

Welcome to the 30-Day Bible Reading Challenge!

We're glad you've joined us for the 30-Day Bible Reading Challenge. Through this challenge you'll foster an important habit—spending time in God's Word every day. Developing this habit won't always be easy, but it will be something you'll never regret.

Over the next thirty days, we'll go through the book of Acts together. As you learn about the history of the early Church and God's plan for the Church overall, you'll also discover an individual call for each of us to be faithful to the Lord and share the gospel with others.

You'll receive a daily email for thirty days with a Scripture verse, a short devotional, reflection questions, and a tool to help you study the Scripture for yourself. As you read verse by verse and chapter by chapter, we hope you'll sense God speaking to your heart. He may give you some marching instructions for the day, awaken you to a truth you've never seen before, or show you an area of your heart or mind He wants to transform.

Whatever He reveals, we pray that as you get into God's Word, His Word will get into you—and make you more like His Son, Jesus!

The *Revive Our Hearts* Team

Day 1: Waiting on the Spirit's Power

(by Erin Davis)

Today's Reading

[Acts 1:1–26](#)

“While staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, ‘you heard from me.’” —Acts 1:4

Devotional

Why did Jesus ask the disciples to huddle together and wait after His ascension? Why not strike while the proverbial iron was hot? Rally the troops when everyone was still abuzz about the empty tomb?

The disciples couldn't have grasped it fully, but they were about to turn the world upside down. The gospel would be unleashed on humanity through this ragtag bunch. It was a feat they could never accomplish in their own human strength. They were destined to fail without the Spirit's power. Christ instructed the disciples to wait because they needed the Holy Spirit, the “Helper,” that He promised them.

I know there are areas where you are waiting to see God move. *We all have them.* If we were writing the story of our lives, perhaps this chapter would be in the books already, and yet we're still waiting. Though painful, waiting is a reminder of how much we need the Helper in our lives. We can rage against the waiting, or like the disciples we can huddle together and wait to see God move. Together, let's choose the latter and bank on the truth that the Holy Spirit is always right on time.

Prayer

Jesus, thank You for seasons of waiting. Use them to teach me to depend on You. Show me how to wait for the Spirit's power instead of trying to make things happen on my own.

Reflect and Respond:

- Can you think of another time when the Holy Spirit was right on time in Scripture?
- How about in your own life?
- What is one area of your life where you are waiting for the Holy Spirit's help?

Go Deeper

Since you're going to be reading in Acts for the next thirty days, take some time today to [understand the context](#) of the book as a whole. Ask yourself, *Who wrote the book? To whom was it written? When was it written? What are some major themes?*

Day 2: A Free Total Makeover

(by Leanna Shepard)

Today's Reading

[Acts 2:1–47](#)

“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” —Acts 2:21

Devotional

Ready for a new you?

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Your life will never be the same!

We're constantly bombarded with marketing campaigns full of empty promises. But there's one offer of complete transformation that always holds true—and it costs you nothing.

When Jesus ascended to heaven, He left us with the promise of a Helper, the Spirit of Truth who convicts and empowers ([Acts 1:8](#)). In Acts 2, this promise was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost when the Spirit descended on the apostles, leaving them forever changed.

Peter's "sermon," beginning in Acts 2:14, reveals that his audience was among those who only days prior called for Jesus' crucifixion. Yet by the end of the chapter, they're repenting and believing, living with one another in harmony, and generously attending to each other's needs. This is the transforming power of the Holy Spirit! You cannot encounter God's love and be left unaltered.

Jesus offers forgiveness of sin and total transformation to all who believe, regardless of your past. It's not too late to respond like Peter's audience and "repent and be baptized . . . in the name of Jesus Christ" and receive God's free and eternal gift.

Prayer

Father, thank You for the gift of the Holy Spirit, which was made possible through the sacrifice of Your Son, Jesus. Your Word says the Helper guides me in all truth and gives life. Fill me with Your Spirit, Lord, that my life may honor and reflect You.

Reflect and Respond

- Have you received God's good and precious gift of the Spirit?
- Is there evidence of the fruit of the Spirit in your life ([Gal. 5:22–23](#); [Eph. 5:18–21](#))?
- Thank the Lord for the ways the Spirit has changed you since He first entered your heart.

Go Deeper

Knowing the type of genre you're reading will determine how well you understand and then apply a passage. For example, if you don't recognize the difference between historical narrative and the epistles, you might read something as prescriptive rather than descriptive (and vice versa). For more help in this area, check out Jen Wilkin's excellent talk about genres and rules for interpretation on the *Revive Our Hearts* podcast, "[How to Approach Scripture.](#)"

Day 3: A Reason to Leap for Joy

(by Leslie Bennett)

Today's Reading

[Acts 3:1–26](#)

"Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus."
—Acts 3:19–20

Devotional

In Acts 3, Luke tells the story of a lame man who camped each day by the Beautiful Gate of Solomon's Temple. Lying against the opulent bronze backdrop, the beggar hoped the people passing by would toss him some spare change. Panhandling was his livelihood, and it was all he'd ever known.

Little did he know that particular day would be his last day putting his hand out. He was appointed for a life-changing encounter with Peter and John, who God had endowed with the authority to heal in Jesus' name.

The apostles didn't have money, but they couldn't escape noticing the beggar. They gave him what they had, the healing power of Jesus—which is better than gold or silver! Peter lent a hand to help the man stand on his feet for the first time. Instantly, he stepped . . . walked . . . leapt . . . then jumped for joy praising God! The miracle couldn't be denied.

Peter quickly seized the attention of the wildly reacting crowd to deflect their praise from himself. Thousands of spiritually lame people were saved ([Acts 4:4](#)) as Peter delivered an impromptu sermon calling for repentance and turning to Jesus Christ in faith.

Peter's sermon is for our ears, too. Turning away from sin and turning to God leads to spiritual refreshment that might be reminiscent of standing under a waterfall on a scorching summer day. The grace of God made a way for our sins to be washed away like a cleansing waterfall, by sending His Son who fulfilled every prophecy and promise in the Old Testament.

When we fall into sin, the arms of Jesus are open as we return to Him in repentance and faith in His name. God's mercy and kindness lead us to repentance ([Eph. 2:6–8](#); [Rom. 2:4](#)).

Doesn't His grace compel you to leap and praise God?

Prayer

Father, nothing but the blood of Jesus can wash away my sin and make me whole again! I humbly confess and agree with You as you reveal my sin. Thank You for granting forgiveness in His Name. I am forgiven and free!

Reflect and Respond

- You cannot give away what you do not possess. Do you have saving faith in Jesus' name?
- Repentance is a change of mind that causes a change of behavior. What changes have there been in your attitude and actions since you became a Christian?

Go Deeper

You can sharpen your Bible skills by recording insights and answers from three basic questions each time you read a passage of Scripture:

- What does it say? (Make observations about the text.)
- What does it mean? (Look for the implications or the interpretation of the text.)
- What should I do? (Make practical application of the text.)

Find help to hone this Bible skill by reading Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth's article "[Write As You Read.](#)"

Day 4: There's Power in His Name

(by Mindy Kroesche)

Today's Reading

[Acts 4:1–37](#)

"There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." —Acts 4:12

Devotional

When you put the right name on something, it adds a level of authority. For example, if my kids want to go on a field trip, they can't put my neighbor's signature on their permission slips. If I think my friend should be the French ambassador, it doesn't mean much coming from me. But if the president signs off? That's different.

When it comes to our spiritual lives, there's only one name that has the authority to make a difference—the name of Jesus.

In Acts 4, after Peter and John healed a man lame from birth and shared the gospel with the crowd, the religious leaders got upset. "By what power or by what name did you do this?" they asked (v. 4).

Peter laid it out plainly: “by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.” It’s by Jesus, Peter said, that this man who had never walked in his life, whose leg muscles were atrophied and useless, was now “standing before you well.”

But Peter pointed out that Jesus has the ultimate authority over both our bodily sickness and our sin-sick hearts—“There is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (v. 12).

It’s only by the name of Jesus by which we are saved from our sins. And it’s through His name we have freedom from sin, in His name we fulfill the Great Commission, and at the sound of His name that every knee shall bow ([Rom. 14:11](#)).

Prayer

Jesus, I’m so thankful that You rule over both the physical and spiritual world and that there is power in Your name. When I’m having a tough day, week, or year, remind me that it’s only through Your name that I find salvation and can have victory over sin.

