

SPRING 2021

LifeWay

YOU



**ESSENTIALS OF
CHRISTIANITY**

+ + +

**HOW TO
SHARE CHRIST**

STUDY 1 ESSENTIALS OF CHRISTIANITY

OVERVIEW

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When we compare world religions, we quickly see that we are far apart in our beliefs and worldviews. Some people attempt to find a common ground by declaring, “It doesn’t matter what you believe, so long as you sincerely believe it.” But what we believe does matter! Our beliefs make a difference both now and for eternity. This study looks at the core truths central to the Christian faith. Within these core truths, we discover the character of God, the nature and work of Christ, who we are, and where we are going—truths that point us to a right relationship with God.

Robby Gallaty is the senior pastor of Long Hollow Baptist Church in Hendersonville, Tennessee.

STUDY 2 HOW TO SHARE CHRIST

OVERVIEW

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The gospel of Jesus Christ is truly life-changing. Every follower of Christ knows that and has experienced it, but we are surrounded by countless others who have yet to hear or experience that same gospel. Christians are called to point others to the gospel. It is a privilege to share with others the message of Christ, the way out of death and into eternal life.

Marshelle Wilburn is an urban missionary in the San Francisco Bay Area. She partners with her husband, Port, in church planting, associational missions, and marriage and family coaching.

A PROMISE THAT WILL NEVER BE BROKEN

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It hurts when people break a promise. Some people make promises they have no intention of honoring. Others sincerely mean well, but circumstances interfere and they're unable to do what they said they promised they'd do.

God is not like us. When He makes a promise, He keeps it. Period. He is always faithful to His word. For example, He promises an abundant and eternal life to those who trust in His Son, Jesus Christ.

"If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.... For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Rom. 10:9,13).

But we don't automatically enjoy the benefits of this wonderful promise. We must understand and believe Jesus died on the cross, taking our sin upon Himself, and then rose from the dead, making a new, eternal life possible for us. As we believe, we also acknowledge His lordship, turning from sin and surrendering our lives to Him.

God's promise is for you. If you would like a new life in Christ, repent of your sins and put your faith in Him. Admit to God you are a sinner and ask Him to forgive you. Turn from the sin that has kept you from God and accept Jesus' gift of forgiveness. Confess your faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Express your repentance and faith by praying something like this:

"Dear God, I know I am a sinner. I believe Jesus died on the cross to forgive me of my sins. I ask You to forgive me. I now accept Your gift of eternal life. Thank You for Your love, forgiveness, and a new life in Jesus Christ. From this day forward, I choose to follow You. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Share your decision to follow Jesus with a pastor or those in your Bible study group. Get involved in a church that will help you grow in faith. Be baptized as an expression of your faith.

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HOLMAN BIBLES IS PROUD TO PARTNER
WITH DR. TONY EVANS TO PUBLISH THE
CSB TONY EVANS STUDY BIBLE.

THE
TONY EVANS
STUDY BIBLE

The *Tony Evans Study Bible* includes extensive study notes and resources crafted and curated by Dr. Tony Evans. Through study notes, articles, Q&As, application questions, and more, Dr. Evans helps readers apply the truth of God's Word and live transformed lives that transfer the values of the kingdom of God to others.

The *Tony Evans One Volume Bible Commentary* also available.



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ON THE COVER

Otelia brings Louisiana charm to our cover. She is a retiree with 37 years experience as a social worker. Otelia graduated from Grambling State University where she honorably reigned as 1972-73 Miss Grambling. Her ultimate goal is to live a life that honors God by serving others and sharing the love of Jesus Christ. Otelia loves missionary work and has made several short-term trips to Ecuador, Jamaica, and Africa. She is a member of CitiPointe Church where she enjoys working with senior adults. God has called Otelia to teach in this ministry, and she also coordinates group activities. Otelia said she is daily inspired by her husband, Art, and their two sons, A. J. and Casey. In her free time, she enjoys cooking, hiking, bike riding, the arts, gardening, and spending time with family and friends. Otelia said her exposure to the *YOU* curriculum goes back to 2014 when she was in a Bible study at another church. She was blessed by her experience and called *YOU* inspirational, informative, thought-provoking, and a powerful teaching and learning tool.

