

SUNGAI WAY-SUBANG METHODIST CHURCH

Being with Jesus

VOL 2, APRIL – JUNE 2023

NAME:

Love God Love People

Mark 12:29-31

Make Disciples

Matthew 28:19-20

READING SCHEDULE, APRIL - JUNE 2023

BEING WITH *Jesus* 2023

	APRIL		MAY		JUNE	
THU					1	Colossians 3:1-4
FRI					2	Colossians 3:5-11
SAT	1	Judges 16:23-31			3	Colossians 3:12-17
SUN	2				4	
MON	3	Judges 17:1-13	1	Ephesians 4:1-6	5	Colossians 3:18-4:1
TUE	4	Judges 18:1-13	2	Ephesians 4:7-13	6	Colossians 4:2-6
WED	5	Judges 18:14-31	3	Ephesians 4:14-16	7	Colossians 4:7-18
THU	6	Judges 19:1-21	4	Ephesians 4:17-24	8	Philippians 1:1-8
FRI	7	Judges 19:22-20:7	5	Ephesians 4:25-28	9	Philippians 1:9-11
SAT	8	Judges 20:8-25	6	Ephesians 4:29-32	10	Philippians 1:12-18
SUN	9	EASTER SUNDAY	7		11	
MON	10	Judges 20:26-48	8	Ephesians 5:1-2	12	Philippians 1:19-26
TUE	11	Judges 21:1-25	9	Ephesians 5:3-7	13	Philippians 1:27-30
WED	12	Ruth 1	10	Ephesians 5:8-17	14	Philippians 2:1-4
THU	13	Ruth 2	11	Ephesians 5:18-20	15	Philippians 2:5-11
FRI	14	Ruth 3	12	Ephesians 5:21-33	16	Philippians 2:12-18
SAT	15	Ruth 4	13	Ephesians 6:1-4	17	Philippians 2:19-30
SUN	16		14		18	
MON	17	Ephesians 1:1-6	15	Ephesians 6:5-9	19	Philippians 3:1-6
TUE	18	Ephesians 1:7-14	16	Ephesians 6:10-13	20	Philippians 3:7-14
WED	19	Ephesians 1:15-23	17	Ephesians 6:14-17	21	Philippians 3:15-4:1
THU	20	Ephesians 2:1-3	18	Ephesians 6:18-20	22	Philippians 4:2-3
FRI	21	Ephesians 2:4-7	19	Ephesians 6:21-24	23	Philippians 4:4-7
SAT	22	Ephesians 2:8-10	20	Colossians 1:1-8	24	Philippians 4:8-13
SUN	23		21	ANNIVERSARY GIFT DAY	25	
MON	24	Ephesians 2:11-13	22	Colossians 1:9-14	26	Philippians 4:14-19
TUE	25	Ephesians 2:14-18	23	Colossians 1:15-20	27	Philippians 4:20-23
WED	26	Ephesians 2:19-22	24	Colossians 1:21-26	28	Philemon 1:1-7
THU	27	Ephesians 3:1-6	25	Colossians 1:27-28	29	Philemon 1:8-16
FRI	28	Ephesians 3:7-13	26	Colossians 1:29-2:5	30	Philemon 1:17-25
SAT	29	Ephesians 3:14-21	27	Colossians 2:6-10		
SUN	30		28			
MON			29	Colossians 2:11-15		
TUE			30	Colossians 2:16-19		
WED			31	Colossians 2:20-23		

PASTORAL MESSAGE

Dear SSMCians,

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

From the verses above, the authority of Scripture is clear. It is God-breathed and inspired, essential to our Christian living and service. Therefore, it is our intention to encourage every believer to systematically read through the Bible cover to cover once every few years. In the same manner, the pulpit must also preach and teach the whole counsel of God and not cherry pick from only the favourite passages or topics but ignore the "difficult or boring" books.

For Q1, we finished reading the book of Joshua and Judges. In Q2, we continue with the book of Ruth before shifting our attention to the four letters of Paul. The three OT books are historical accounts from the period of the conquest, division, settlement in the promised land, and rise and rule of the judges. Some major themes covered include the faithfulness of God (purpose, promise and presence), to know and obey the book of the law, successes and failures, renewing of the covenant, consequences of breaking faith and God's providence in lives despite tragedies.

Paul wrote these four NT letters during his first incarceration in Rome pending his appeal to Caesar (Acts 28:30), comprising of three pastoral letters to the church in Philippi, Ephesus and Colossae and one personal letter to Philemon. He deals with rejoicing in gratitude, the church as the body of Christ, Jesus Christ the pre-eminent One and about forgiveness and reconciliation in Christ.

I trust that as we continue to read and meditate on Scriptures, we will be encouraged and inspired through the renewing of our minds and experiencing the transformation of our hearts to live lives as God intended for you and I. May we have a fruitful and impactful encounter *BEING WITH JESUS*. Do share with someone as you learn, apply and experience God's truth.

Love God, Love People, Make Disciples.

Humbly,
Pastor Robin and the Leadership Team

Love GOD. *Love* PEOPLE. *Make* DISCIPLES.

INTRODUCTION TO THE READINGS

We continue our readings through selected books of the Bible, firstly by completing the book of Judges as well as by reading its "sister" book, the book of Ruth. Having plumbed the depths of Israel's disobedience and idolatry, the book of Ruth provides a stark contrast and a reminder that hope and faithfulness still exist for Israel. We then proceed to read through four of Paul's letters, to discover for ourselves the instructions, the values, and most of all the Jesus Christ of the early churches.

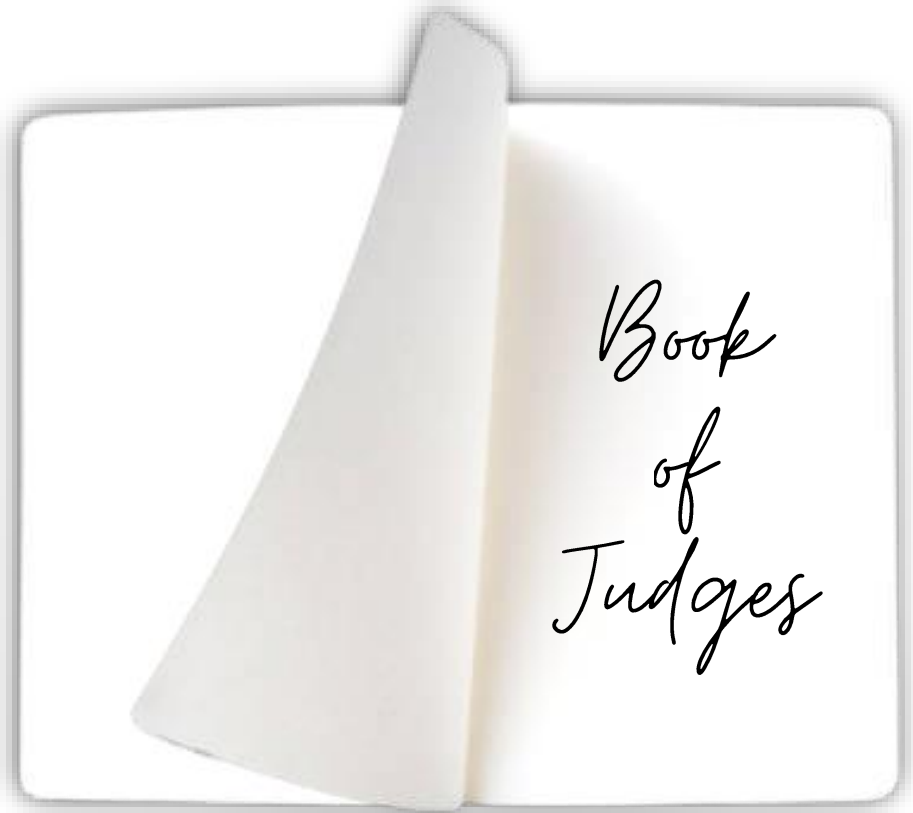
Let us continue to spend time in God's Word, both individually and collectively as a faith community. For those who have been faithfully reading through Scripture individually, consider how you may join with loved ones (whether related or not) to sharpen each other in faith. Let us all also consider the importance of building up those of older or younger generations to ourselves, knowing that the same Spirit is at work in all of us.