Reflect and Respond

- Do you ever look to something other than Jesus for salvation? If so, what?
- Are there areas of life where you need to cede control to the authority of Christ?

Go Deeper

As you read through Acts 4, look for key words or phrases. How often are they repeated through the passage? Are they literal or figurative? What do they mean in context? How do they fit with the main point of the passage? For more insight on how to use this Bible study tool, check out the article “[How to Study Your Bible Part 2](#).”

Day 5: Get Off Envy’s Crazy Train!

(by Hayley Mullins)

Today’s Reading

[Acts 5:1–42](#)

“They left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name.” —Acts 5:41

Devotional

Have you ever done something *crazy* out of envy? I know I have. In today’s passage, we have two examples of people doing something ungodly—and completely bonkers—when they got jealous.

The beginning of Acts 5 tells us about Ananias and Sapphira, who looked wildly generous on the outside but had hearts filled with hypocrisy and envy. That little word “but” at the beginning of verse 1 directs us to the end of chapter 4. In the midst of everyone giving what they could, Barnabas sold property and laid it at the apostles’ feet. Rather than following his forthright example, Ananias and Sapphira sought after recognition without sacrifice and lied to the Holy Spirit. (That’s crazy!) Envy led them to attempt to make themselves look better than they actually were.

Later in the passage, the Jewish religious leaders see the apostles working miracles and gaining followers, and they arrest them. Why? They were “filled with jealousy” (v. 17). They took the people who were relieving their people’s misery and imprisoned them. (That’s crazy!) Rather than falsely emulating the good like Ananias and Sapphira, these men sought to stop it entirely.

Do either of these scenarios sound familiar to you? How can we solve our crazy envy problem? Verses 29 and 41 tell us. We “obey God rather than men” and rejoice when we’re “counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name.” We continue doing good in submission to God, even when others get recognized or when we’re on the receiving end of someone’s vengeful jealousy. That will keep us off envy’s crazy train—and bring great glory to our Savior.

Prayer

Lord, have mercy on us for being envious, crazy, and controlling rather than trusting You and rejoicing in others’ honor. Forgive us for seeking to be thought of as better than we actually are. Give us grace to live forthrightly and gladly for Your name’s sake.

Reflect and Respond

- How have you sought to make yourself look better than you actually are?
- How have you stopped others from doing good or being recognized?

Go Deeper

Summarizing is a great tactic to add into [your Bible reading practice](#). Read through Acts 5 again, and then tell the story of the chapter in your own words. Give it a title, and if possible, note the main themes of the chapter.

Day 6: Called to Serve

(by Alejandra Slemin)

Today’s Reading

[Acts 6:1–15](#)

“Brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty.” —Acts 6:3

Devotional

For many years I have seen the work that missionaries do overseas and wondered, *how is it possible that some of these men and women leave their own countries willing to risk their lives to serve people they don’t know?*

In Acts 6, we encounter a special scenario. After Jesus ascended into heaven, the disciples were left with a big responsibility: love God and love their neighbors. Somehow they had to develop a plan to serve the people around them and preach the gospel entrusted to them as the first eyewitnesses of Jesus’ work on earth.

Throughout this passage, the disciples demonstrate important aspects of servanthood:

- Serving others isn’t just a duty; it’s evidence we’ve understood the gospel.
- Taking care of someone’s needs isn’t an easy job and must be done with special care.

- No matter how big or small the task, we need to seek assistance from the Holy Spirit and other believers to guide us in this mission.
- Our true motive for serving will be tested. May grace and wisdom be our foundation.
- When we serve others, we are serving Jesus.

Even if you're not a missionary overseas, God has given you a place to impact other people. It might be at work or at home. But no matter where it is, God calls you to serve others. As John Piper said, "It is better to lose your life than to waste it."

Prayer

Lord, give me an understanding of how to serve others today, no matter my circumstances. Help me to use grace and wisdom in all the tasks You have entrusted to me. Ignite in me a desire to seek You for focus while serving.

Reflect and Respond

- Why do you serve others? Is it out of duty or with a conscious understanding of how much your job can point others to the gospel?
- What are the main spheres of life where you are able to build relationships with others? How might God want you to serve those people today?

Go Deeper

Did you ever have to copy a page out of a textbook when you were in school? Although it may have seemed like busywork, the teacher knew that if you wrote out the material for yourself, you would better understand and remember the concepts. The same goes for [writing out Scripture](#). It forces us to think about what we're reading and to carefully observe the details. Today, copy out the fifteen verses of Acts 6 and pray that this simple practice will help you better understand His Word.

Day 7: The Struggle to Forgive

(by Leslie Bennett)

Today's Reading

[Acts 7:1–60](#)

"Falling to his knees he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." And when he had said this, he fell asleep." —Acts 7:60

Devotional

One in four Christians admits to not being able to forgive someone in their life. I became one of those statistics when an unspeakable sin was committed against me as an innocent young girl.

Like a dead person walking, I carried around the searing pain into adult life until I finally surrendered it to Jesus. Unforgiveness felt like picking a self-inflicted wound and wanting it to injure someone else. We may wrongly think Jesus has abandoned us, but friend, nothing could be further from the truth ([Heb. 13:5](#)). The suffering Savior understands the bottomless pit of human suffering and desires to tenderly mend the fragments of our hurting heart.

The senseless martyr of a Spirit-filled deacon in Acts 7 sets up a Christlike model of forgiveness for us to follow. Stephen's bright light was tragically snuffed out when he indicted the Jewish leaders who'd sinned and needed a Savior.

Breathing his final breaths on earth, Stephen forgave his murderers while Jesus stood in heaven to extend suffering grace, power for forgiveness, and a victorious homecoming. Stephen echoed the words from Jesus on the cross of Calvary: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

We often refuse to forgive because it feels like we're excusing the sinner, minimizing the offense, or pretending we can forget it. Jesus teaches a true forgiveness that frees us from the prison walls erected out of desperation to manage pain and punish the offender.

Once liberated, a forgiving woman never forgets God's immense grace that redeemed her sins by the blood of Jesus, and so she prays, "Lord, with Your help, I choose to forgive." Scars from an inexcusable wound can be redesigned into marks of His extravagant grace.

· Barna Group, "1 in 4 Christians Struggles to Forgive Someone," accessed 5/15/19, https://www.barna.com/research/forgiveness-christians/?mc_cid=329af911e9&mc_eid=45df4cf49e.

Prayer

Father, forgiveness never comes easy. On my own, it would be impossible. Thank You that Jesus models the path and enables me to follow in His footsteps. Show me who I need to forgive. Give me courage to choose forgiveness so people will see Your monumental grace through me.

Reflect and Respond

- Stephen shows us how to live and to die as Spirit-filled Christians. What have you learned from his brief life?
- Even in Stephen's death, beauty arose because Jesus stood in heaven. Ask Jesus to bring beauty from ashes in your life and those you love.
- Pray for persecuted Christians whose lives are threatened because of the gospel.

Go Deeper

When Christ-followers read the Word of God, we aren't just adding to our head knowledge. Since information plus application equals transformation, our head, heart and hands are impacted as we read. Prayerfully ask the Lord [how He wants you to respond to the Truth and what He wants you to do](#). Obeying His leading is your ticket to freedom, fruitfulness, and joy!

Day 8: Cough Syrup and Clichés

(by Hannah Underhill)

Today's Reading

[Acts 8:1–40](#)

"Those who were scattered went about preaching the word." —Acts 8:4

Devotional

“God has a purpose for your pain.”

Worn down by trite overuse, it’s a cliché that can seem a bit ingenuine, like cherry cough syrup that promises to taste like Candy Land in a bottle but goes down with the shocking aftertaste of chemicals.

We know that, like cough syrup, this rundown expression is meant to heal, but the rancid, sick-sweet taste still stays on our tongues. And yet maybe, also like the cough syrup, the bedrock truth of this cliché—albeit at times masked by lab-engineered cherry flavor—truly *could* heal us.

Acts 8 explores the grandeur of an original cliché, a then-nascent truth too real to have descended into overuse. After the martyrdom of Stephen, wicked cultural and spiritual forces converged upon the early church in Jerusalem in a wave of persecution that scattered Christians throughout the region.

Lost and disconnected from community, these Christians could have huddled in seclusion, bemoaning their fate. But instead, they embraced the vibrant truth of what now might ring in our ears as cliché: God had a purpose for the pain.

And that purpose, they determined, was “preaching the word” (v. 4) that pushed back demonic forces (v. 7), healed the sick (v. 7), and brought joyful new life (v. 8). The rest of the passage narrates a series of salvation experiences and miraculous encounters that exploded on the scene as a result of the pain these early Christians experienced.