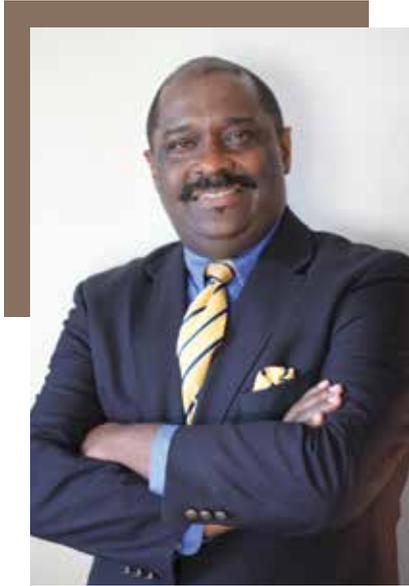


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EDITORIAL

MARK CROSTON

After I moved away from home I asked my mother for her sweet potato pie recipe. She quickly wrote some things on a piece of paper and gave it to me. Sometime later I tried to bake one. My pie was nothing like my mother's. The next time I was at her house I told her the old one did not work, and I asked her for it again. She had cooked so long without a recipe that it took her some time to think about the true essentials of her sweet potato pie.

In this quarter we will be working on sharing something far more important than sweet potato pie. We will be discussing sharing Christ, but like my Mom's recipe, it's vital that we get this correct. Before we discuss "How to Share Christ," we need to make sure we are all on the same page about the faith we profess. Sometimes ingredients of other faiths or secular ideas as have crept into our talk. So, we will take some time to study "Essentials of Christianity."

The COVID-19 pandemic would not allow us to meet face-to-face for the 2020 Black Church Leadership and Family Conference, but we had almost as good a time as we took the conference online. I said, "Almost as good!" Just like online church is not as good as being in the house of the Lord, the BCLFC is even better in person. So, join me July 19-23, 2021 in Ridgecrest, North Carolina. Each year we plan something new to keep it fresh and to make it better. There is a full program for every member of the family! This is the place to bring your church leaders and their families to be edified, encouraged, and energized. Get all the details at LifeWay.com/BlackChurchLife.

Now, grab your Bible and allow God to speak through YOU!

Dr. Mark A. Croston, Sr.

YOU General Editor

National Director of Black Church Ministries

www.lifeway.com/BlackChurchLife

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark". The signature is stylized with a large, looping flourish at the end.



GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOU

YOU is a three-in-one learner and leader resource with inspirational and educational features to enhance Bible study that leads to spiritual maturity and life change. Here is information to help you get the most out of *YOU*.

LEARNER PAGES

The first half of *YOU* includes pages for personal study. These should be read by the learner and leader prior to group time. Included in each session:

Memory Verses encourage filling the mind with the Word of God to strengthen every aspect of spiritual life.

Digging Deeper provides a deeper look at a word, character, or other aspect from the session.

Did You Know? provides an African-American or urban historical fact or update connected to the session.

DAILY READINGS

Included with each session are five devotionals to be read by the learner and leader. The benefits of a daily devotion are innumerable. Their primary purpose in this resource is to focus attention on the biblical content of each session for application of and conformity to the Word of God.

LEADER PAGES

The second half of *YOU* includes pages to guide teaching each session. Leaders can use the leader pages to guide learners through the passage and its key emphases as detailed on the learner pages. Here are suggestions on how to teach:

Prior to the session, read and study the Bible passage, keywords, and learner pages.

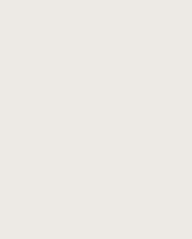
Plan teaching using the leader pages. Keep in mind that because of time, it may not be possible to use every teaching suggestion. Also the teaching suggestions are in sequential order for easy use.

Features to use when teaching include: The Point, which is readily recognizable on the learner and leader pages; the question at the top of the first page of each learner session; Keywords on the Scripture pages; “Object Lessons”; “Digging Deeper”; “Did You Know?”; Pack Items*; and Commentary at the end of each session on leader pages.

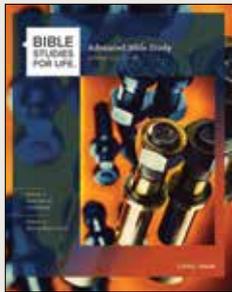
Refine your teaching plans when necessary.

PRAY

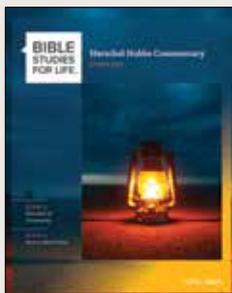
Because the Holy Spirit is the guide for your study, invite Him to show you how to “rightly divide the word of truth” as you teach your group. Read the Bible passage several times, asking the Holy Spirit to show you its meaning and application.



