Paul say he

will place value on his life? How does this help you reframe the importance of sharing the gospel to those in the mission fields you've been called into?

PRAY: In your prayer time today, pray the words "Jesus, I will go where you send me. I will live for you. I am yours." Also, pray that your heart and mind would be open to how He wants to use you. He doesn't promise an easy life, but he promises He'll be there for every step. Let that truth wash over you and fill you with peace.

THE CHURCH HAS LEFT THE BUILDING: Sacred Scattering

July 19, 2020

Week 3 Reading Plan

Day 1-

READ: [Acts 8:1-8](#)

REFLECT: Verse 4 says that, *“those who were scattered went about preaching the word.”* What has your response been since being “scattered” during this pandemic?

When Philip is forced out of Jerusalem, he goes to Samaria (where the Samaritans lived) instead of Judea (where his fellow Jews lived). At best the Samaritans were considered rivals, at worst, enemies. What unique opportunities has our current “scattering” given you to spread God’s love and truth to people who aren’t like you?

PRAY: Praise God for the new opportunities he is providing to advance his kingdom. Confess any sin or selfishness that has held you back from “preaching the word” (v.4) in your actions or speech. Ask him to open your eyes to new ways to spread the gospel this week!

TAKE IT FURTHER!

WATCH: Watch this 8 minute [video](#) from The Bible Project to learn about the events (and their significance) of Acts chapters 1-12.

Day 2-

READ: [Acts 11:19-26](#)

REFLECT: Locate Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch on this [map](#). When the scattering first happened, the apostles were only spreading the gospel to their fellow Jews and the Samaritans (who were essentially half-Jewish). It wasn’t until they were scattered far beyond their homeland (i.e. comfort zone) that the gospel started spreading to non-Jews called Gentiles or Hellenists. Think of an example of a time when God brought you far beyond your comfort zone in order to advance his kingdom in that new place, or to be prepared to help others in the future. What have you learned and how have you grown because of it?

PRAY: Thank God for his sovereignty when he leads you beyond your comfort zone. Ask him to show you where he is leading you next and to soften your heart to obey his call.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

LISTEN/WATCH/READ: Take some time to watch, listen to, or read the sermon transcript of this [Scattered to Gather sermon](#) by Matt Chandler about God’s purpose in difficult times.

REFLECT: “God doesn't drive an ambulance. He never shows up after something and tries to put the pieces back together. That's not how he works. There is no triage in the kingdom of God. No, God governs the chaos.”

Day 3-

READ: [Genesis 12:1-9](#)

REFLECT: God blesses Abraham and his descendants “so that” they would be a blessing to others (v 2), and through them “all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (v 3). Abraham’s descendants grow into the nation of Israel, and we see here that, from the start, God’s intention was that Israel would be the nation *through whom* the entire world would be blessed - they were his instrument for redemption on earth! Even though they often lost sight of that calling, we see God at work throughout the Old Testament bringing other nations to himself, until it ultimately culminated in the saving work of Christ’s death and resurrection. Now, Christians are God’s instrument for redemption on earth!

How do you see this idea of being blessed to be a blessing playing out in your own life? In what areas of your life could you be a blessing to the people around you?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Pray through [Psalm 67](#) and ask God to give you a heart for all people.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

REFLECT: God used persecution to scatter the church to areas it otherwise wouldn’t go. Where are you currently unwilling to go (physically and figuratively)? Are you sensing that God is directing you to use your story, calling, or finances to grow and strengthen his church, and how will you respond to his prompting?

Day 4-

READ: [Philippians 4:1-23](#)

REFLECT: In light of the sermon and Days 1-3 of this reading plan, what part of Philippians 4 stands out to you the most? How can you apply it to your life this week?

PRAY: Meditate on verses 12-13 for five minutes. Ask God to speak to you through his word.

I know how to live humbly, and I know how to abound. I am accustomed to any and every situation—to being filled and being hungry, to having plenty and having need. I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

READ: Read this [article](#) from the Gospel Coalition to learn about the state of the global church and how

we have been blessed to be a blessing.

REFLECT: “Our time, our resources, and our heart should be diverted away from primarily seeking our own pleasure and comfort and toward expanding God’s kingdom and glory.”

Day 5-

READ: [John 14:15-31](#)

REFLECT: In this passage, Jesus says that if we love him, we will obey him. But he knew we couldn’t obey him without supernatural help, so he promised that his Holy Spirit will help us, teach us, and remind us. Do you lean on the Spirit to help you when you feel too scared or too selfish to obey?

PRACTICE: Write down 1-3 specific areas of your life that you struggle to obey God in. Then write out a one sentence prayer for each temptation that you can pray this week when you need to call upon the Spirit for help.