What is God’s purpose for your pain? Don’t dismiss it merely because it’s a cliché; embrace the core truth of a God who does all things well.

Prayer

Dear God, in the scattered places of my heart and life, please reveal Your purpose for my pain. Don’t let me miss what You want to do in and through me for my good and Your glory.

Reflect and Respond

- What cliché might you be tempted to reject that actually holds healing biblical truth?
- Ask yourself: what is God’s purpose for my pain? Seek a practical answer that applies to your unique situation.

Go Deeper

Use this passage to further practice [your Bible study skills](#). Try circling or bracketing repeated words or phrases, writing cross references in the margin, or jotting down notes about the meaning of specific words or phrases in the passage. Ask God to further open your eyes to His miraculous purpose in the scattering of the Jerusalem church.

Day 9: Struck Speechless by His Grace

(by Erin Davis)

Today’s Reading

[Acts 9:1–31](#)

“The men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one.”
—Acts 9:7

Devotional

When was the last time your mouth flapped open over your salvation? How long has it been since you shook your head in wonder or raised your hands in worship because God has rescued you from sin and death?

Paul’s dramatic conversion amazes us all. That a threat-breathing, Christian-imprisoning, pride-filled hypocrite could turn into a church-planting, Scripture-writing, kingdom-building saint is truly remarkable. No wonder the men who were with him stood spellbound, shocked silent by what was happening (v. 7).

But while Saul’s story is amazing, it’s not wholly unique. We are all Sauls. In our sinful state we will all run in rebellion against God’s authority. Like Saul, we are naturally blind to our own sin and hyper-focused on others who don’t see things our way.

- Thank God for Damascus roads.
- Thank God that He pursues us and then answers our question, “Who are you, Lord?” (v. 5).
- Thank God He prides the scales from our eyes. We were blind and now we see.
- Thank God He transforms us from the person we were without Him to a “new creation” fully hidden in Him.

Thank God for His saving work in each of our lives. May we stand spellbound by His grace.

Prayer

Jesus, thank You for your grace. Help me never get over the wonder of Your work in my life.

Reflect and Respond

- Recount your “Damascus Road” experience, a moment when you knew that Jesus was Lord.
- Are you still amazed at God’s work of salvation in your heart? If not, what can you do to rekindle your awe?

Go Deeper

[Look up today’s passage in multiple translations](#) of the Bible. (Hint: if you don’t own hard copies of different Bible translations, use an online tool like [BibleGateway.com](#) or [YouVersion](#).) As you look at different ways that this passage has been translated, you’ll gain fresh insight and help for understanding the meaning.

Day 10: Hope beyond Our Circumstances

(by Mindy Kroesche)

Today’s Reading

[Acts 9:32–43](#)

“Jesus Christ heals you; rise and make your bed.” —Acts 8:34

Devotional

Have you ever faced a situation that seemed hopeless? You may have an ongoing illness, a troubled marriage, or turbulent family relationships. Year after year has passed, and things aren't getting better.

Aeneas was in a situation just like that. He was paralyzed and had been bedridden for eight years. Lying there day after day, dependent on others to care for him, what did he think when Peter told him to get up and make his bed?

“Immediately” Aeneas was able to walk. This man who had no hope of ever getting well was made whole through the power of Jesus.

Switch scenes to another desperate situation. Dorcas, a beloved member of the local church, had died. Rather than feeling desolate, her friends chose to hope in the power of Christ. They begged Peter to come to them, believing he could raise her from the dead. And when Peter gave Dorcas his hand, she rose to life (v. 41).

Jesus gave hope to Aeneas and Dorcas for this life and the life to come. But He didn't change their situations just for themselves—in both instances, their miraculous healing was ultimately for His glory, prompting others in their communities to place their faith in Christ (vv. 35, 42).

Whatever hard situation you're facing today, Jesus is there to offer you hope. Take His hand, rise up, and do whatever He calls you to do next.

Prayer

Lord, there have been times when it feels like things will never get better, that nothing will ever change. When I'm in those times, help me to look to You. Remind me that my hope doesn't come from improved health, a better situation, or a restored relationship, but from You and You alone.

Reflect and Respond

- How can Jesus give you hope in whatever difficulties you're currently facing?
- How can you glorify God in those situations and point others toward the hope He offers?

Go Deeper

As you read the Bible, pray that God would give you a better understanding of the passage and that He would reveal Himself to you through what you read. For more ideas on how prayerfully reading the Bible can help you understand it, listen to [this Revive Our Hearts podcast](#).

Day 11: Interruptions Are the Story

(by Hayley Mullins)

Today's Reading

[Acts 10:1–48](#)

“So I sent for you at once, and you have been kind enough to come. Now therefore we are all here in the presence of God to hear all that you have been commanded by the Lord.” —Acts 10:33

Devotional

“I was walking along, minding my own business, and then out of nowhere . . .”

The ellipsis is where the story really begins. We want to know what happens next, because we know something unexpected is coming. Is it a soccer ball to the head? A crazy squirrel? A flash of lightning?

All the best stories have interruptions. We know this innately. Bilbo Baggins’ meal is interrupted by a mess of dwarves. Alice is roused by a white rabbit with a pocket watch. Ebenezer Scrooge is awakened by a visit that will transform his greedy heart.

But do we see our own lives as a great story when we’re interrupted? The stoplight that makes you late for work, the child who interrupts your devotional time in the morning, the neighbor who stops by unexpectedly . . . are they joys or irritations?

Today’s passage shows us how God uses interruptions to accomplish His purposes and drastically redirect our course into His story of redemption. Check out Cornelius. It’s mid-afternoon (the ninth hour). He was likely working, focused in on something “important”—and an angel showed up!

The next day, Peter waited for his lunch with a growling stomach. He was interrupted by a strange vision and some instructions from God that perplexed him. Little did these men know that God was using these interruptions to intersect their paths, allowing Cornelius and his subordinates to hear the gospel and making way for the Holy Spirit to fall on Gentiles—expanding the Church!

The next time you’re interrupted, remember that unexpected task may be the kingdom work He’s called you to in that moment. You never know. That knock on the door may be the next necessary interruption in the great redemption story He is writing.

Prayer

Father, thank You for interruptions You use to advance Your kingdom. Forgive me for the ways I’ve been selfishly irritated by them. Help me to look at these interruptions as pages in Your redemption story, and give me wisdom to joyfully follow Your leading in the unexpected.

Reflect and Respond

- When have you been interrupted and seen God use it for good? Thank God for that reminder, and take it with you into this week’s unexpected moments.
- What are the interruptions that irritate you? Consider why. Is that frustration caused by any selfish desires you should repent from?

Go Deeper

All through this challenge, we’ve been giving you tips for deepening [your interaction with Scripture](#). Here’s another one: be curious. Ask questions. Who wrote it? Who were the original readers? What is happening in the passage? What are the major ideas? When in history did this happen (or is it a prophecy yet to be fulfilled)? Where did this happen? Taking the time to slow down and ask these questions can bring fresh insights—even in a familiar text. Try it and see!

Day 12: Making a Difference . . . One Step at a Time

(by Leanna Shepard)

Today's Reading

[Acts 11:1–30](#)

“The Spirit told me to go with them, making no distinction.” —Acts 11:12

Devotional

Life is full of choices. Get up or hit snooze? Shower or dry shampoo? Accept or refuse that invitation? The small decisions we make may seem insignificant in the moment, but often it's the ordinary choices building upon one another that make a considerable impact.

When God challenged Peter to embrace His plan of salvation for the Gentiles, Peter chose to say “yes” to God. Peter’s decision was instrumental in building momentum for the early Church to welcome non-Jews into their circle and spread the gospel to surrounding nations. This fueled the birth of the church in Antioch, which became the thriving, loving community that later commissioned Barnabas and Paul to go even further into all the world and make disciples. And through the ministry of Paul came the majority of our New Testament epistles, which still edify the Church hundreds of years later.

One choice at a time. Significant results for all of eternity.

Your choices today may not seem like a big deal, but they have the potential to make an eternal difference in someone’s life, one small step at a time. What will you choose today?

Prayer

Father, give me eyes to see Your purposes in each mundane activity or ordinary decision I make today. Thank You that because of Jesus my life has meaning. Help me to serve You with wisdom and love in all that I do.