FOR THOSE WHO WANT TO CREATE A DEEPER LEARNING EXPERIENCE



The **Advanced Bible Study** is written for learners who desire more extensive commentary. It includes exposition of each session's Scripture passage, an examination of keywords, an introduction to the setting of the passage and biblical life and times, questions to guide the study, and interactive responses to help readers apply God's truths to their lives today.



The **Herschel Hobbs Commentary** is designed specifically for leaders and provides a comprehensive exposition of each session's Scripture passage. Specific attention is called to items in the biblical text that readers would miss without a commentary. This commentary is based on the King James Version, but interacts with all major English translations.



The **YOU Leader Pack** is a collection of teaching aids designed to help leaders provide a visual and interactive experience for learners. Each pack contains posters, charts, maps, and handouts that can add another layer to teaching and engender needed variety that makes learning more interesting.

The **YOU Leader Pack** is located at lifeway.com/YOU



Social Media: Connect with a community of *YOU* users.

Post responses to questions, share teaching ideas, and link to great blog content. [Facebook.com/YOUBibleStudy](https://www.facebook.com/YOUBibleStudy)

For more about *YOU* go to www.lifeway.com/YOU

YOU DISCIPLESHIP PLAN

The Pathway of Discipleship

Growing in Christ is a journey—a lifelong journey—but what does that look like? LifeWay’s research reveals eight signposts that indicate believers are on the discipleship pathway that leads to spiritual maturity. Each year, *YOU* engages all eight of these areas. Following this intentional plan for discipleship ensures progress on the pathway to becoming more like Christ.

Visit BibleStudiesforLife.com for a fuller picture of this discipleship plan through 2022.

8 SIGNPOSTS	Fall 2020	Winter 2020-21	Spring 2021	Summer 2021
Build Relationships	After God’s Own Heart			
Seek God	All In: A Life of Commitment			
Obey God and Deny Self		When Emotions Rise		
Engage with Scripture		Spiritual Disciplines: Becoming More Like Jesus		
Exercise Faith			Essentials of Christianity	
Share Christ			How to Share Christ	
Live Unashamed				Walking in Confidence
Serve God and Others				Discovering and Using Your Spiritual Gifts

STUDY 1 ESSENTIALS OF CHRISTIANITY

HOW THIS STUDY FITS YOUR'S DISCIPLESHIP PLAN

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Exercise Faith.

Within the pages of Scripture, God has revealed truth, the core things that define Christianity. Knowing these truths is more than an academic exercise; as we trust what God has revealed to us, our faith impacts how we live both now and for eternity.

Writer Bio

Robby Gallaty

is an author and the senior pastor of Long Hollow Baptist Church in Hendersonville, Tennessee. He and his wife, Kandi, founded Replicate Ministries in 2008, and have devoted their lives to making disciples who make disciples. They live in Gallatin, Tennessee with their two boys.

Chandra Bennett

adapted the learner pages for the *YOU* audience. Chandra has written numerous Bible study resources and articles. She currently works as a literacy specialist and serves as a women's Bible study teacher at her church.



A BIBLE STUDY ON THE CORE TRUTHS OF CHRISTIAN FAITH

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“Do my beliefs really matter?” We may be tempted to ask ourselves this question because we live in a world that has become open to and tolerant of a variety of worldviews. Some people attempt to find a common ground with others by declaring, “It doesn’t matter what you believe, as long as you sincerely believe it.” But what we believe does matter! Our beliefs make a difference.

This study looks at core truths central to the Christian faith that have been revealed in the pages of Scripture. Without these truths, life loses all meaning and hope. But within these core truths, we discover the character of God, the nature and work of Christ, who we are, and where we are going—truths that point us to a right relationship with God. Knowing these truths is more than an academic exercise; as we trust what God has revealed to us, our faith impacts how we live both now and for eternity.

During this study, we will be reminded of these fundamental elements of our faith:

- God has revealed Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God created us to serve and honor Him.
- We are sinners, and on our own, we can do nothing to solve our sin problem.
- Forgiveness is possible because Jesus died on the cross for our sins.
- We experience new life when we trust the risen Christ.
- The Holy Spirit indwells and empowers Christians.
- Jesus will return to establish His eternal kingdom.

As believers, we need to know what we believe, so we can represent God well in the midst of a culture of unbelief and religious error.

THE NATURE OF GOD

Leader pages on pp. 102-105

THE POINT:
GOD HAS REVEALED HIMSELF TO US AS FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT.