For 2023 we will continue to provide questions for the reader(s) to ponder. The pronouns "I", "me", and "my" are used to indicate the personal nature of the proposed reflections. This however should not be seen as being individual-focused, those reading together should consider self-inserting "we" and "our" instead as appropriate. For those who prefer to focus on Scripture alone, feel free to do so, as Scripture stands above all the thoughts of men. However, for those who prefer more guidance and background, the readings for this year are loosely based on the JourneyThrough series published by Our Daily Bread Ministries. These readings can be found online at <https://journeythrough.org/all-courses/> with different links for each book. Physical devotional booklets are available at local Christian bookstores as well.

May we approach God's Word with gladness of heart, an inquiring mind, and hands willing to put into action the instructions of our Lord. May Christ be evident inwardly and outwardly in every aspect of our lives.

Yours truly,
Ng Oon-Ee (Christian Education)

This edition of Being With Jesus has seen significant contributions from various disciples in the body. Special thanks to Poh Gaik, Kwee Heong, Chien Aun, Eddy, Sarah and Rosalind for their efforts and time.



APR 1, SATURDAY

Judges 16:23–31

Our God Has Delivered ...

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What do the songs of praise in verses 23 and 24 tell me about who the Philistines credited for their victory? Were they correct? 2) What does Samson's prayer tell me about his attitude and intentions at the end of his life? 3) How can I help a brother or sister take hold of God's grace in spite of failure today?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

APR 2, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

APR 3, MONDAY

Judges 17:1–13

Idolatry to the Lord

Context

Questions
to ponder

- 1) What are the sins that Micah commits in today's passage?
- 2) Who is Micah trying to worship with his ephod and idols? What does God's law say about his actions?
- 3) Why did the Levite leave his own place and city? What can this teach me about contentment and God's will?

Head

What can I understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

APR 4, TUESDAY

Judges 18:1–13

Dan Had Not Yet Come Into An Inheritance

Judges 1:34

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Why had the tribe of Dan not yet come into an inheritance (see also Judges 1:34)? What was preventing them from claiming what God had promised? 2) Dan inquires of Micah's priest instead of inquiring of the Lord at nearby Shiloh. What does this tell me about their intentions? Is the priest speaking God's true message? 3) Attacking and settling in Laish seems easy and less risky. This is what Dan does. Is there an area of my life where I am doing what Dan did?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

APR 5, WEDNESDAY

Judges 18:14-31

Be Our Father And Priest

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) How do the actions of the Danites against Micah mirror Micah's own life and actions? 2) The Levite priest is very pleased with what happens in today's passage. His lineage is revealed at the end of the chapter. What does this tell me about passing down Godly faithfulness through the generations? 3) The Danites create their own land and city, with their own idols and priests. Some later writings (1 Chronicles 4-7, Revelation 7:4-8) skip over the tribe of Dan. Is there a brother or sister that I can pray for today who seems to be removing himself/herself from God's Kingdom and plan?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

APR 6, THURSDAY

Judges 19:1–21

Seeking Out Our Own People

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The final narrative in Judges involves a Levite and his unfaithful concubine. What would the Levite's motivations have been to travel to Bethlehem? 2) Judges 19:12 expresses an all-too-familiar "preference" (more correctly called bigotry) in all of us. What reasons does the unnamed Levite have to avoid Jebus and its people? 3) The Levite entered Gibeah, a town of the people of Israel of the clan of Benjamin. He has sought out his own people and now seeks hospitality from these brethren. What does his conversation with the old man imply about the town they are in?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

APR 7, FRIDAY

Judges 19:22–20:7

Speak Up!

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The night-time actions of the "wicked men of the city" closely resemble those of the men of Sodom (Genesis 19). Is their conduct reflective of many different sinful desires and motivations or just a single one? What is the spiritual condition of these men from Gibeah? 2) The Gibeah narrative matches the Sodom narrative up till the point where the host speaks to the crowd. The actions of the Levite are where this narrative diverges. What is the spiritual condition of this Levite?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) The sentiment of Judges 19:30 would not feel out of place in a 21st century conversation, where a recent event demands an urgent response. While some are quick to dismiss such calls (for example by decrying "cancel culture"), in this situation a national response is actually merited. What would I wish done, if I were one of the Israelites hearing of this?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

APR 8, SATURDAY

Judges 20:8–25

Mobilization of All Tribes In Israel

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) This passage describes "all the men" and "all the Israelites". However, Judges 20:3 and 20:12 indicates that the word "all" is a broad generalization. What does this tell me about the spiritual condition of Israel as a whole? 2) Israel fully mobilizes for war on the testimony of a single Levite. Benjamin musters tens of thousands to meet them in battle to defend the wicked men of a single city. How am I to understand this willingness for battle, especially compared with the unwillingness to fight to claim the lands promised to them by God?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Israel inquires of God twice and is defeated twice. Were they suffering from being obedient to God's instruction? Are my prayers to God for guidance similar to what Israel is doing here?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

APR 9, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

Empty space for notes or content.

APR 10, MONDAY

Judges 20:26-48

Shall We Go... Or Not?

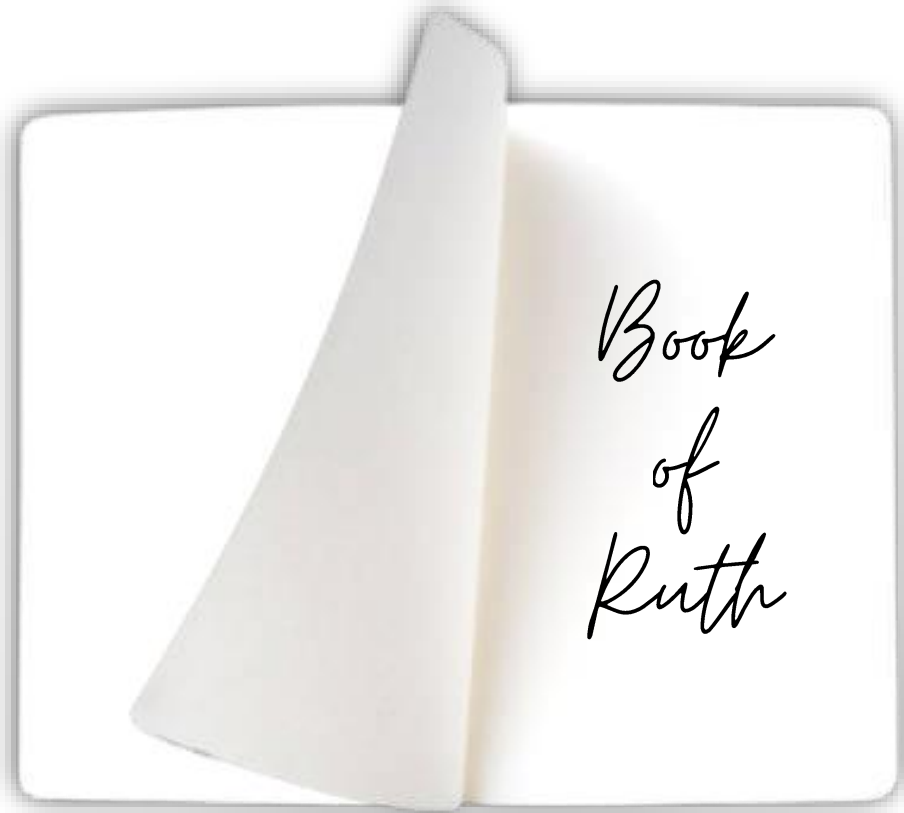
Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) For the third battle, Israel's inquiry of the Lord is now different in form, and God's answer also differs. What does this teach me about the right heart/attitude I should have in seeing God's will (Luke 22:42)? 2) The description of the battle itself is reminiscent of Joshua's successful conquest of Ai (Joshua 8). This time it is accomplished against an Israelite army and an Israelite city. What do the actions of the victorious Israelite army in Judges 20:42-48 tell me about them?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Who are the "good guys" in this story? Who is it who is passionately serving God and humbly seeking His favour and instruction? Do we as God's church also behave towards one another as the Israelites did?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

APR 11, TUESDAY

Judges 21:1–25

Why Has This Happened To Israel?