Reflect and Respond

- Peter had to overcome cultural and religious prejudices before choosing to saying “yes, Lord.” What is keeping you from saying “yes” to God today?
- Are you, like Barnabas, nurturing someone in the gospel of Jesus Christ? Your investment in another person could be the catalyst for God to move mightily in the Church and around the world.

Go Deeper

Studying the Bible for yourself involves more than reading the text. As you read today’s passage, use study tools such as an English dictionary, a concordance, and commentaries to help you accurately observe, interpret, and apply Scripture. A great place to start is by reading Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth’s classic book [A Place of Quiet Rest](#).

Day 13: A Dramatic Rescue

(by Erin Davis)

Today's Reading

[Acts 12:1–25](#)

“Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries before the door were guarding the prison.” —Acts 12:6

Devotional

Peter was in a real pickle.

A violent and powerful ruler was hunting his friends. Some had been slaughtered, and Peter had been captured. He was thrown into a maximum security prison where he was forced to sleep between two armed soldiers, was bound by double chains, and was guarded by two squads of sentries (not to mention the iron gate).

There was no way Peter could get out of this mess on his own.

Except . . . no army can stop the plans of God.
No chains can take His people’s freedom.
No gate can contain His Spirit.

Peter’s story reminds me of my own captivity. Enslaved by sin and death, I couldn’t get out of the mess on my own. And while the prince of darkness seeks to enslave me, Christ has set me free.

Herod’s armies couldn’t stop Him either.
No number of guards could prevent Him from breaking out of the tomb.
His resurrection means, like Peter, we all get to walk out of the prison of our sin and be free.
Free indeed.

“If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed” (John 8:36).

Prayer

Jesus, thank You for setting me free from sin and death. Help me to walk in that freedom today.

Reflect and Respond

- What do you love most about Peter’s story in this passage?
- Other than a physical prison, what other types of bondage can we find ourselves in?
- What is one area of your life where Christ has freed you where you could not free yourself?

Go Deeper

As you read over Peter’s miraculous release from prison, use the three “R’s” to help you better understand it: 1) **Reflect** on it. 2) **Review** it. 3) **Respond** to it. Then check out the *Revive Our Hearts* podcast “[Cultivating a Taste for God’s Word](#)” for more insight.

Day 14: Sent Out

(by Hannah Underhill)

Today’s Reading

[Acts 13:1–52](#)

“Being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus.”—Acts 13:4

Devotional

I detest making phone calls.

Of my own accord, I would usually rather send an email than pick up the phone to make an inquiry about almost anything. To me, a phone call in these days of texts and tweets somehow feels awkward and intrusive. (My apologies for being a stereotypical Millennial.)

But if my boss requests that I make a phone call? Suddenly it's as if I have all the force of the United States government, the FBI, and the United Nations at my back. Because I'm executing the wishes of another person with greater authority, I have the confidence to accomplish a task that I might never initiate on my own.

Similarly, Saul and Barnabas embarked from the church in Antioch on a gospel-bearing venture backed by something far more than religious zeal or starry-eyed wanderlust. Scripture records that they were “sent out by the Holy Spirit.” Matthew Henry, a well-known commentator, writes:

Their being sent forth by the Holy Ghost was the great thing that encouraged them in this undertaking. If the Holy Ghost send them forth, he will go along with them, strengthen them, carry them on in their work, and give them success.

If we live and serve under the leading of the Holy Spirit, we can have confidence that, wherever He sends us, we will be equipped to carry on.

Prayer

Lord, following You can often take me outside of my comfort zone, but I thank You for the confidence I can have in going where You lead and doing what You command. Help to live today with holy boldness as I humbly submit to Your guidance in all things.

Reflect and Respond

- Is God calling you to do something that feels like it's outside your comfort zone? Take some time to pray over it.
- How can knowing He has called you give you the courage you need to step out?

Go Deeper

As you walk through Acts 13, [note any comparisons or contrasts](#) made in the passage—particularly in Paul's message in Antioch of Pisidia ([vv. 13–41](#)). Identifying these elements may require a little more digging and careful thought, but the rich treasures you glean will be well worth it!

Day 15: Faith: The Enabler of Our Sight

(by Aylín Merck)

Today's Reading

[Acts 14:1–28](#)

“Strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith.”—Acts 14:22

Devotional

Have you ever seen two people experience the same thing but have wildly different responses? Acts 14 is full of that. Over and over again, different groups of people witnessed the power of God in the gospel, but their response couldn't be more divided.

When they entered Iconium, Paul and Barnabas spoke in such a way that a great number of both Jews and Greeks believed (v. 1), but a group of unbelieving Jews didn't. Instead they opposed the work Paul and Barnabas were doing.

When they got to Lystra, Paul and Barnabas started speaking to a crowd. Paul saw a crippled man, realized he had faith, and healed him. But the reaction of the crowd wasn't faith in God; it was false worship.

Twice in this chapter the author mentioned that the Lord left witness of Himself and His Word (vv. 3, 17). But the response to Him isn't always worship. Even when some people hear the Truth, they keep following their own gods and understanding (vv. 4, 18).

What is the difference? It's the gift of faith. It enables us to see true reality, while unbelief blinds us. We especially see this in Paul and Barnabas. They experienced great opposition. Their enemies wanted them to stop. But they knew the power of the gospel. They knew we must enter the kingdom of God “through many tribulations,” so they continued to preach the gospel by faith.

Tribulations can either hinder or fuel our faith. We may be tempted to lose heart. But friend, let's continue in the faith. The power of the gospel doesn't shield us from suffering. Instead, knowing Jesus means that in this life there is suffering. But praise God, it also means we have His resurrection power to suffer well while we wait with hope for the resurrection ([Phil. 3:10–11](#)).

Prayer

Father, we praise You for the faith You have given us in Christ. What a gift that Christ persevered through suffering and received the resurrection! Please strengthen our faith that we may continue in it, holding fast to the gospel as Christ holds us fast.

Reflect and Respond

- How are you tempted to doubt God right now?
- How do you see God leaving a witness of Himself in your life?
- Are you responding in faith or in unbelief?

Go Deeper

As you read through this chapter, and all through the book of Acts, look for cross-references. Note where the apostles are quoting the Old Testament. Luke, the author of Acts, helps us to understand Scripture better by the way he uses the Old Testament. For more insight and help in studying God's Word, check out [Nancy's Recommended Devotional Tools](#).

Day 16: Rooted in the Gospel

(by Alejandra Slemin)

Today's Reading

[Acts 15:1–21](#)

“When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they declared all that God had done with them.” —Acts 15:4

Devotional

If there was ever a meeting I would have loved to be present at, it's the Council of Jerusalem recorded in Acts 15. It's during this meeting that many heroes of the faith bravely made statements confirming their allegiance to Christ and the gospel entrusted to them.

Peter, Barnabas, James, and Paul—these were all men who worked in the trenches sharing the good news. Now they were united under one roof with one common goal: to solve the matter at hand. Was salvation by faith in Jesus, or faith in Jesus plus the rules of Moses? To help make their case, “they declared all that God had done with them” (v. 4).

They didn't argue for their own benefit. They wanted to lead others to the abundant grace they had received from Jesus and share how it had changed their lives. These men had something valuable to say because they knew God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit in an intimate way. They were certain of their identity in Christ, they knew the Word, and their lives and ministries had been forever changed by the power of the gospel.

No matter what circumstances you're facing today, remember what Jesus did in the past, is doing in the present, and will do in the future. Then share that boldly with other people around you.

We didn't have the opportunity of walking with Jesus when He first came to earth, but we can decide to walk with Him now, growing in faith as we get to know Him through the Scriptures. This will give us the confidence to stand firm, rooted in the gospel—the unshakable rock that sustains us in any situation.

Prayer

Lord, You are powerful, and Your gospel has changed my life. Help me to grow in knowledge of who You are and what You have done for me. Please give me the boldness to share the gospel with the people around me.

Reflect and Respond

- How had God prepared Peter, Barnabas, James, and Paul to understand and defend that salvation is by grace through faith, for both the Jews and the Gentiles?
- How does having a deeper understanding of God's Word enable you to be bold in sharing Christ with others?

Go Deeper

One simple and practical approach to Scripture is to utilize the [A-E-I-O-U Bible Study Method](#). As you, **ask** questions, **emphasize** key words and phrases, write Scripture **in** your own words, look for **other** related Scriptures, and **use** it in application, you'll get a deeper understanding of the Bible.