JOHN /// 14:8-11,16-20,23-26

⁸ “Lord,” said Philip, “show us the Father, and that’s enough for us.” ⁹ Jesus said to him, “Have I been among you all this time and you do not know me, Philip? The one who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰ Don’t you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I speak to you I do not speak on my own. The Father who lives in me does his works. ¹¹ Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. Otherwise, believe because of the works themselves.

.....
¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever. ¹⁷ He is the Spirit of truth. The world is unable to receive him because it doesn’t see him or know him. But you do know him, because he remains with you and will be in you. ¹⁸ “I will not leave you as orphans; I am coming to you. ¹⁹ In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me. Because I live, you will live too. ²⁰ On that day you will know that I am in my Father, you are in me, and I am in you.

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MEMORY VERSE

.....
²³ **Jesus answered, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.** ²⁴ The one who doesn’t love me will not keep my words. The word that you hear is not mine but is from the Father who sent me. ²⁵ “I have spoken these things to you while I remain with you. ²⁶ But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have told you.

KEYWORDS

The works (v. 11)—The miracles that Jesus performed. These not only demonstrated Jesus is God, but they also validated the truth of His words and teaching.

Counselor (v. 16)—Literally, one called alongside another. The Spirit protects, guides, and supports believers until Jesus returns.

WHAT HAS GOD REVEALED ABOUT HIMSELF SO WE WILL KNOW HIM?

It's complicated. This is a sentence we all have uttered at some point. We all face situations and relationships that seem complicated to us, but with enough effort, determination, and time we usually can figure them out. However, some things are beyond our ability to grasp, at least for now. For example, a four-year-old may be learning to count, but we don't expect her to be able to understand calculus. It's not that the child is unable to learn, but her brain is still developing. It will be a while before abstract ideas like calculus are within her ability to understand. While calculus is complicated now, she will grow in her understanding.

One subject that remains beyond our ability to grasp is the Trinity. A key truth in Scripture is that God has revealed Himself as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Three Persons, but One God. Perhaps our finite minds cannot fully comprehend how three can be one, but we can still appreciate the beauty of the nature of God. Let's take a deeper dive into John 14 to discover more about how God has revealed Himself.

To Know the Son Is to Know the Father // John 14:8-11

The "Trinity" is a word we use to try to put God's nature into human words. It describes three ways God has revealed Himself to us. He has revealed Himself as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. We do not find the word "Trinity" anywhere in Scripture, but many passages help us understand exactly how it works. John 14 is one of those passages.

On Jesus' last night with His disciples before His arrest and crucifixion, He told them, "If you know me, you will also know my Father. From now on you do know him and have seen him" (v. 7). This wasn't clear to Philip, so he made a request: "Show us the Father, and that's enough for us" (v. 8). Jesus essentially told him, "You're looking at Him." Indeed, Jesus equated Himself with the Father, but He was not saying He is the Father.

IN WHAT WAYS DOES JESUS SHOW US WHAT GOD IS LIKE?



THE POINT: GOD HAS REVEALED HIMSELF TO US AS FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT.

Saint Patrick was a missionary in Ireland during the fifth century. Legend has it that when Patrick went to Ireland to share the gospel, the people had trouble understanding the Trinity. So he reached down, plucked a clover from the ground, and explained how the clover had three distinct leaves, but it was just one plant. This might be a helpful way to get the idea of the Trinity in our minds, but it falls short in an important way: God is not divided into parts. Each part of a clover is just a part of the whole. But each Person of the Trinity is fully God, not just a part of Him.

Our inability to fully understand how the Father and the Son are one but separate does not mean we can't appreciate the way He works. We might not understand how an engine works in our cars, but we can still rely on it to take us from place to place. In the same way, we may not understand exactly how God works, but we can know and trust that He does work.

When the Word of God became flesh and made His home among us (John 1:14), He came to us as Jesus, the Son of God. Jesus is fully God, and He revealed God to us in a way we can relate to. He became human like us. He looked like us. He could walk with us and talk with us. The people could see and touch Jesus. And most importantly, even though He is God, Jesus died as a human. The key difference is that Jesus died with our sins upon Himself. He died in our place so that we could be cleansed from our sins and have eternal life with Him. Look back at what Jesus said to Philip in verses 9-11. By looking at Jesus, we see God. God the Son shows us God the Father.