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What is my emotional reaction to reading Israel's cry to the Lord in Judges 21:3? How would I have answered them? 2) We understand the period described in Judges to be summarized by "everyone did what they saw fit". Besides the obvious sin and disobedience, we also see rash oaths before God, similar to the one stated in Judges 21:3. This leads directly to further bloodshed and the kidnapping of young virgins. When do the consequences of sin end?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) How can I be radically committed to God and to my promises to Him without allowing legalism to lead me deeper into sin?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	



APR 12, WEDNESDAY

Ruth 1

Ruth's Loyalty

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The book of Ruth begins similarly to most of the accounts in Judges, with hopelessness and death. As I read Ruth 1:1-5, is there a brother or sister I am reminded of who I can pray for right now? 2) Naomi sets out to return home with two Moabite daughters-in-law. She wants to send both back home, and after the culturally expected protestations, Orpah returns home a widow. Ruth does not. What are Ruth's motivations?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Ruth 1 ends with a note of hope, evidence that the famine that Elimelek's family had fled from was no more. Yet Naomi's testimony (understandably) is one of bitterness. Is there a root of bitterness in my heart? Who can I share this with and ask for prayer?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

APR 13, THURSDAY

Ruth 2

Boaz Notices Ruth

Context

Questions

to ponder

- 1) Ruth volunteers to provide in the manner common to the destitute. The first field she enters belongs to Boaz, a close relative of Elimelek. Some read this coincidence to be evidence of God's handiwork. Would I consider this a work of God (a God-incident)?
- 2) What is the character of Boaz demonstrated in this passage? What is his motivation for the kindness he shows to Ruth (Ruth 2:8 and 2:11)?
- 3) What is the character of Ruth demonstrated in this passage? Who do I know who reflects Ruth's character, and how can I pray for them today?

Head

What can I understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

APR 14, FRIDAY

Ruth 3

The Proposal

Context

Questions

to ponder

- 1) Who is the instigator of the events of this passage? Who is the primary "actor" or protagonist? What can I learn here about differentiating between cultural expectations/practices and Scriptural edict?
- 2) Boaz blesses Ruth specifically for her "kindness", to what does that refer? What kindness does he show in return?
- 3) The large amount of barley given as a gift, not to Ruth, but to Naomi (Ruth 3:17), has implications which are obvious even to us. And so Naomi is now content to ask Ruth to wait, having done what was needed on her part. What am I patiently waiting for right now?

Head

What can I understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

APR 15, SATURDAY

Ruth 4

Better Than Seven Sons

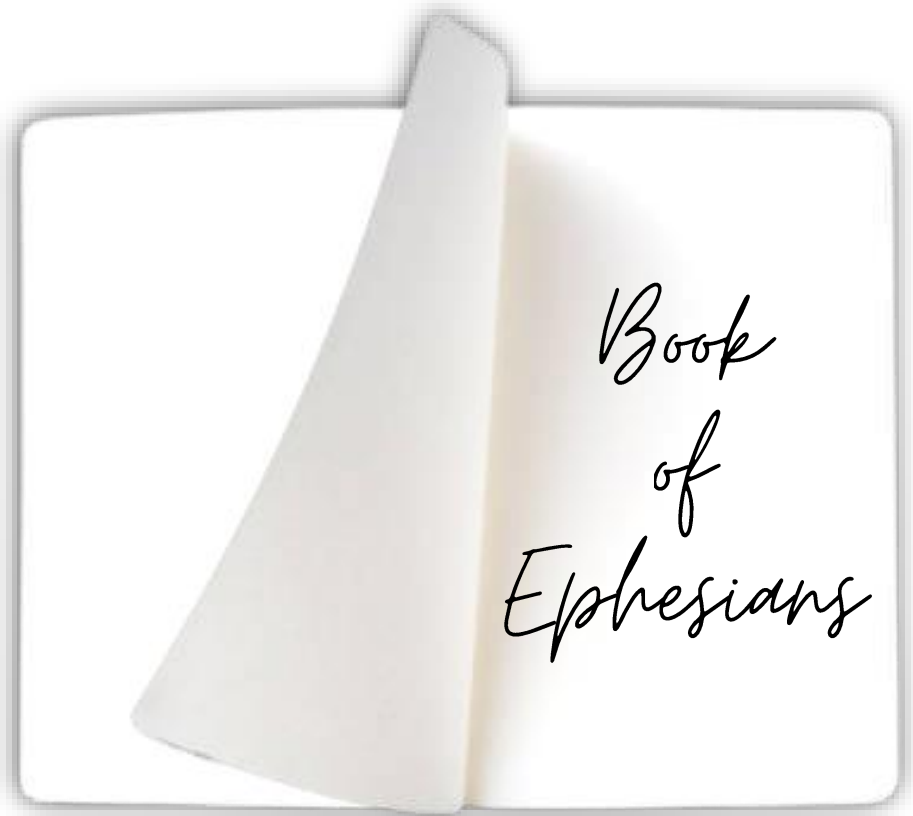
Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The "endangering" of Ruth 4:5 applies equally to Boaz as well as to the closer kinsman-redeemer. Yet Boaz takes on the kinsman-redeemer role to marry Ruth. What parallels does this have with Jesus, our own kinsman-redeemer? 2) The book of Ruth is traditionally believed to have been written, along with the book of Judges, by Samuel. They cover the same time period, and even some of the same concerns such as mixed marriages but contrast greatly with each other in spirit and hope. How can I live obediently even in faithless times?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Ruth's character and virtue is central to this entire book. But she is in many aspects the lesser person, a pagan Moabite widow rather than an Israelite man. Despite this, she is "better than seven sons" (Ruth 4:15). What preconceptions can I pray for God to remove from my thinking today?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

APR 16, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER



APR 17, MONDAY

Ephesians 1:1–6

Destined to be Adopted

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) God's holy people addressed here are both "in Ephesus" as well as "in Christ Jesus". We may change the first address, but our second address is permanent and unchanging. What does it mean for me to be "in Christ Jesus"? 2) "Every spiritual blessing in Christ" should naturally lead to a response of praise. Take a moment today to praise God for every spiritual blessing in Christ. 3) "He chose us before the creation of the world" and "He predestined us for adoption to sonship" are clear statements which can elicit much debate on predestination. But let us not neglect the second half of verse 4. How am I becoming holy and blameless in God's sight today?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

APR 18, TUESDAY

Ephesians 1:7-14

For The Praise Of His Glory

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Paul starts this letter by recounting basic foundational faith tenets. What does he say about our redemption in today's passage? 2) When recounting all of Christ's marvelous gifts of grace, Paul mentions twice in today's passage (in verses 12 and 14) the ultimate reason for them. What is this ultimate reason, and how does this help me place my priorities rightly? 3) How does the description of a believer's initial faith journey in Ephesians 1:13 match with my personal experience?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

APR 19, WEDNESDAY

Ephesians 1:15–23

Power and Strength

Context

Questions

to ponder

- 1) Paul prays for wisdom, revelation, and enlightenment for the Ephesian believers. What is the purpose he gives for his prayer?
- 2) The incomparably great power and mighty strength of God is exerted on Christ's behalf. Why is it important for me to know this power and strength?
- 3) What role is stated here for the church? Do I need to correct my understanding of my faith community before God?