Day 17: Put Down Your Burdens

(by Mindy Kroesche)

Today's Reading

[Acts 15:22–41](#)

“When they had read it, they rejoiced because of its encouragement.”—Acts 15:31

Devotional

I grew up going to church and Sunday school. Even though I heard the gospel, I still thought I had to be “good” to go to heaven. I can remember worrying, *How good is good enough?* I was taking on the burden of salvation that God never placed on my shoulders.

The early church in Antioch had such a burden. They started out on the right path of following Christ by faith. But some false teachers came in and said, “No, you also have to do this and this and this!”

To combat this issue, the apostles and leaders of the Jerusalem church held a series of meetings and agreed that becoming a Christian was based solely on faith in Jesus, not faith plus following the rules of Moses. Now, Paul and Barnabas were on their way to deliver the good news.

Whew! I can just imagine the relief the Antioch believers felt. In fact, when they read the letter, “they rejoiced because of its encouragement” (v. 31).

In John 8:32, Jesus said, “And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” Through the message of salvation by faith alone, the Antioch church had been set back on the path of Truth. They were freed from the guilt and shame of trying to gain favor with God through works. And to help them keep experiencing that freedom, Paul and Barnabas stayed on, “teaching and preaching the word of the Lord” (v. 35).

Are you taking on a burden God never intended for you to carry? Immerse yourself in His Word so that you can know the Truth—and know God Himself. For His yoke is easy, and His burden is light ([Matt. 11:30](#)). He will set you free.

Prayer

Lord, I'm so thankful that there's nothing we can do to gain favor with You. It's by Your grace alone that we are saved. Please deepen my relationship with You that I may know the Truth more fully. Help me to realize when I'm taking on a burden You never intended me to take on, so that I may come to You to find freedom and rest.

Reflect and Respond

- Have you ever caught yourself thinking you needed to do “good” things to find favor with God? How does that thinking place a heavy burden on your life?
- What burdens are you carrying today that God wants you to let go of? How can knowing His Truth more fully help you find freedom from the load?

Go Deeper

Take time to [meditate](#) on this passage. Look at it closely from different angles, as a whole and in different parts—one word at a time, one phrase at a time. As you go throughout your normal activities, contemplate what God is saying to you through these few verses.

Day 18: Dual Salvation

(by Nicole Forgette)

Today's Reading

[Acts 16:1–40](#)

“Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.” — Acts 16:31

Devotional

I never thought that lying on the side of the road in the mountains would be so impactful. When I was a teenager, I was in a bad bus accident and should have died. At that moment, I realized I had a second chance at life. Soon afterward I heard the gospel through a support group and gave my life to Jesus. I was saved from two different deaths—physical and spiritual.

We read today of a similar dual-salvation. Paul and Silas were in prison when an earthquake opened the doors. The jailer then decided to kill himself—probably because he knew he would be killed if the prisoners escaped. But Paul told him to stop and assured him that the prisoners were still there. The jailer responded, “What must I do to be saved?”

In our “Christian lingo” it’s easy to assume he was asking for salvation from eternal life. Yet Bible teacher [Nathan Johnson](#) gives a deeper view into the mindset of the jailer:

It cannot be that while your life itself was still in immediate jeopardy, that you would ignore that and focus on your need for salvation from sin. You would wait for your life to be saved first, then focus on your relationship with God.

Paul said to believe in Jesus and then he explained who He is. You can’t believe in someone you’ve never heard about. It’s after that the jailer was baptized. He was saved not only from suicide (or being killed) but from his sins to eternal life.

Prayer

Awesome God, thank You for the ways You have saved and preserved me in this life from things that harm and destroy. But most of all, thank You for Your Son, Jesus Christ, who alone has the power to save me from sin and death.

Reflect and Respond

- Have you ever been saved from a near-death experience?
- How is being saved from our sins different?
- How did Timothy and Lydia, also mentioned in this chapter, come to believe in Jesus as Christ? Compare and contrast their conversion with that of the Philippian jailer.

Go Deeper

Even though Paul and Silas were beaten and thrown into prison in this chapter, they were singing praises and hymns at midnight (v. 25). What an attitude they had in the face of their

difficult circumstances! As you read today, [choose to respond to God's Word](#) by singing a hymn or worship song.

Day 19: Be a Fact-Checker

(by Leslie Bennett)

Today's Reading

[Acts 17:1–34](#)

“They received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.” —Acts 17:11

Devotional

It's something we do practically every day without giving it much thought. Each time we enter a password to request access to a computer, phone, or website, we're authenticating ourselves as someone with proper authorization. Authentication is a security measure that proves something (or someone) is real, genuine or true—just like a notary public's stamp verifies a person's signature.

When you hear a Christian message, do you assume it's 100 percent reliable, or do you pause to authenticate it?

The Berean Jews of Acts 17 model that we shouldn't accept everything we hear and read at face value. They were the fact-checkers of their day. These noble men and women authenticated Paul's preaching by holding it up to the plumb line of God's Word. When the Bereans tested Paul's words against the Word of Truth, many believed the gospel and had their names written in the Book of Life.

My pastor often tells the congregation to “be like a Berean,” meaning to know your Bible like the back of your hand so you can discern truth from error. We live in turbulent times that are agitated by relative truth and fake news. Too many false teachers are fooling biblically illiterate Christians with lies and deceit.

Let's vow not to join their ranks. Instead, fellow fact-checkers, let's rise up and be ready to speak up for God's eternal, unchanging Truth.

Prayer

Father, I'm thankful for the gift of Your precious Word, which is inerrant, infallible, and sufficient for all my needs. Give me a voracious appetite to devour Truth every day, and teach me discernment so I can defend Your Truth in an unbelieving world.

Reflect and Respond

- On a scale of one to ten, how well do you know the Word of God?
- The more we know the Word, the more we will love it. Set aside time to soak up the treasures found in [Psalm 19](#) or [Psalm 119](#), and make a list of all the benefits of the Bible.

Go Deeper

Let's do more than just get into the Word. God intends for the Word to get into us. So when you read the Bible, take time to study, meditate on, and apply it. Fill both your head and your heart, as James 1:22 exhorts, "be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves." Ask questions like:

- Does this passage have any promises I should I claim?
- Are there commands here that I need to be obeying?
- Is there an example in this passage I should follow?
- Is there an example I should avoid?

Using questions like these will transform your head knowledge into true, lasting life change. For more questions to help you study and apply the Bible, listen to the program "[Hear and Act](#)" from Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth.

Day 20: A Snapshot of the Family of God

(by Erin Davis)

Today's Reading

[Acts 18:1–28](#)

"Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, for I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, for I have many in this city who are my people." —Acts 18:9–10

Devotional

In this chapter of Acts, we see a tender snapshot of the family of God. Look closely. Study the faces of the believers who are named.

There's Paul, of course. A zealous Christ-follower, who we know as the author of thirteen books of the New Testament. We also meet:

- **Aquila and Priscilla**, refugee tentmakers who took Paul in and later traveled with him.
- **Silas and Timothy**, wise Christian leaders ([Acts 6:3](#), [15:22](#)) and co-laborers with Paul.
- **Titius Justus**, a worshiper of God who lived next door to a Jewish synagogue.
- **Crispus**, a synagogue leader turned Christ-follower whose entire family converted.
- **Apollos**, who possessed wisdom and knowledge without training and boldly preached the gospel of Christ.

Not to mention the many believers throughout the city of Corinth who Christ claimed as His own. What a ragtag bunch of misfits. What a strange assembly of saints. Yet this is what the Church looks like.

We are married and single, white collar and blue collar. We are well trained and self-taught. We have means, and we have need. We are from every city on the globe and every background under the sun.

What united believers in Corinth unites us still. *We are Christ's.*

Prayer

Jesus, thank You for claiming people of every shape and size as Your own. Teach me to love and celebrate variety within Your Church.

Reflect and Respond:

- Thinking about your own church, do you see diversity represented? Why or why not?
- What makes you different from other Christians you know? What do you have in common?
- What do you imagine life was like for the Christ-followers described in this chapter?

Go Deeper

One method that can greatly help you in your study of God's Word is to read it thoughtfully. Pause to meditate on the meaning of what you read and think about what it's saying. Take time to dwell on it, ponder it, and go over it again and again. You can learn more about savoring God's Word through [these words of wisdom from Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth](#).

Day 21: Peace Amidst the Chaos

(by Leanna Shepard)

Today's Reading

[Acts 19:1–41](#)

"The word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily."—Acts 19:20

Devotional

An unattended toddler can wreak havoc on a clean house faster than a speeding bullet. Turn your back for five minutes, and you'll find toothpaste splattered on the wall, clean clothes strewn across the floor, and the remains of a dirty diaper smeared all across your white rug.

