



WEEKLY STUDY

WEEK 1

In the last several years, Providence Church has experienced a growing number of people who are eager to go deeper in their walk with Jesus. The “all in” of baptism becomes a steady life-long pursuit of Christ-likeness. In this new sermon series, we are encouraged to listen to the invitation of Jesus to dive into the life of a disciple.

Peace of Christ,
Dr. Mark Youngman
Pastor of Discipleship

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional questions at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected visit prov.church/smallgroups.

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture and follow the daily prayer prompt. Pray this or another prayer as you move into your day.

God,
*Signs of your faithfulness are all around me,
And I am amazed by your faithfulness,
I hear your call to deeper waters.
I put my trust in You today.
Amen.*

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: LUKE 5.1-11

One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, the people were crowding around him and listening to the word of God. ²He saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. ³He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat.

⁴*When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch.”*

⁵ Simon answered, “Master, we’ve worked hard all night and haven’t caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets.”

⁶ When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. ⁷ So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink.

⁸ When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus’ knees and said, “Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!” ⁹ For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, ¹⁰ and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon’s partners.

Then Jesus said to Simon, “Don’t be afraid; from now on you will fish for people.” ¹¹ So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.

- We can often relate to Simon Peter. At the end of a long day of work with mixed results, we are tired. We are ready to resign to the ordinariness of our lives. But Jesus has more in store—for Simon Peter, and for us. Peter was willing to give it another go because Jesus was right there with him. It would have been easier to ignore Jesus’ command if he wasn’t looking him in the face!
Have you ever had a sense that God was calling you out into the deep waters of life? How did you respond?
- *God I long to experience Jesus face to face. Give me courage to respond to his invitation to go into the deeper waters of faith. Amen.*

TUESDAY: PHILIPPIANS 3.12-14

Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. ¹³ Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

- Paul had a persistent sense that he was moving towards something in Christ. As a leader who had accomplished and suffered much, he could have been impressed by the depth of his own life. Instead, he pushed on towards the places Jesus had called him. **Who do you look to as someone who is spiritually accomplished? What characteristics do they have? Do they seem settled or are they still actively pursuing Jesus?**
- *Jesus, I long for heaven. Keep my eyes focused on the life in front of me, and the life to come. Amen.*

WEDNESDAY: JOHN 17.20-26

“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, ²¹ that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— ²³ I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

²⁴ *“Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.*

²⁵ “Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. ²⁶ I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.”

- This prayer from Jesus serves as a reminder that we have been given the glory that exists between Jesus and his Heavenly Father. It describes a level of intimacy between Father and Son that we also get to participate in. The love of the Father flows through Jesus to us. Jesus wants us to be with him where he is, and when we are with him where he is, we participate in his Way of life. **There is unity that exists when disciples share in the glory of God. When have you experienced unity in the body of Christ (the church)? When have you seen believers falling short of this goal?**
- *God, help us to hold fast to the glory of your presence. May we find unity that announces to the world who Jesus is and how he reveals your love. Amen.*

THURSDAY: 1 JOHN 1.5-7

This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. ⁶ If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. ⁷ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

- We can know we are walking in the light when we are walking with Jesus because Jesus is the light of the world. It is easy to claim that you love God and yet neglect to walk in His ways. **What does it mean to walk in the light? What are some common signs that you are walking in darkness instead?** In the midst of fellowship with one another, the blood of Jesus purifies us from all sin. **What role can fellowship or community play in our purification from sin?**
- *God, you are pure light, there is no darkness in you. Shine on my path and hold me in community so that I might be made pure. Amen.*

FRIDAY: PROVERBS 3.3-6

*Let love and faithfulness never leave you;
bind them around your neck,
write them on the tablet of your heart.*

⁴ *Then you will win favor and a good name
in the sight of God and man.*

⁵ *Trust in the Lord with all your heart
and lean not on your own understanding;*

⁶ *in all your ways submit to him,
and he will make your paths straight.*

- It's only when an apprentice gets serious that he or she will accept language like “bind” and “submit”. We are invited to carry around the love and faithfulness of God and therefore earn favor. Genuine humility is a sign that someone is going deeper with God. It requires trusting God above your own understanding. **What is written on the tablet of your heart? If it's something less than love and forgiveness, what steps might you take towards changing the tablet of your heart?**
- *Jesus, may I wear your love and forgiveness for me and may it straighten the path before me. Amen.*

SATURDAY: MATTHEW 16.24-26

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ²⁵ For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. ²⁶ What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?"

- Following in the Way of Jesus requires a complete change of perspective. It is in our nature to cling to our own life, but Jesus invites us into a life of self-denial. **What do you think Jesus meant by denying self and taking up your cross?**
- *Jesus, reveal the path to true life in you and help me to lose my life for you. Amen.*

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Pastor Jacob gave several examples of how the church has continued in its mission during hard times. Can you say the same for your household?

- How have you seen God moving through the church in the last year?
- How have you seen God moving in your home in the last year?
- How have you seen God moving in your heart in the last year?
- What would it look like for you to follow Jesus "into the deep"?