Head

What can I understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

APR 20, THURSDAY

Ephesians 2:1-3

You Were Dead in Your Sins

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Transgressions break God's law, while sin falls short of God's ideal. Am I still dead in my transgressions and sins? 2) Is there a difference between the "ways of this world" and those of "the ruler of the kingdom of the air"? How have these external influences led to spiritual death in my life and the lives of those I love? 3) Ephesians 1:3 starts by saying "all of us... at one time". Perhaps more importantly, an internal motivation (cravings of our flesh) is identified. What internal thoughts and desires can I bring before God today?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

APR 21, FRIDAY

Ephesians 2:4-7

God Made Us Alive!

Context

Questions
to ponder

- 1) God is in the business of raising the dead. What words in today's passage signify God's attitude towards me?
- 2) Every mention of a living "me" in today's passage has the qualifier "with Christ". Is there a loved one today who needs to be made alive or raised up "with Christ"?
- 3) The Christian life goes beyond merely the dead being made alive. What does it mean to be "seated with Him in the heavenly realms with Christ Jesus"?

Head

What can I understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

APR 22, SATURDAY

Ephesians 2:8-10

Gift of Grace Through Faith

Context

Questions

to ponder

- 1) What does the word "grace" mean? How is grace administered "through faith" in my life?
- 2) "Not by works" here refers to our own works (instead, we are God's handiwork). Why is it so important that our salvation is not built on our own works?
- 3) Those who quote Ephesians 2:8-9 can sometimes forget what follows immediately after. What different perspective on good works is shown in Ephesians 2:10?

Head

What can I understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

APR 23, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

APR 24, MONDAY

Ephesians 2:11–13

Then And Now

Context

Questions
to ponder

- 1) "Formerly" and "at that time" refers to something which is in the past. What does today's passage tell me about those who were formerly outside the Kingdom of God?
- 2) In referring to the "now", Ephesians 2:13 focuses on what is presently true. What does it tell me about the present situation of those who are in Christ Jesus?
- 3) What is my own "then and now" story? Who can I share it to today?

Head

What can I understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

APR 25, TUESDAY

Ephesians 2:14–18

Wall of Hostility Destroyed

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Who were the two groups separated by the dividing wall of hostility? What similar divisions do I see in my faith community and my nation? 2) What was Christ's purpose in destroying the barrier of hostility? Can Ephesians 2:15 be read without Ephesians 2:16? 3) What is the unifying factor that we have in our faith community? Who do I need to express Christ-centered unity with today?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

APR 26, WEDNESDAY

Ephesians 2:19–22

Built Together

Context

Questions
to ponder

- 1) What is the difference between the community in today's passage and the two groups of yesterday's passage?
- 2) The church today still stands on the chief cornerstone of Christ Jesus. Has the time of the apostles and prophets now passed, or is the church still building new foundations today?
- 3) What is the purpose of a temple? Is there a brother or sister today who I can join together with to build God's holy temple and dwelling place?

Head

What can I understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

APR 27, THURSDAY

Ephesians 3:1–6

Mystery of the One Body

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Where is Paul when he writes this letter? Who is it who holds him captive according to Ephesians 3:1? 2) Some mysteries are solved through careful reasoning and investigation. Some require great intellect or wisdom to comprehend. What does Paul say is the source of his understanding of this "mystery of Christ"? 3) The universality of the gospel was earth-shattering to the first century Jewish church. Paul's own life was turned upside down by this revelation. How does this universality affect my own life, belief, and faith-practice?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

APR 28, FRIDAY

Ephesians 3:7-13

The Grace Of Preaching Christ

Context

Questions

to ponder

- 1) What is Paul's attitude towards himself in today's passage? What can I learn from him?
- 2) What is Paul's attitude towards the task God gave to him? What can I learn from him?
- 3) What does today's passage say about approaching God? Who do I know who needs to be reminded about this?

Head

What can I understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

APR 29, SATURDAY

Ephesians 3:14–21

Knowing What Surpasses Knowledge

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What is it that Paul prays for the Ephesian people to receive? 2) Why do we need God's power to know this love that surpasses knowledge? 3) "To Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus" – why is the church specifically a vessel for the glory of God?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

APR 30, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

MAY 1, MONDAY

Ephesians 4:1-6

Making Every Effort for Unity

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What is Paul calling for the believers to do and to value? How does Paul's status as a prisoner tie in to this call? 2) What is the source of Christian unity, according to Ephesians 4:5-6? 3) What attitude do we as believers have towards Christian unity? What can I do today as part of 'every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit'?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

MAY 2, TUESDAY

Ephesians 4:7–13

Equipped for Service by Grace

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What is it that builds up the body of Christ? How do I build up the body of Christ? 2) What is the source of our equipping, according to today's passage? 3) What is the description of maturity in today's passage? How can my faith community strive towards maturity?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAY 3, WEDNESDAY

Ephesians 4:14–16

Growth in Christ – Truth–Speaking

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What is the difference between many infants and a united mature Christ-body, according to today's passage? 2) The imperative in Ephesians 4:15 is to speak the truth in love. What harm have I seen as a result of the speaking of truth without love? 3) On the other hand, what harm comes from speaking lies or denying truth? How can we remain in the truth while building Christ's body in love?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAY 4, THURSDAY

Ephesians 4:17–24

Contrasting Ways of Life

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Based on prior readings, is Ephesians primarily written to Jewish or Gentile believers? How do I the understand Paul's instructions "not to live as the Gentiles do"? 2) What is the root of the futile thinking that Paul attributes to the Gentiles? Am I still engaging in this form of thinking? 3) What then is the root of the new self that Paul is promoting? Am I being made new in my mind's attitudes?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

MAY 5, FRIDAY

Ephesians 4:25–28

Old Self Habits to Put Off

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Does my speech include falsehoods? What can I do to put off this habit? 2) Do I feed my anger to the point of sinfulness? What can I do to put off this habit? 3) Do I shortchange myself and others in the work that I do (whether within or outside my formal employed or educational role)? What can I do to put off this habit?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAY 6, SATURDAY

Ephesians 4:29–32

Sins of the Tongue

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What does "unwholesome talk" mean in the context of today's passage? Is it merely about avoiding vulgar vocabulary? 2) Ephesians 4:30 provides the basis for the instructions Paul gives in today's passage. How should this basis guide my speech? 3) Replacing malice with kindness, compassion, and forgiveness is difficult. What can I do to encourage positive patterns of speech in my faith community?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAY 7, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

MAY 8, MONDAY

Ephesians 5:1–2

Dearly Loved Children

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Young children tend to imitate the adult examples they have in their lives. How have I previously imitated Christ's example in my conduct? 2) Walking in the way of love goes beyond mere imitation and involves an internalisation of the values of the one being imitated. How is it possible for my heart to reflect God's heart? 3) Christ is our ultimate example. Who do I know who has in some manner echoed Christ's sacrifice in his or her life?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAY 9, TUESDAY

Ephesians 5:3-7

Improper for God's Holy People

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) "Not even a hint" is a high standard, and a stark contrast to the society of Ephesus. How do my own life and speech measure up to this standard? 2) How can I reconcile Ephesians 5:5 with salvation by grace through faith and not by works? 3) How can I reach out to those who hold to different standards of morality, including sexual or financial morality? How do I do this while remaining unstained and untouched by immorality, impurity, and greed?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAY 10, WEDNESDAY

Ephesians 5:8-17

Light Not Darkness

Context

Questions

to ponder

- 1) The phrase "Christ will shine on you" is both simple and deep. What do I understand regarding the source and effect of Christ's light on my life?
- 2) We were previously darkness, but now in Jesus are children of the light. What does this mean in our communities (especially considering Ephesians 5:13)?
- 3) Darkness and light are shown to be analogous to foolishness and wisdom. Take some time now to pray for Christ's wisdom and understanding to fill you.