Acts 19 follows a similar and much more grievous progression from order to utter chaos. There's a clear contrast seen between the new believers in Ephesus mentioned early in the chapter and the angry mob described at the end. Where the Holy Spirit is welcomed there is order, confession of sin, repentance, acts of mercy, and a fear of God. But where evil reigns there is confusion, unbelief, rash and riotous behavior, greed, and rage.

Life often feels like the out-of-control mob, tumultuous and frightening. But smack dab in the middle of Acts 19 we're reminded of a statement of hope that stands firm when all else is in shambles: the Word of God prevails.

When your heart is in confusion and your world full of chaos, remember that God's Word is sure and steadfast. Rest confidently in that promise, and you will find peace.

Prayer

Lord, thank You for Your Word, which lights my path, gives me strength, and is sweeter than honey. Give me faith to hold fast to Your Word and believe in Your promises. I praise You for your steadfast love and your Word that endures forever.

Reflect and Respond

- Is your life characterized by the Spirit of peace? Or does chaos rule in your heart?

- Do you believe God’s Word is powerful enough to conquer your fears and slay your foes? What promise in His Word can you cling to today to overcome the spirit of fear and confusion?

Go Deeper

Throughout this challenge, we’ve shared multiple tools for how to study the Bible inductively, such as through observation, interpretation, and application. A helpful tip for the observation phase is to visualize the verbs. You do this by discerning the action or movement of the passage and asking yourself, *What is being done?* Find a more thorough explanation on this and the other points of inductive study in “[How to Study Your Bible, Part 2.](#)”

Day 22: Faithfulness for Future Generations

(by Hannah Underhill)

Today’s Reading

[Acts 20:1–38](#)

“Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all, for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God.” —Acts 20:26–27

Devotional Content

Faithfulness doesn’t exactly make for a riveting devotional topic. I’d rather read about the miraculous than the mundane with its one-foot-in-front-of-the-other dullness. It feels boring. Common. Void of sparkles and warm fuzzies.

Yet faithfulness was the crux of Paul’s last face-to-face meeting with the leaders of the Ephesian church. He gathered them to say goodbye, to remind them of their mission, and to reestablish his credibility as a leader and an ambassador for Christ. It’s important to remember that Paul didn’t present himself as a flawless example of Christianity for the sake of his ego; rather, he directed others to imitate him in the areas in which he imitated Christ ([1 Cor. 11:1](#)).

In Acts 20, Paul reminded the Ephesian leaders that while he had been with them, he modeled these Christlike barometers of faithfulness:

- Humility (v. 19)
- Perseverance in teaching truth (vv. 20, 27)
- Compassion (v. 31)
- Contentment (v. 33)
- Service to those in need (v. 34)
- Diligence (v. 35)

While not flashy or exciting, these characteristics established a rapport with Paul’s audience that allowed him to challenge them to pursue faithfulness in ministry themselves (v. 31).

The next time you’re tempted to compromise, remember the example of Paul: faithfulness that left a legacy. Press on!

Prayer

Lord, when life feels mundane, remind me of the glory of everyday faithfulness. Give me the grace to model faithful habits and attitudes so that those around me—and generations to come—will be encouraged to faithfully obey You in the same way.

Reflect and Respond

- Who is an example of faithfulness that you can imitate as they imitate Christ?
- What's one area in which you need to be more faithful? Spend some time praying over that area and asking God for His grace to press on.

Go Deeper

One hallmark habit of faithfulness is spending consistent time in Scripture and prayer on a daily basis. Remember, the goal of this 30-day challenge is to spend time in God's Word—to get the Word into your heart and life and to cultivate an intimate relationship with Jesus. Make a plan for the next week to help you develop faithfulness in this area. Establish a time, a place, and an approach (what you'll read, how you'll respond, etc.) for spending time in His Word. You won't regret it! For practical ideas, check out the classic resource [A Place of Quiet Rest](#) by Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth.

Day 23: Counting All Things as Loss

(Aylín Merck)

Today's Reading

[Acts 21:1–36](#)

"I am ready not only to be imprisoned but even to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." —Acts 21:13

Devotional

When Paul was in Ephesus, he decided to go to Jerusalem ([Acts 19:21](#); [20:23](#)). He didn't know what awaited him there, but the Spirit had told him to expect affliction everywhere he went. Paul's response convicts and challenges me:

"I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God." (20:24)

In today's chapter, the Spirit indicated more of what will happen to Paul in Jerusalem. Spoiler alert: it's not good. The disciples, who loved Paul fiercely, begged him not to go. And again, Paul's response floors me:

"I am ready not only to be imprisoned but even to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." (21:13)

The name of the Lord Jesus is worthy and precious. Paul knew it was better than life itself. His determination didn't waiver because Paul's life had been swallowed up by the life of Jesus Himself. Christ's courage was Paul's courage. He counted all things as loss for the sake of knowing the life, death, and resurrection of his Lord ([Phil. 3:10–11](#)).

For the majority of us, we're tempted to shrink back at the mere thought of intense suffering. But Christ enables us to count the value of our life in light of how much it exalts the worthy and precious name of Christ alone.

Prayer

Oh Father, thank You for giving me the life of Jesus so that I can face suffering with His faith, courage, and trust. Please work in me so that I would increasingly trust You and not fear anything. Strengthen my heart in You so that Your name alone would be my joy.

Reflect and Respond

- What suffering are you facing right now?
- How would you face it differently if you knew that through it Christ is being proclaimed, believed, and adored?

Go Deeper

A valuable aid to mediating more deeply on Scripture—and gaining a better understanding—is Scripture memorization. Today, pick a verse or passage from Acts 21 and use the suggestions in [this article by Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth](#) to help you get started on a habit that will transform your life.

Day 24: The Most Important Word

(by Mindy Kroesche)

Today's Reading

[Acts 21:37–22:29](#)

“Up to this word they listened to him.” —Acts 22:22

Devotional

One word—that's all it took to change the mood of the mob Paul faced in Acts 22. Just moments before, he was dragged out of the temple and then grabbed by soldiers. But Paul asked for an opportunity to speak to the crowd.

As he told the powerful story of how Jesus met him on the road to Damascus, the people were spellbound. You probably could have heard a pin drop, until Paul said that one word—*Gentiles*.

When Paul shared Christ's instructions for his ministry: “Go, for I will send you far away to the Gentiles” (v. 21), the crowd swung back to anger. “Away with such a fellow from the earth!” they shouted. “For he should not be allowed to live” (v. 22).

Paul knew any mention of the Gentiles wouldn't go over well with this group. But Paul also knew something more important—the gospel was for *both* the Jews and the Gentiles. God had put this calling on Paul's life, and he needed to speak the truth, even if it meant being taken prisoner or killed.

As I read the news and posts on social media, I realize that even the name of Jesus can incite people to anger. It can be easy for me to want to avoid words or topics that might hit the hot button. But just as Paul has a calling, so do I . . . and so do you. We're called to share the gospel ([Matt. 28:19](#)). We have to tell people our story, to share why we have hope—and that

they can have it, too ([1 Peter 3:15](#)). That one word, *Jesus*, might just make some people angry. But it's the only word that can give them true hope.

Prayer

Lord, I'm so thankful that You've redeemed me and given me hope for this life and the next. Give me boldness to tell my story and help me to do so with wisdom, gentleness, and respect, that others would come to know You as their Savior, too.

Reflect and Respond

- What is the story God has given you to tell others about His work in your life? When is the last time you shared it with someone?
- What opposition have you faced in trying to share the gospel with someone? Take time to pray right now that God would help you overcome any obstacles to share about Jesus with that person.

Go Deeper

Everything we read in God's Word requires some kind of response. As you meditate on today's passage, ask God to show you what you need to do. Do you need to exercise faith in His promises or character? Do you need to humble yourself and acknowledge your need? Are there any sins you need to confess or a command you've been neglecting to obey? Pray that the Lord would help you move past *hearing* His Word to *doing* it. For more tips on ways to respond to God's Word, check out chapter nine in [A Place of Quiet Rest](#).