ACCORDING TO VERSE 11, WHAT ENCOURAGEMENT DOES JESUS PROVIDE TO THOSE WHO MAY STRUGGLE TO UNDERSTAND THAT JESUS SHOWS US WHAT GOD IS LIKE?

To Have Jesus Is to Have the Holy Spirit

// John 14:16-20

Jesus had just given His disciples seemingly sad news: He was going away, and they couldn't come with Him. It had already been a traumatic night because they had learned one of them would betray Jesus before the night was over. But Jesus didn't leave them hanging in despair. He was about to leave them, but He would be giving them a gift that was, if



DIGGING DEEPER COUNSELOR

When we hear the word *counselor*, we may think of a professional listener who allows us to lie on a sofa and talk through our issues. However, Jesus was referring to something a little different.

In verse 16, Jesus used the word "Counselor," translated from a Greek word that literally means "a calling to one's side." It refers to someone who comes alongside us to comfort, encourage, and exhort us. Specifically, Jesus was referring to the third Person of the Trinity—the Holy Spirit. A key to understanding the Holy Spirit is Jesus' use of the word "another." In the Greek language, it means "another of the same kind." In other words, this Counselor, the Holy Spirit, would be just like Jesus! They are both God.

How is Jesus' description of the Holy Spirit similar and different from the way we think of the Holy Spirit?



they could believe it, better than the gift they had sitting in front of them. Later that evening, Jesus told them it was *good* that He was going because, if He didn't, the gift wouldn't come (John 16:7). That gift was the Holy Spirit.

ACCORDING TO THESE VERSES, WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF HAVING THE HOLY SPIRIT IN YOUR LIFE?

Jesus explained two things about the Holy Spirit. First, the Counselor was coming so the disciples wouldn't be left "as orphans" (v. 18). Jesus wanted them to know His physical absence didn't mean that the Father had left them on their own. In addition, the Counselor was coming so they could still have access to God just as they had access to God when they spoke with Jesus face-to-face.

The eleven disciples sitting with Jesus—Judas having departed (John 13:30)—had already fulfilled the only requirement for receiving the Holy Spirit: they recognized and acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah, the One who came to save them. The promise of the Holy Spirit meant they would not be disconnected from a relationship with God. He would walk with them every day of their lives.

This is also good news for us. We don't have Jesus physically standing beside us, eating dinner with us, or teaching us face-to-face. But we still have access to Him because we have His Holy Spirit. When Jesus, the Son of God, is in your life, God the Holy Spirit is in your life. The Holy Spirit will work through you in ways you can't comprehend in order to carry out the will of the Father.

The Holy Spirit Continues the Works of Christ // John 14:23-26

When Jesus said it was good that He was going away and that the Holy Spirit was taking His place (John 16:7), He meant it. In God's Word, we have the written testimonies of people who met the living Jesus; they recorded what Jesus said and did while He was on earth. But now we have the Holy Spirit to guide us in the same way Jesus guided His disciples.

Jesus said the Spirit would "teach you all things and remind you of everything I have told you" (v. 26). Later, as the Spirit moved God's people to action, we see Him empowering them to share the gospel in languages they didn't speak (Acts 2:4), heal the sick and the lame (Acts 3:1-9), and discern truth from lies (Acts 5:3-4).

THE POINT: GOD HAS REVEALED HIMSELF TO US AS FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT.

Whatever the act or situation, each time someone did an amazing thing through the power of the Holy Spirit, it was to further the kingdom of God. It allowed them to reach people who had been unreachable, speak to those who had not heard, teach the gospel, and make disciples in impossible places.

The Holy Spirit we read about in Scripture is the same Spirit at work in our hearts today. He still convicts us, moves us, and empowers us. And He dwells inside of everyone who calls Jesus Lord. The Father sent the Son to give us an example to follow and to die for our sins. He sent the Holy Spirit to continue the work of the Son by empowering believers to be His church.

The Holy Spirit comes alongside us and instructs us in the ways of God. Through the Holy Spirit we can understand God's truth in Scripture, live the way Jesus taught, and carry out the work Jesus left for us to do—making disciples of all nations.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THESE VERSES ABOUT THE ROLES OF THE FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT?

DID YOU KNOW?