Head

What can I understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

MAY 11, THURSDAY

Ephesians 5:18–20

"Drunk" with The Spirit

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) John Wesley was known for a strong opposition to alcoholic beverages, calling brewers "poisoners and murderers". How does my faith community read and understand passages such as Ephesians 5:18a? 2) How is one filled with the Spirit? Is there a pattern or formula that we can follow to fill ourselves with God's Spirit? 3) What are the inward and outward signs of the in-filling of the Spirit? Do I show signs of being drunk on the Holy Spirit?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAY 12, FRIDAY

Ephesians 5:21–33

Husbands and Wives

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) This passage can be contentious for many. What do I understand Paul's instructions to be here, especially in the context of adultery and spousal abuse being common to this day within the church of Christ? 2) Is there an element of idolatry in placing husbands in the place of Christ? Can an earthly husband make his wife holy as Christ made us holy? 3) Ephesians 5:32 makes it clear that the focus here is Christ and the church. In this context, verses 21 and 33 can be understood to provide practical guidance on applying this model to our earthly spousal relationships. How can our faith community best encourage Christ-reflecting spousal relationships?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAY 13, SATURDAY

Ephesians 6:1–4

Children and Parents

Context

Questions
to ponder

- 1) What is the reason given here that children should obey their parents?
- 2) What is the responsibility of fathers (and by extension all parents) before God?
- 3) How can my faith community raise Christ-centred children who obey as to Christ, and responsible parents who honour the children God has entrusted to them?

Head

What can I understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

MAY 14, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

MAY 15, MONDAY

Ephesians 6:5-9

Slaves and Masters

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Does this passage of Scripture condone and justify slavery as a societal practice? When should a Christian be found opposing social injustices as William Wilberforce once did? 2) In the master-slave relationship, who is it that both the slave and the master should focus on in their interactions? 3) How do the instructions in this passage translate into our modern context? Are there aspects of modern life (e.g. office employment, management of domestic or industrial labour) where these principles are still directly relevant?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAY 16, TUESDAY

Ephesians 6:10–13

Struggle Is Not Against Flesh and Blood

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) How does Ephesians 6:12 define the context in which we should understand prior passages on immorality, spousal relations, parent-child relations, and slave-master relations? 2) Do I take seriously the threat of spiritual forces of evil which oppose the Kingdom of God? How does this inform my theology, my actions, and my prayers? 3) What purpose does the armour of God serve? What is the mandate given to me when clothed in this armour?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAY 17, WEDNESDAY

Ephesians 6:14-17

Components of Our Spiritual Armour

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) This description of the armour of God starts with instructions to "stand firm". Which of the pieces of the armour are primarily protective in nature? 2) How does the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace (fitted to our feet) protect us? Does it serve another non-protective purpose? 3) Is there any part of the armour of God that I need to put on or adjust today? Can I help support a brother or sister in fastening their own armour today?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAY 18, THURSDAY

Ephesians 6:18–20

Pray, Pray, Pray!

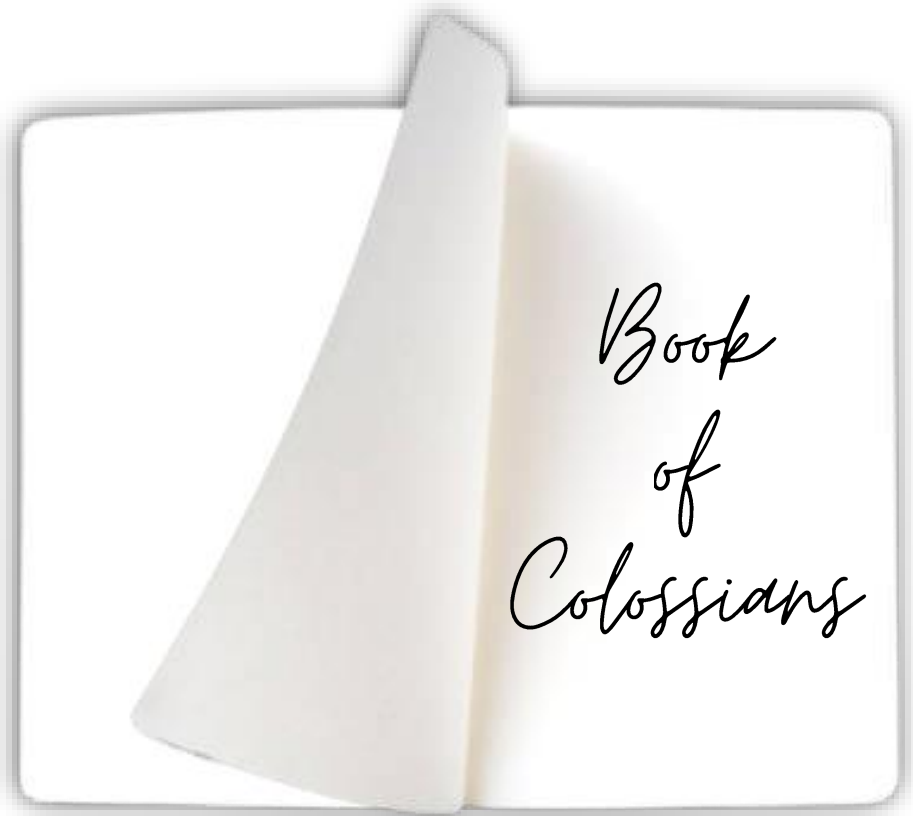
Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) How many times is the word "all" used in Ephesians 6:18? What does this imply for my prayer life? 2) How does prayer fit in with the armour of God from yesterday's reading? Is spiritual warfare a solo or joint experience? 3) Paul closes by requesting personal prayers for himself. When was the last time I requested specific prayers for myself from my faith community? Do I need to do so today?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAY 19, FRIDAY

Ephesians 6:21–24

An Undying Love

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Tychicus often acted as a messenger for Paul (Colossians 4:7; Titus 2:12), carrying Paul's letters as well as personal messages and encouragement. Who do I know personally who serves a similar message-bearing role today? How can I appreciate them? 2) Reflect on the words "peace, grace, faith, and love". How did Paul focus on them through this letter? 3) Paul speaks of the "undying love" of the Ephesians for Christ. How can I build this undying love in my faith community and avoid the reprimand the Ephesian church was given in Revelations 2:4?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	



MAY 20, SATURDAY

Colossians 1:1–8

Spring from the Hope

Context	<p>1) Many of Paul's letters are written as a prisoner, yet he begins this letter by telling the Colossian church that he always thanks God for them. What is he thankful for?</p> <p>2) What is the source of the faith and love that the Colossian church (and the whole world, as in Colossians 1:6) have?</p> <p>3) The increase and bearing of fruit in Colossians 1:6 echo God's purpose expressed in Genesis 1:28, and is similarly the result of God's Word; in this case shared by Epaphras. How can I share God's Word today?</p>
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