Day 25: A Spirit-Led Firecracker

(by Hayley Mullins)

Today's Reading

[Acts 22:30–23:35](#)

"Looking intently at the council, Paul said, "'Brothers, I have lived my life before God in all good conscience up to this day.'" —Acts 23:1

Devotional

When I read through Acts, I'm always struck by how the apostle Paul is kind of a firecracker. You read the epistles, and he seems rather bold, but in Acts, it's as if his personality is put in Technicolor. We get great lines like the one in today's passage: "God is going to strike you, you whitewashed wall!" What!? Name calling when talking to a religious and political leader? And this is one of the apostles speaking? Shocking!

This occurs right after Paul spoke our verse for today: "Brothers, I have lived my life before God in all good conscience." He was confident of his clear conscience, but responded to his situation with some fiery words.

Keep reading. It gets better.

Our text tells us that Paul noticed two factions are present: the Pharisees, who believed in the resurrection, and the Sadducees, who didn't. Then the apostle brought up that one thing they disagreed on—intentionally. Paul was no fool. He was a Pharisee himself (23:6), so he knew the

effect his words would have. Yet he came into this situation confident of his clear conscience. What do we do with this?

Paul spoke boldly because the moment demanded it. And he was imitating Christ. Our Savior [turned over tables in the temple](#) and [did some name calling](#) Himself, yet He did not sin. In the same way, maintaining a clear conscience doesn't always mean sitting back, just letting things happen, and not making any trouble. Sometimes to "take courage" (23:11) means saying or doing something bold and disruptive but true and wise.

The key here is wisdom and a humble heart before the Lord, letting Him guide us into the right path. At times that means tempering our tempers, but at others it means speaking up when fear would silence us. God can use firecrackers—when we're controlled, empowered, and led by the Holy Spirit.

Prayer

Father, give us the wisdom to know when to be silent and when to speak. Deliver us from our paralyzing fear and sinful anger. Keep us in the way of our Savior, who was bold and yet did not sin. Give us wisdom to act courageously today.

Reflect and Respond

- How do you tend to respond in situations where wrong is being done? Are you more prone to fear or anger?
- How can you respond to your current circumstances more like Christ?

Go Deeper

Any teacher will tell you that one of the best ways to internalize something is to explain it to others. To get today's passage deeper into your heart, call up a friend and tell them what you learned from today's passage in Acts. As Nancy reminds us in [this program](#), sharing what we're learning from God's Word helps us remember we're not alone on the journey. Your words may be what your friend needs to hear, too.

Day 26: More Than Just Information

(by Alejandra Slemin)

Today's Reading

[Acts 24:1–27](#)

"This I confess to you, that according to the Way, which they call a sect, I worship the God of our fathers, believing everything laid down by the Law and written in the Prophets." —Acts 24:14

Devotional

In Acts 24, the apostle Paul faced one of the most difficult circumstances of his life: being imprisoned and accused by the authorities.

He had to endure persecution on a constant basis. His character, faith, and faithfulness to the gospel were tested, exposing the core of his beliefs.

In verse 14, Paul declared the foundation for his faith. What he believed was affirmed by his Jewish forefathers but still truthful and powerful for that present time. Being exposed to the Scriptures not only gave him knowledge, but also a cause to live for, a hope beyond any self ambition, dream, or goal. He was a man forever changed.

As women who have believed in the gospel of salvation and been exposed to the Scriptures, we are challenged to follow his example. As D.L. Moody said, “The Bible was not given for our information, but for our transformation.”

Each day through this Bible Reading Challenge, you have been exposed to Truth that should produce good and lasting fruit in you—to exalt Christ in every situation you have to face. Are you using the Bible just to gain knowledge? Is this Word of Life changing the way you live? Pray that, like Paul, the Word of God will transform you forever.

Prayer

Lord, You are our only hope. Thank You for Your Word, which is a lamp to our feet, even in times of obscurity. As I read Scripture, help the words to go beyond just information in my brain to cause transformation in my heart and life.

Reflect and Respond

- Is your daily ambition to know Christ and show to the world His gospel?
- What are some ways that God’s Word has transformed your life?

Go Deeper

One way you can help God’s Word become more than just another piece of information in your brain is to meditate on it. This means that you stop and consider it throughout your day and keep it in front of you. You could display verses around your house, either on Post-It notes, framed pictures, or a chalkboard. Or you could memorize Scripture to help “store it up” in your heart ([Ps. 119:11](#)). For more ideas, listen to the *Revive Our Hearts* podcast, “[Planting Your Life in God’s Word](#).”

Day 27: The Gospel Is a Sword

(by Erin Davis)

Today’s Reading

[Acts 25:1–22](#)

“When the accusers stood up, they brought no charge in his case of such evils as I supposed.”
—Acts 25:18

Devotional

While the gospel is good news, it’s also a sword that slices and divides.

Here in Acts 25, Paul is imprisoned and on trial. But did you notice that no one can quite figure out what his crimes are? No one seems to know who is responsible for his sentence.

Verses 18–19 help us see through the hoopla:

When the accusers stood up, they brought no charge in his case of such evils as I supposed. Rather they had certain points of dispute with him about their own religion and about a certain Jesus, who was dead, but whom Paul asserted to be alive.

Paul's crime was nothing more than declaring the gospel. By preaching that Christ sets us free from the law of sin and death, he upset the apple cart of those who saw themselves as gatekeepers of human law.

In every era and every culture, the gospel continues to divide. Until Christ returns, there will always be those who seek to contain it and come against those who declare the good news.

But here's hope. Ultimately, Paul's message was not stopped by those who threw him into prison. The jury is not out on whether the gospel will prevail.

As we declare the gospel, let's remember that it's a sword and repeat the resolve of Paul: "I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:2).

Prayer

Jesus, Your Word is a sword. Teach me to wield it wisely. Help me stand for the gospel even when others oppose it. You are worthy.

Reflect and Respond

- What has declaring the gospel cost you?
- Why do you think Christ's message is so divisive?

Go Deeper

As you study Acts 25 today, try paraphrasing the chapter (or a selected portion) in your own words. This simple exercise can help you gain insight into the message of Scripture. (For more Bible study tips, check out chapter nine in the book [A Place of Quiet Rest](#).)

Day 28: Ridiculous or True?

(by Nicole Forgette)

Today's Reading

[Acts 25:23–26:32](#)

"In a short time would you persuade me to be a Christian?" —Acts 26:28

Devotional

I was so excited when I first became a Christian that I went out and got a tattoo of an ichthys (the Jesus fish) to signify my new life in Christ. A week later a guy in my dorm (who was not a Christian) said, "Don't you know Christians aren't supposed to get tattoos? So hypocritical." I was mortified and had no idea how to respond. I still had a lot to learn about my new-found faith.

Christian is a common word today, but it's only used three times in the Bible ([Acts 11:26](#), [26:28](#); [1 Peter 4:16](#)). The Greek word carries the meaning of "little-christs" and was used as more of a mockery that the disciples were trying to be little messiahs. We don't see followers of Christ

calling themselves Christians until the second century. Perhaps it was then that they gained a better understanding and became more confident of this title.

Here in Acts, King Agrippa responds by mocking Paul with the term “Christian,” insulted that Paul would attempt to convince him to become a believer.

Paul didn’t let the intimidation of an authority figure shy him away from sharing the gospel. Not only did he boldly proclaim the gospel, but he boldly expressed his hope that King Agrippa, Festus, and all who were present that day would live in the same truth and freedom that he experienced. He knew the gospel was for everyone from the least to the greatest.

As a new Christian, I was oblivious to many things the Bible does and does not teach, but I was confident of one thing: I knew Jesus as my Savior. As I’ve grown in my faith, I’ve learned to be thankful for comments and questions like the one from the guy in my dorm that push me to seek out answers.

Prayer

Father, thank You that Your Word gives understanding to the simple ([Ps. 119:130](#)) and that You remain faithful even if we are faithless ([2 Tim. 2:13](#)). Put in me the desire to know You more and more.

Reflect and Respond

- What are some questions you had before you put your faith in Jesus?
- Do you feel equipped to respond to someone who is questioning Christianity? If not, how can you seek answers?
- Paul used only the Old Testament to prove that Jesus was the Messiah (vv. 22–23). Can you?

Go Deeper

As you reflect on the above questions and what God has taught you through this passage, [write out your response](#) in the form of a prayer to the Lord.

Day 29: Maybe Biting Your Tongue Isn’t the Answer . . .

(by Hayley Mullins)

Today’s Reading

[Acts 27:1–44](#)

“Take heart, men, for I have faith in God that it will be exactly as I have been told.” —Acts 27:25

Devotional

“I’m biting my tongue.”

Have you ever had a moment where this is the only thing you thought you could say? Because otherwise, a triumphant “I told you so” might slip out? (Your meaning is clear anyway, I imagine.)