We may not fully understand the Trinity, but in the words of African-American hymnologist Charles A. Tindley, “We’ll Understand It Better By and By.” Tindley (1851-1933) was born in Maryland to a father who was a slave and a mother who was free. At the tender age of two, his mother died. To ensure he remained free, he lived with his mother’s sister, who was also free. Tindley worked alongside slaves and was very familiar with plantation life. As a young man, he moved to Philadelphia, where he committed himself to learning. In 1880, he was licensed to preach at Bainbridge Street Methodist Episcopal Church, and he became the church’s janitor. Years later (in 1902), he became the pastor, and the church grew rapidly under his leadership. History notes that Tindley wrote the hymn “We’ll Understand It Better By and By” as he faced challenges with negotiations to purchase a larger facility that would seat nearly 1,000 people.¹

What do you want to understand about the Trinity by and by?

LIVE IT

What will you do with the truth that God has revealed Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

We don't have to live in confusion and with unanswered questions about God because through the Scriptures He has revealed Himself to us. He has revealed Himself as our Father who loves us, as the Son, who died for our sins, and as the Holy Spirit, who will never leave our side. He is all of these persons, yet, He is one. This is a mystery beyond our understanding, but it does not change who God is.

+ + +

- **Pray.** Thank God for being a God who reveals Himself to us. Thank Him for coming to us in Jesus Christ and for giving us His Holy Spirit to work in us and through us.
- **Study.** Compare two passages: Genesis 1:1-2 and John 1:1-18. Underline where you see the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit in these passages. Make note of the similarities and differences.
- **Display.** Just as the world around us reveals God, we are called to reveal Him to those around us. Trust the Holy Spirit to give you the opportunity and the words to point others to Jesus.

DAILY READINGS

1. ONE WAY TO THE FATHER // JOHN 14:1-6

Prior to teaching the disciples about the indwelling Holy Spirit in John 14, Jesus prepared His anxious disciples for His inevitable departure. Jesus said, “Don’t let your heart be troubled” (v. 1). Then He encouraged them by pointing to the unity between God the Father and Son. Jesus assured them He was preparing a place for them to join Him. When Thomas honestly admitted his confusion—“We don’t know where you’re going. How can we know the way?” (v. 5)—Jesus declared He is the only way to God the Father. He alone provides access to the Father because He alone paid the penalty for our sins. Thomas reminds us to come to Jesus when we are confused.

Prayerfully ask Him to answer your questions and strengthen your faith.

2. NOT UNDERSTANDING IS OK // ISAIAH 55:8-9

When we think about the Trinity, it’s easy to get our brains in a twist. How can one be three? Are there three Gods? Christians have struggled to understand the doctrine of the Trinity for thousands of years. Just as we can watch a TV without fully understanding how it works, we can embrace and trust the truth that God is one in essence, but He exists in three distinct Persons. This passage reminds us God’s ways and thoughts are higher and different from human ways and thoughts. We may not fully understand the Trinity, and that’s OK.

Make a conscious effort to trust Him even if you don’t have or understand all the details.

3. FAITH REQUIRED // LUKE 8:22-25

While on the boat with Jesus in Luke 8:22-25, the disciples had enough faith to believe they would be able to cross the lake with Jesus at the beginning of the trip. However, when the storms started to wage war on the lake and they feared their lives might be in danger, they momentarily forgot the

power and concern of their sleeping Master. Most of us are like the disciples when we face anything that causes us to doubt. The question, “Where is your faith?” (v. 25) is a reminder that when we don’t fully understand something in life, we don’t have to abandon our faith in Jesus.

Let us trust and rest in Him because He is with us.

4. IN THE BEGINNING, GOD // GENESIS 1:1

A few years ago, my family took a trip to the Creation Museum in Petersburg, Kentucky. We enjoyed the experience, and it strengthened our faith. While there, we were reminded that God’s Word is the place to begin if we want to make sense of the world in which we live. This is because, as Genesis 1:1 reminds us, God is the uncreated Heavenly Father who existed before there was a universe. Speaking of Himself through the prophet Isaiah, the Lord declares He is “the Creator of the heavens, the God who formed the earth and made it, the one who established it... ‘I am the Lord, and there is no other’” (Isa. 45:18).

Let us remember that the creation story is a true testimony of the greatness of our God.

5. GOD’S GREATEST CREATION // GENESIS 1:26

Until my daughter was about nine-years-old, I could give her a few canisters of modeling clay, and she would create for hours. We even had family challenges to see who could create the best version of the word selected. It’s amazing what we can make with modeling clay. However, it’s even more breathtaking to read about God’s creative power in Genesis 1. That He created humanity in His image and likeness—giving humans the ability to reason, experience emotions, and make moral decisions—gives me goosebumps! We have been given the most privileged role in all of creation.

How will you take care of the world He created and live in a way that honors Him?