MAY 21, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

MAY 22, MONDAY

Colossians 1:9-14

Prayers for the Colossians

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What is it that Paul is unceasingly praying for the Colossians? 2) When we "seek God's will", we often refer to specifics (whom shall I marry, what job offer should I take). What does the knowledge of God's will lead to, according to Colossians 1:9-10? 3) Even in his prayers for the Colossians, Paul cannot help but to emphasize "giving joyful thanks to the Father". Do I also pray with God's grace and goodness in mind?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAY 23, TUESDAY

Colossians 1:15–20

Supremacy of the Son of God

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Colossians 1:16 states that all things were created through Him and for Him. This includes every earthly authority to the present day. What does this mean for me as a believer subject to those authorities? 2) In everything, Christ has the supremacy. How must I live in light of this? 3) The supreme Christ reconciled all things in heaven and on earth to God. This includes us. Is there an acquaintance or relative who is yet to experience this reconciliation whom I can pray for?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAY 24, WEDNESDAY

Colossians 1:21–26

Christ's Gospel, through His Servant

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Our reconciliation is by Christ's sacrifice, yet our faith is to be continued and dwelt in (Colossians 1:23). How can we ensure our lifelong faithfulness to the gospel of Christ? 2) Paul describes his labour to bring the gospel to the Colossians. Who was it who brought me God's Word? When did I last thank them and pray for them? 3) The lack Paul is filling in Colossians 1:24 is the lack addressed in Romans 10:14-15. Who has God called me to bring His Word and good news to?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

MAY 25, THURSDAY

Colossians 1:27–28

Christ in You, Hope of Glory

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The revelation (mystery) to the Gentiles is the in-dwelling Christ and the glorious hope He brings. Do I recall the first time I realised this glorious hope? 2) The ministers of the gospel (e.g. Paul) strive to present everyone fully mature in Christ. How can this practically be effected in my faith community day by day? 3) The journey of discipleship includes maturing and leading others along that same journey (even if we do not feel sufficiently prepared or mature yet). Who am I mentoring to greater maturity in Christ right now?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAY 26, FRIDAY

Colossians 1:29–2:5

Contending for You

Context

Questions
to ponder

- 1) What is Paul's goal for the Colossian and Laodicean believers?
- 2) Paul repeatedly says that he is contending for the believers. Who or what does Paul contend with?
- 3) How closely does my life reflect the goal that Paul espouses in Colossians 2:2?

Head

What can I understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

MAY 27, SATURDAY

Colossians 2:6–10

Rooted in Christ

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) How did I receive Christ? How have I lived and been built up in Him since? 2) What kind of teaching (spiritual or otherwise) do I fill my mind with? Do they cause me to depend on something other than Christ? 3) I have been brought to fullness in Christ, the head over every power and authority. Who can I build up in Christ today?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

MAY 28, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

MAY 29, MONDAY

Colossians 2:11–15

Circumcised by Christ

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What significance would circumcision have had to the Colossian believers? How many of them were circumcised? 2) What truths can I learn from today's passage about my indebtedness and sin? 3) We sometimes prefer to see our conversion experience as a personal and private matter. Yet Colossians 2:15 speaks of Jesus making a public spectacle of powers and authorities in His triumph. Is Christ's triumph publicly visible in my own life and walk?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAY 30, TUESDAY

Colossians 2:16–19

Do Not Let Anyone ...

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What are the two things we should not let anyone do according to this passage? 2) Does Colossians 2:16-17 render worthless all sorts of traditions, observances, and religious practices which point to the reality in Christ? 3) Have I ever felt unworthy due to lacking a specific form of experience of God? How can Colossians 2:18-19 reassure me?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

MAY 31, WEDNESDAY

Colossians 2:20–23

Appearance of Wisdom

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What do I understand from Colossians 2:20 where Paul writes that we are "dead to the world" (paraphrased)? 2) Paul speaks of "the world's rules", but Colossians 2:21 describes what we would think of as "religious" rules. What is the root of Paul's criticism in today's passage? Do I adhere to practices which would fall into this category? 3) Paul is obviously not advocating against all rules (he himself gives a few rules in chapters 3 and 4). What is the difference between those upcoming rules and what Paul is warning us against here?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JUN 1, THURSDAY

Colossians 3:1-4

Set Your Hearts and Minds on Things Above

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Paul is about to encourage the Colossians to live differently, but in today's passage he focuses first on thinking differently. Why does he do this? 2) What does it mean to "set your minds on things above"? What practical steps can I take to do this? 3) What are some old habits that I find it hard to let go of? How should being raised with Christ help me to change?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JUN 2, FRIDAY

Colossians 3:5-11

Take It Off

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) As we have died with Christ, so too our earthly nature must die. Colossians 3:5 focuses on inner desires and motivations which displease God. Do I need God's help today with any of these? 2) Colossians 3:7-8 focuses on another part of our earthly nature, how we relate to others (especially in speech). Do I need God's help today with any of these? 3) All of Paul's instruction is for believers to engage in radical obedience. Should we extrapolate these instructions to others? How can we differentiate between value advocacy and moral policing/value imposition?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

Put It On

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) As we have been raised with Christ, so there is a new nature for us. This time, Paul begins in Colossians 3:12-14 with relational virtues ("forgive" is even repeated for emphasis). Do I need God's grace to help me express one of these virtues more and more? 2) Colossians 3:15-16 focuses on body-centric virtues, to be exercised in the fellowship of believers. What surprising medium does Paul say we should use to teach and admonish each other? How does my faith community sing together? 3) All of Paul's instructions include the word "in Christ". What does this tell me about both the standard we are to live up to as well as the power we are to use to live?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JUN 4, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

JUN 5, MONDAY**Colossians 3:18-4:1****There Is No Favouritism**

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The passages here are similar to Ephesians 5:21-6:9 (May 12-15). All these relationships require obedience from both sides of the relationship. What are the perils of single-sided obedience? 2) All exhortations in today's passage are centered on our place before God our Lord and Master. Am I fully in submission to God alone today? 3) Embedded in today's passage is Colossians 3:25. How can this help us understand and obey everything written in today's passage?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JUN 6, TUESDAY