You're driving around in circles with your spouse. Your teenager gets a bad grade because they stayed up too late doing anything *but* writing a paper. That action you advised a friend to take—because something might go wrong—wasn't taken and things *did* go wrong.

Our teeth go deeper and deeper into that muscle in our mouths. Tension grows in our relationships. Bitterness entangles its strangling roots tighter around our hearts.

We've all been there. Is there a better way?

Our passage today gives us a way forward when others' decisions go wrong. Paul had advised the centurion in charge of the journey not to have them leave port, but that leader listened to others' advice. And they hit a storm. And lost the cargo. And they were facing death. Talk about a tongue-biting moment.

But Paul didn't silently watch with masked delight at the disaster in front of him. He spoke. First with an "I told you so" and then with encouragement. Too many times, we only say what the person already knows ("I told you so") and don't continue by speaking life into the situation.

Look at Paul's words closely. He pointed them to God's promise, told them confidently that there was hope, and urged them to "take heart" and keep working. We can do the same. Edify that husband who wouldn't ask for directions. Remind that child that God gives grace when they fail and repent. Encourage your friend to try again, bolstered by new wisdom.

Death and life are in the power of the tongue,
and those who love it will eat its fruits. (Prov. 18:21)

With God's help, let's speak life and eat that fruit, rather than just biting our tongues.

Prayer

Lord, we often use our tongues—and our looks and our silence—to speak death, not life. Forgive us for eating the fruit of bitterness and pride. Help us remember our own foolishness so we can have compassion on others. Give us wisdom to know how to encourage those around us today, especially when their choices go wrong.

Reflect and Respond

- How do you respond when someone doesn't take your advice—and fails?
- How could you be proactive about speaking life to those around you when things go wrong?

Go Deeper

Paul went on an epic journey in today's passage. You may not have been shipwrecked, but likely you've had moments during our journey through Acts where God worked in your life in dramatic (or small) ways. Write down what God has taught you over the past month, and thank Him for being a wise teacher who brings you safely to shore. (For more insights on the power of praise, check out [A Place of Quiet Rest](#), chapter ten.)

Day 30: Purpose in the Detours

(by Mindy Kroesche)

Today's Reading

[Acts 28:1–31](#)

“He lived there two whole years . . . proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance.” —Acts 28:30–31

Devotional

Sometimes when I'm driving, I end up taking a wrong turn. When this happens, I try to make the best of it and tell my family, “Well, now we just get to see some new scenery.” Eventually, we make it to our intended destination, but it takes longer than originally planned.

It might be easy to see Paul's journey to Rome in that context. Bad weather. A shipwreck. A snakebite. And months later, Paul, still a prisoner, finally arrives at his destination. Throughout the difficult journey, Paul never lost sight of his purpose—to share the gospel. He did that through healing the sick on the island of Malta, and he continued by gathering together the local Jewish leaders in Rome to teach about Jesus.

“From morning till evening he expounded to them, testifying to the kingdom of God and trying to convince them about Jesus both from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets,” Acts 28:23 tells us. The result? Some believed and some did not (v. 24). But Paul wasn't dissuaded from his purpose. He spent the next two years welcoming “all who came to him, proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance” (vv. 30–31).

Our lives on earth can take some detours. We may end up with scenery we never expected. But like Paul, we can make the most of our temporary circumstances and keep living for our eternal purpose. Because as Paul showed us, in the end, it's all about Jesus.

Prayer

Jesus, I'm so thankful that wherever the road of life takes me, You're right there with me. No matter what difficulties or obstacles I encounter, help me keep my eyes on You and glorify You through what I do and say, so that others may see Christ in me.

Reflect and Respond

- Do you feel like you're in a “detour” situation of life today? How might God want to use that for His glory?
- What main lessons from the book of Acts will you take away from this challenge?
- How has this challenge helped you grow in your faith?

Go Deeper

Now that you've finished this challenge, it's time to consider what to read next. Since you just spent thirty days studying church history, maybe it's time to focus on the New Testament epistles or something from the Old Testament. Whatever you choose, remember the importance of well-balanced reading. For more insight, listen to this *Revive Our Hearts* podcast as Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth shares about [systematically reading the Word of God](#).

Conclusion: The Challenge Continues

Dear Friend,

It's been a joy to jump into your inbox each day to consider Truth together. This email challenge may be over, but the adventure of growing in Truth isn't.

Revive Our Hearts has a simple mission—calling women to freedom, fullness, and fruitfulness in Christ. Everything we do, including this email challenge, flows from a desire to see you thrive in your walk with Christ.

As we think of you, the words Christ prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane come to mind: “Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth” (John 17:17).

God's Word changes us. So let's continue to turn to it together.

ReviveOurHearts.com is loaded with resources to help you do just that. Including . . .

Practical, biblical posts on our blogs:

- Find truth for every season of life at TrueWoman.com
- Read posts by leaders for leaders on the [Leader Connection blog](#)
- Young women, learn how to identify lies and replace them with God's Truth at LiesYoungWomenBelieve.com

Meaningful Bible studies like:

- [*Abigail: Living with the Difficult People in Your Life*](#)
- [*Elizabeth: Dealing with Disappointment*](#)
- [*Esther: Trusting God's Plan*](#)
- [*A Place of Quiet Rest: Finding Intimacy with God Through a Daily Devotional Life*](#)
- [*Seeking Him: Experiencing the Joy of Personal Revival*](#)

And inspiring video testimonies like:

- [“Katie's Story: If Not, He Is Still Good”](#)
- [“Three Generations of Spiritual Life—Givers”](#)
- [“A Marriage Restored by Radical Forgiveness”](#)

We also have two daily radio broadcasts and podcasts created to help you thrive in Christ. Find out more at ReviveOurHearts.com. Our hope is for you to really know Him and to trust Him enough to obey, love, and enjoy Him. Let's keep turning toward Him together.

Blessings,

The *Revive Our Hearts* Team

Bios

Alejandra Slemin

Alejandra loves Jesus and is being transformed by Him in her daily walk as a wife and a mother. Born in the Dominican Republic, she currently lives in Victoria, Canada, where she serves in a group for Hispanic women growing together in the Word.

Aylín Merck

Aylín is one with Christ. She was raised in Spanish, thinks in English, and lives in Arabic. She enjoys all things chocolate, a good run, and writing. She loves adventure, especially the endlessly satisfying adventure of knowing God through Christ in His Word.

Erin Davis

Erin lives on a sheep farm in the Midwest. She likes growing green beans, raising boys, and teaching the Bible to women. God's Word has transformed her from a woman obsessed with herself to a woman obsessed with her King.

Hannah Underhill

Hannah is a transplant from the mountains of Central Virginia to the shores of southern Lake Michigan. She's a fan of dark chocolate, jazz music, and summer time . . . especially after her move to the snowy Midwest! She loves spending time in God's Word because of how God uses His unchanging Truth to speak clearly and powerfully to the deepest needs of her heart.

Hayley Mullins

Hayley lives in northern Indiana, where she enjoys getting lost in the woods, devouring good books, and being an auntie/big sister to the kids at her church. Reading God's Word has given her joy in dark places and confidence in her identity as a beloved child of God.

Leanna Shepard

Leanna grew up in Arkansas where she discovered her love of the great outdoors. She loves God's Word for its faithful source of wisdom and comfort in every season of life. Leanna enjoys sipping hot tea with good friends, experimenting in the kitchen with a new recipe, and cheering for the St. Louis Cardinals.

Leslie Bennett

Leslie lives in the Lowcountry of South Carolina where she never gets tired of watching spectacular sunsets, walking beside live oaks draped in Spanish moss, and drinking sweet tea on her front porch swing (with lemon, of course!). She marvels that God's Word tastes sweeter than honey and is worth more than the finest gold.

Mindy Kroesche

Mindy lives in a small city in the Midwest with her husband and two kids, but she's a country girl at heart. She likes relaxing at the lake with her family, curling up with a cozy mystery, and finding out what coffee shops serve the best raspberry mochas. She's thankful for the anchor of the Truth of God's Word that has held her steady throughout the small and big storms of life.

Nicole Forgette

Nicole is from Minnesota but resides in northern Indiana after spending years living in other parts of the world and the United States. She enjoys studying the Scriptures, extreme adventures, coffee, and deep conversations with others. Through her unique travels, living

situations, and most importantly her time in God's Word, she speaks into many women's lives from teens to older adults.