PRAY: Repeat those prayers a few times right now. Make sure you write them out and put them somewhere you will see them this week.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

WORSHIP & PRAY: Listen to [Love Changes Everything](#) by Red Rocks Worship (lyrics in video description), and ask God to allow his love to change the parts of you that haven’t been transformed by his love yet.

THE CHURCH HAS LEFT THE BUILDING: Transforming Traditions
July 26, 2020
Week 4 Reading Plan

Day 1-

READ: [John 20: 21-23](#); [John 3: 17](#); [Matthew 28: 19-20](#)

REFLECT: After Jesus' resurrection, He met with His followers to encourage, instruct and equip them to carry on with His work. He sent them out with the same spirit, power and purpose that He demonstrated. How would you describe those three things – spirit, power and purpose – as Jesus illustrated them? What was the role of the Spirit? What did the power accomplish? What was Jesus' primary purpose?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: *"As the Father sent me, so also I am sending you."* Think about what it means to be sent in the same way that Jesus was sent. Ask God to show you any ways that you may be withholding the freedom of forgiveness or getting sidetracked from His primary purpose.

Day 2-

READ: [Matthew 9: 9-13](#)

REFLECT: Why do you think the Pharisees were so offended by Jesus spending time with those they viewed as 'sinners'? How do you think they determined if a person was a 'sinner'? How do you think they justified excluding themselves from the 'sinner' category?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Jesus came to redeem those who are able to acknowledge and admit that they need help – need a savior - yet all people have sinned and fallen short of God's glory ([Roman 3: 23](#)). The Pharisees' blindness to the truth of their own condition caused them to miss the point and actually get in the way of the gospel. Ask God to reveal any specific areas of blindness that you may have in your own life that would cause you to miss the point and get in the way of God's work in and through you.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

WATCH: 2 short video clips from RightNow Media- Larry Osborne, pastor of North Coast Church, talks about "The Accidental Pharisee: [Uniformity](#) and [Exclusivity](#)". [Need a *free* RNM account? Sign up for one [here](#).]

REFLECT: Have you ever found yourself in danger of being an 'Accidental Pharisee'? Why do you think it is so tempting to think uniformity is valuable or necessary?

Day 3-

READ: [Matthew 15: 1-9](#)

REFLECT: The ‘tradition of the elders’ was developed over time as teachers of the law tried to interpret and apply God’s law through detailed rules. While this may have started out as a way to better understand the law, the leaders eventually placed more value on these doctrines than on the commandments of God themselves. They lost sight of God’s heart for His people. Have you ever found yourself paying more attention to a tradition or practice of faith than to God himself? How has this impacted your relationship with God and with other people?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Spend some time drawing near to the heart of God and let Him show you any ways in which your worship has become more about traditions than relationships. Consider listening to “[The Heart of Worship](#)” with Matt Redman as a starting point.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

WATCH: Video clip of Larry Osborne from RightNow Media– The Accidental Pharisee: [Legalism](#)

REFLECT: Can you think of any common cultural rules or traditions that are loosely based on the word of God, but are not actually scriptural?

Day 4-

READ: [Acts 4: 13-17](#)

REFLECT: As the early church began to step out in the power and purpose of Jesus, great miracles of faith took place, including the healing of a beggar at the temple gate ([Acts 3: 6-10](#)). But the teaching and acts of the Apostles did not fit within the traditions and boundaries established by the religious rulers and teachers of the time. Although they could not deny the miracles, they did everything in their power to stop the spread of Christianity. Why do you think they tried to silence the testimonies of the new believers? What do you think would have happened if the religious leaders would have embraced the Good News?

PRAY: Have you ever encountered a story or an expression of faith in God that you did not understand or that would require you to move WAY out of your comfort zone to accept? How did you respond to it? Seek God for wisdom and courage to embrace His will in new ways and even expect it to transform your daily life and expressions of worship. Ask him to help you overcome any fear you might have that would hold you back from moving with the Spirit.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

WATCH: Video clip of Larry Osborne from RightNow Media – [The Accidental Pharisee: Idolizing the Past](#)

REFLECT: Are there any areas of your faith tradition that you are tempted to hold onto – even if God is nudging to step out into a new opportunity?

Day 5-

READ: [Romans 14: 1-19](#)

REFLECT: Based on Paul's instructions to the Romans, how should a Christian interact with other believers that are in different places in their faith walk than he/she is? Since Jesus came to remove the ultimate barrier between each of us and God, why do you think believers are so often tempted to build new barriers in the form of rules or traditions, expectations or hierarchies? What are some stumbling blocks that you have encountered along your journey?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Read [Romans 5: 1-2](#). Spend a little time resting in God's peace and then seek Him for guidance on how to help remove barriers from the faith paths of others you encounter.