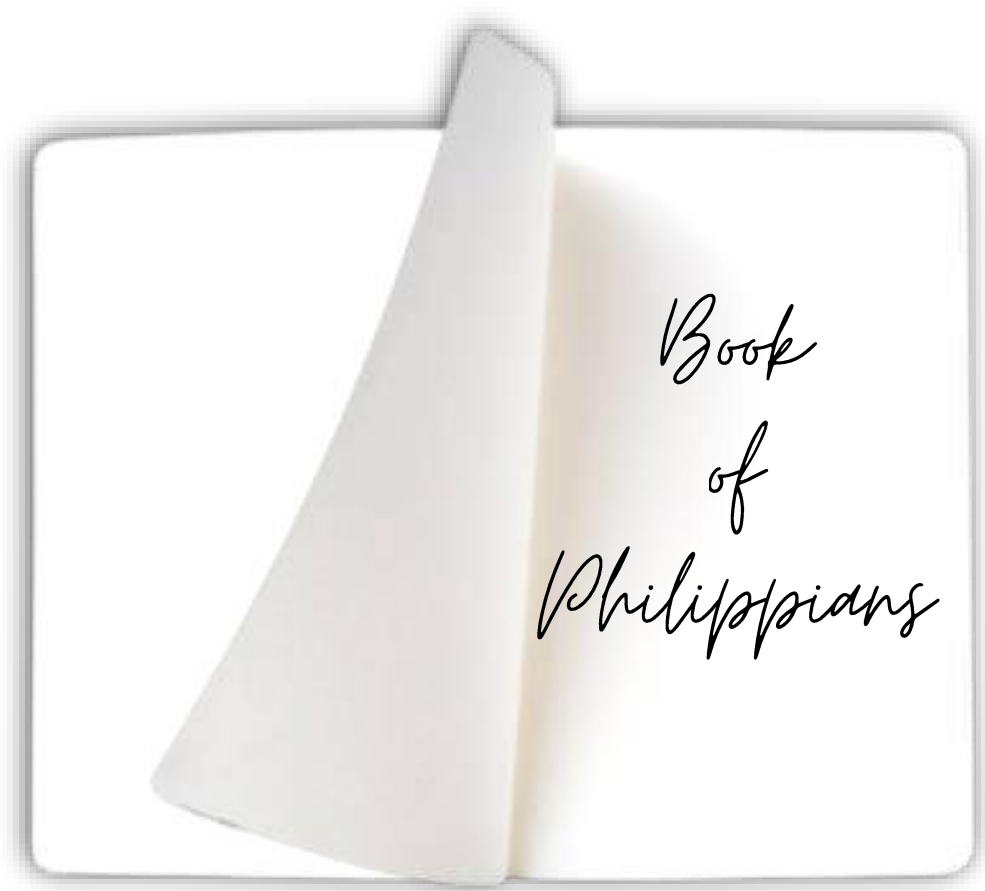
Colossians 4:2-6

Pray, Do, Talk

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) In today's conclusion, Paul starts first with exhorting the Colossians to pray. What do his words teach me about how - and for whom - I should pray? 2) Paul's next exhortation concerns our actions, in particular towards "outsiders". What do his words teach me about my attitude and approach towards Godly actions? 3) Finally, Paul exhorts us concerning our speech to "everyone" (not just "outsiders"). What concrete decisions should I make regarding my speech based on this familiar verse?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

Farewells and Greetings

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) We have already pondered Tychicus with our readings for May 19th, and Paul also mentions Onesimus here (whom we will read about in June). Tychicus is referred to as a "fellow slave in the Lord" while Onesimus is not. Why does Paul write this? 2) Two other people mentioned in today's readings are Mark (Acts 15:36-41) and Demas (2 Timothy 4:10). Let us pray for all our brethren to return to God's service and remain in God's service.
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Colossians 4:17 is a specific message and instruction for a specific person. As I read it, do I also hear the Spirit speaking to me?
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	



Book
of
Philippians

JUN 8, THURSDAY

Philippians 1:1–8

Start With Thanksgiving

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Paul rejoices in the Philippians' partnership in the gospel, despite being more than a thousand kilometers distant from them. How are Christians who are physically distant engaged in partnership with each other in the gospel to this day? 2) Philippians 1:6 is commonly memorized as an encouragement for believers of all ages. What is one way in which Christ is carrying on His good work in me? 3) Who are the brethren in Christ whom I am most thankful for, and why? Could I pray for and encourage them today?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

JUN 9, FRIDAY

Philippians 1:9–11

Prayers for the Philippians

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Paul's prayer presumes the presence of love in the Philippian believers. What is his first prayer for their love? 2) Paul also prays that their love would grow "in knowledge and depth of insight". To some of us, this would give the idea of a measured, intellectual, calculated expression, but the rest of this passage belies that assumption. What knowledge is Paul referring to? 3) We sometimes assume love (the greatest of these!) to be an end goal in itself. What does Philippians 1:10 have to say about this?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JUN 10, SATURDAY

Philippians 1:12-18

In Every Way Christ Is Preached

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Paul's chains are described here positively in their impact. What principle(s) can we learn from this? 2) Philippians 1:15-17 raises the spectre of those who "preach Christ" for selfish or sinful reasons. Is this something I am familiar with in my own faith community or in the church at large? 3) What is Paul's over-riding priority as expressed in today's passage? Can I also be given Paul's heart for Christ being preached?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JUN 11, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

JUN 12, MONDAY

Philippians 1:19–26

Christ Will Be Exalted

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Paul is speaking of his deliverance in the context of life and death. Does he have a clear preference between these two outcomes? 2) Do I prefer to live for Christ or die and be with Him? Which do I fear more? 3) In today's passage, Paul appears confident that he will be released. A few years after this is written, he will be martyred. Does this invalidate what he wrote to the Philippians? Was Paul's confidence misguided?
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

JUN 13, TUESDAY

Philippians 1:27–30

Conduct Worthy of the Gospel of Christ

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What are the standards of conduct worthy of the gospel of Christ that Paul lists in Philippians 1:27-28? 2) How can Paul's insights about suffering for Jesus Christ (Philippians 1:29) help me face suffering differently? 3) How can the body of Christ stand together with those who are undergoing persecution, both nearby and in far-off lands?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JUN 14, WEDNESDAY

Philippians 2:1–4

Humility Over Selfishness/ Vanity

Context	<p>1) Paul starts off in Philippians 2:1 by enumerating the benefits we have received in Christ. Which of these resonate strongly with me right now?</p> <p>2) Paul then encourages the Philippians towards unity. What are the facets of unity that Paul covers? Which of these does my faith community most need today?</p> <p>3) True Christ-like unity issues from a shared and distributed humility (Philippians 2:3-4). How does this humility reflect our Lord and Master?</p>
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

JUN 15, THURSDAY

Philippians 2:5-11

The Mind of Christ

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Today's passage is likely to be an early Christian hymn or poem, and reinforces Paul's instructions from yesterday's reading. What part of Philippians 2:6-8 is most amazing to me? 2) "Every knee shall bow", with no exceptions. What specific area of my life do I need to acknowledge Christ's Lordship over today? 3) "Every tongue" speaks both of the initial confession of the repentant sinner as well as the joyous praise of the redeemed saint. What brother or sister can I encourage today to acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JUN 16, FRIDAY

Philippians 2:12-18

Rejoicing Over Grumbling and Arguing

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Paul now turns his focus to the attitude of obedience. What does "fear and trembling" mean in Philippians 2:12? What is the realisation which should prompt this "fear and trembling"? 2) Paul exhorts the Philippians to obey "without grumbling or arguing". What are the pitfalls of mere grudging obedience to God's will? 3) Paul then explains the positive outcomes of the obedience of the Philippians in terms of both he and the Philippians rejoicing. How does rejoicing win over grumbling and arguing?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JUN 17, SATURDAY

Philippians 2:19–30

Sending the Soldiers Back

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) How are the two men mentioned in today's reading related to the church in Philippi? 2) What is Timothy's outstanding quality according to Paul? What servant of Christ do I know who reflects this quality? How can I pray for him or her today? 3) The short details given of Epaphroditus' story here reflect both his qualities as well as what he has endured. Paul instructs the Philippians to welcome him with honour. How are we as a church to treat God's soldiers when they return from their long (or short) sacrificial service?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JUN 18, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

JUN 19, MONDAY

Philippians 3:1–6

Put No Confidence in the Flesh

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Paul begins his warnings about Judaizers (who insisted on Old Testament requirements for believers) by saying "Rejoice in the Lord". How is this exhortation related to the topic of today's passage? 2) While Paul does warn the Philippian believers to watch out, he also emphasizes that "we who serve God by His Spirit" put no confidence in the flesh. What am I to understand by the contrast here between Spirit and flesh? 3) Paul's words in Philippians 3:4-6 can be read either as a grudging boast (by Judaizer standards), or as a confession of self-reliance and self-righteousness. How many of the traits Paul lists are the result of his own qualities and actions? What does this tell me about self-focused righteousness?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JUN 20, TUESDAY

