

GOD CAN BE TRUSTED

WEEKLY STUDY

WEEK 2

We celebrated Baptism Sunday this weekend. Dozens of people came forward for baptism or to recommit to their baptism. God has been speaking to many people's hearts as we've explored all that God has done and how trustworthy He is. Many have responded to God for the first time, giving their lives to Jesus. Others are (**metaphor alert!***) more like an athlete in the era of the transfer portal in college sports—they once committed to Jesus, seemed to spend a season or two with a different team before being welcomed home. A recommitment to baptism is a return to our home in Jesus. May you sense a deeper commitment to Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior as you read and pray this week!

Peace of Christ,
Pastor Mark

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.

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: ACTS 8.26-38

Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." ²⁷ So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of the Kandake (which means "queen of the Ethiopians"). This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, ²⁸ and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the Book of Isaiah the prophet. ²⁹ The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it."

³⁰ *Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. "Do you understand what you are reading?" Philip asked.*

³¹ *"How can I," he said, "unless someone explains it to me?" So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.*

³² *This is the passage of Scripture the eunuch was reading:*

*"He was led like a sheep to the slaughter,
and as a lamb before its shearer is silent,*

so he did not open his mouth.

³³ *In his humiliation he was deprived of justice.*

Who can speak of his descendants?

For his life was taken from the earth.”

- The fact that this man held a high level position is important to the scope of the story, but holds no relevance to his salvation. In the moment of questioning he was just like anyone else seeking to know God. Philip was in a position to share Jesus with a complete stranger, and God set him up beautifully by putting the words of Isaiah smack dab in the middle of the conversation. Sometimes we may feel unprepared to share the good news of Jesus with a stranger, but God’s Word is a gift that will always be true and timely. **How do you respond to opportunities to share about Jesus? How can you increasingly rely on God’s Word in these situations?**
- *God, I look to the scripture you have given to us. Put them in my heart and on my tongue as I meet those who are seeking you. Amen.*

TUESDAY: ISAIAH 53.7-9

*He was oppressed and afflicted,
yet he did not open his mouth;
he was led like a lamb to the slaughter,
and as a sheep before its shearers is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.*

⁸ *By oppression and judgment he was taken away.*

Yet who of his generation protested?

*For he was cut off from the land of the living;
for the transgression of my people he was punished.*

⁹ *He was assigned a grave with the wicked,
and with the rich in his death,
though he had done no violence,
nor was any deceit in his mouth.*

- The words of Isaiah were written over 700 years before Jesus. They were harsh words that pointed to a hope through humility. There would be a suffering servant who would take away the sins of the world. It doesn’t seem like the easiest starting point to share about Jesus with someone who hadn’t heard, but it was what Philip had to work with. **Think about people in your own life who are seeking to learn more about God. What tools do you have to share about God’s amazing love for them?**
- *O God, would you use me to point others to your heart. Reveal Jesus through me today. Amen.*

WEDNESDAY: ACTS 8.34-39

The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?”³⁵ Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.

³⁶ *As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?”³⁸ And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.³⁹ When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing.*

- Philip heard these words read from the Ethiopian man's chariot. They sounded familiar because he knew God's Word. He had already interpreted these words as a prophecy about the coming Messiah—who he knew to be Jesus Christ. He basically says, "There's Jesus!" **How does this passage point you to Jesus? How would you use them to share about Jesus? What opportunities do you have in your daily life to point to a situation or event in someone's life and say "There's Jesus!"?**
- *O God, I believe that Jesus Christ is your Son and that you sent him as our Messiah, our rescuer who takes away the sins of the world. Amen.*

THURSDAY: MARK 9.20-25

When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately threw the boy into a convulsion. He fell to the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth.

²¹ *Jesus asked the boy's father, "How long has he been like this?"*

"From childhood," he answered. ²² "It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us."

²³ *"If you can?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for one who believes."*

²⁴ *Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!"*

²⁵ *When Jesus saw that a crowd was running to the scene, he rebuked the impure spirit. "You deaf and mute spirit," he said, "I command you, come out of him and never enter him again."*

- Every honest follower of Jesus can relate to the father's words from Mark 9.24, "I believe, help my unbelief!" As Pastor Jacob shared this weekend, we don't have to have it all figured out in order to respond to Jesus. What is needed is a belief that God can do amazing things, like send a disciple into the path of a seeker, and send Jesus to save us. Notice the desperation and the timidity in the father's question. "If you can do anything..." Our requests of Jesus can be similar, "If it wouldn't be too much trouble..." **What are you asking of Jesus right now?**
- *O Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me and hear my prayers. I know that all things are possible for you. Amen.*

FRIDAY: MARK 2.1-5

A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. ² They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. ³ Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. ⁴ Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on. ⁵ When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

- One of the signs that you are being prepared to say yes to Jesus is the presence of others who are helping you. The man in Mark 2 was carried and lowered into a crowded room, just in hopes of his healing. The faithfulness of others can impact our own story of salvation. **Are there people around you who seem to be going to great lengths to draw you closer to Jesus?**
- *God thank you for placing others in my path who are seeking after you. Open my eyes to their presence and fill me with gratitude for those who would tear a hole in a roof in order to get me closer to you. Amen.*

SATURDAY: LUKE 15.4-7

“Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? ⁵ And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders ⁶ and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’ ⁷ I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

- God seeks after us so intently that we can sometimes feel it. And when we witness someone else being found and brought back into the fold, we rejoice much like Providence Church did this last Sunday as people of all ages came forward to accept Jesus for the first time or to recommit to their baptismal vows. **Can you identify a time where you or someone you love caused rejoicing in heaven?**
- *Jesus, lover of my soul, you have pursued me even when I didn’t realize I was lost. Come and find me each time I wander and hold me close to your heart like a shepherd who loves his sheep. Amen.*

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Pastor Jacob left us with 6 Indicators that a person is ready to respond to Jesus and seek baptism:

- The Spirit is active.
- The person is seeking.
- There isn’t full understanding.
- There is a confession of belief.
- Someone else has to help you to the water.
- There is rejoicing.

How many of these are true for you today?

If you have already been baptized, share what you know about that day.