Philippians 3:7-14

Pressing On Toward The Goal

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Paul now denounces what he once thought were gains. What caused this change in perspective? Have I had my own heart values realigned in the same way? 2) Paul now wants to know the power of Christ's resurrection and participate in His sufferings. How are my head and hands aligned with Philippians 3:10-11? 3) Unlike the Judaizers Paul is warning against, Paul is acutely aware of unachievability of the goal we have set before us. His response is to "press on". What is mine?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JUN 21, WEDNESDAY

Philippians 3:15–4:1

Our Citizenship is in Heaven

Context	
<p><i>Questions</i> to ponder</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Paul speaks of maturity, but not as an authoritarian leader. What does Philippians 3:15-16 teach us about helping our brethren grow in maturity? 2) Paul contrasts the citizen of the world (Philippians 3:19) with us whose citizenship is in heaven. Who among my faith community can be an example for me to follow? Who is following my own example? 3) As we eagerly await our Saviour's return (Come Lord Jesus!), let us take some time to express our eagerness in song, either alone or with our spiritual family members.
<p><i>Head</i> What can I understand?</p>	
<p><i>Heart</i> How do I respond?</p>	
<p><i>Hands</i> What must I do?</p>	

JUN 22, THURSDAY

Philippians 4:2-3

Reconciling Within Christ's Body

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Paul's prior words on humility and joyful obedience are now given an immediate and personal focus in the form of two servants of God in the Philippian church. How do I imagine the reactions of the congregation to have been when this letter was publicly read? 2) Paul pleads directly with both parties who are in dispute to come together in the Lord (a recurring phrase throughout this letter). He also asks another believer to help bring them together. How do we in our faith community handle sharp disputes? 3) Is the Holy Spirit prompting me about someone with whom I need to be reconciled? Who can help bring me and that person to the same mind in the Lord?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JUN 23, FRIDAY

Philippians 4:4-7

Sanctified Heart

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) These verses are very popular memory verses, speaking of our heart attitudes before God. Try to recite as many of them as you can by heart. Rejoice as you speak Scripture aloud. 2) Philippians 4:5 is much less commonly quoted, yet is no less important. Is my gentleness (born of Christ, not of my own personality) evident to all – to those outside, as well as to those closest to me? 3) There is a spiritual journey from anxiety to God-centered peace. How has my walk on that journey been? Is there a roadblock that I need God's (and other believer's) help to overcome on this journey?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JUN 24, SATURDAY

Philippians 4:8-13

Sanctified Head (Mind)

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Paul's imperatives here focus on the mind. What does Philippians 4:8 instruct us to focus our thoughts on? 2) In Philippians 4:10-12, Paul shows through his thanksgiving and response for the gift of the Philippian church the practical thought outcome of his instructions in Philippians 4:8. What is it that Paul knows and has learnt? 3) Philippians 4:13 is very easily misquoted and misused, to the point of claiming that we can "control" God's omnipotence (which is obviously false). What is the "all things" that Paul is talking about here? And who is it who enables Paul?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JUN 25, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

JUN 26, MONDAY

Philippians 4:14–19

Sanctified Hands

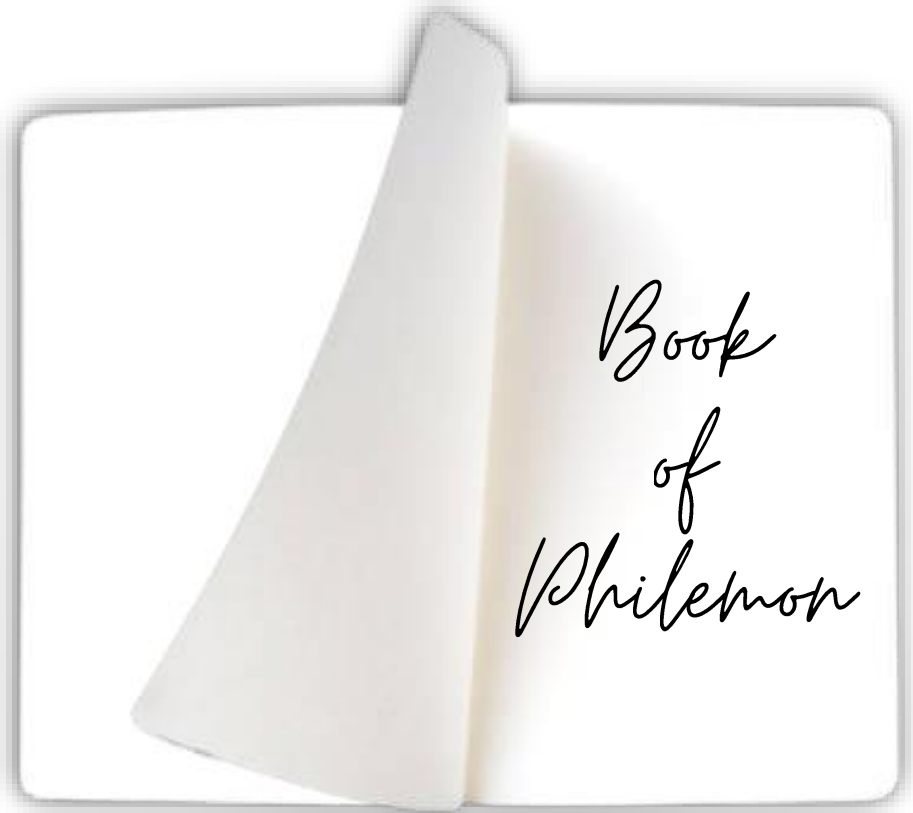
Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) In today's passage Paul continues to thank the Philippian church for the provision they provided to him. Were these gifts only spiritual in nature? 2) Paul speaks of crediting into accounts, yet clearly he is not the one doing the crediting. Who is it who rewards the cheerful giver, including by meeting all their needs? 3) Practical and financial support for each other, especially those in God's service, is both Scriptural and practically necessary. Am I faithfully exercising stewardship of what God has given to me in this regard?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JUN 27, TUESDAY

Philippians 4:20–23

Greetings From All

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Paul ends this letter starting with a doxology in Philippians 4:20. When have I last privately given glory to God? Can I pause now and praise God from whom all blessings flow? 2) Paul then sends greetings to, and from, various parts of Christ's body. When was the last time I greeted and met with my brethren from outside my faith community and local geography? How can I bind myself in love to the rest of the church? 3) Paul ends with a benediction, that the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with the Philippians' spirit. Let us bow our heads and accept this same grace which has been poured out on every one of us.
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	



JUN 28, WEDNESDAY

Philemon 1:1-7

Greetings to Philemon's Church

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) This letter is written to one man (Philemon), but the greetings also address the church he hosts. Why does Paul address a private matter (the former slave Onesimus) in a public letter? What can I learn here about community and shared responsibility? 2) Philemon 1:4-7 describes the man Philemon is, both individually and in the community of faith. How does verse 6 foreshadow the content of this letter? 3) What is my place and relationship with others in my faith community? Is there a deep trust and transparency there? How can we deepen our relationships?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JUN 29, THURSDAY

Philemon 1:8–16

My Son Onesimus

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What is the attitude which Paul is showing towards Philemon in today's passage? What is the basis of his appeal to Philemon (Philemon 1:8 and 1:14)? 2) Why does Paul address Onesimus as "my son Onesimus" and "my very heart"? What is the basis of Paul's care for Onesimus? 3) The gospel transforms relationships. Have I ever seen personal relationships transformed by the love of Christ?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

JUN 30, FRIDAY

Philemon 1:17–25

Even More Than Paul Asks

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) How should forgiveness and reconciliation look like in Christ's body? What is the most pressing reconciliation that my faith community currently needs? 2) Why is Paul so confident that Philemon will do even more than he asks? Do I have the same confidence in those of my faith community? 3) What evidence do I see of reconciliation in the faith practice of my church?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

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