

Weekly Study Guide

February 5, 2017

Wish to view the message again? Go to vimeo.com/flcwb. Will you be out of town soon? Watch on-line at livestream.com/flcwb. Desire to ask Pastor Steve a question about today's message? Contact him at 651.429.5349 x215 or sturnbull@flcwb.org.

Daily Readings

Sunday	Genesis 12:1-3	God creates life; people choose to sin; Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, Jacob, Leah, Rachel; the 12 tribes of Israel; and the story of Joseph.
Monday	Exodus 5:2, 14:13-14	God delivers his people from slavery into freedom. God gives the 10 Commandments and begins teaching his people how to follow his ways.
Tuesday	Leviticus 20:7-8 Numbers 9:17-18 Deuteronomy 6:4-9	Laws, rules, and traditions meant to help God's people honor him with their lives. Census of the people; journey to the promised land; Balaam and the donkey. Moses' last words to the people as they enter the promised land.
Wednesday	Joshua 1:6, 24:15	Joshua takes leadership after Moses; battles to take the promised land; Battle of Jericho.
Thursday	Judges 2:16-19	Time of chaos where God raises up judges to help lead his wayward people.
Friday	Ruth 1:16-17, 4:13-17	Story about a non-Jewish widow who chooses to be faithful to her mother-in-law and trusts in God as they journey to a new home. David and Jesus are born of Ruth's line.
Saturday	1 Samuel 8,6-9, 17:45 2 Samuel 5:4, 7:16	Samuel, the boy in the temple, becomes prophet/priest. Samuel anoints Saul as king; then anoints David as king.

Regular habits of private Bible reading strengthen our relationship with God and teach us how to follow Jesus. In addition to the thematic exercise above, you can use this guide each week to lead you through relevant sections of the Bible.

Group Discussion Guide

CONNECT

What's the last book you read? Did you like it?

LEARN AND APPLY

The Bible is a huge book, and it was written thousands of years ago. Reading the Bible successfully does require some thought and practice, and it's okay to have questions. Reading the Bible well is a journey.

- Have you had any experiences with reading the Bible that were helpful or encouraging? Give an example.
- What difficulties have you had with reading the Bible, or what open questions do you have? It's okay to acknowledge these even if you don't know all the answers or solutions yet.

In this first week of our series we are practicing reading a passage from the Old Testament. We are reading an excerpt from the story of Joseph (not the father of Jesus; this Joseph lived between 1,500 and 2,000 years before Jesus). It's hard to read only part of a story, but we always have to start somewhere. **Read Genesis 39.**

- To strengthen your grasp of the story, before attempting to understand it's meaning, try retelling it to each other in your words.
- When reading a passage that's a story, such as this one, it can be helpful to imagine the experience or perspective of the various characters. What do you think it was like to be Potiphar's wife? Or Potiphar? Joseph? One of the servants?
- Another very important character in the story is the LORD. (Most Bible translation use "the LORD" in all caps to translate the proper name of Israel's God.) What does this story suggest to you about God? If you had to give God a verb for this story, what would it be... God loves? God guides? God blesses? Something else?
- What does the story of Joseph suggest to you about what it means to be part of the people of God as Joseph was?
- In the message this week, we learned a little bit about the larger context of the Joseph story. Does this context add anything to your answers to the last two questions?
- We are reading an Old Testament story as Christians. This can sometimes be difficult to imagine, but do you think this passage sounds any different in light of what you know about Jesus?
- How do you think God is inviting you to respond based on your reading of this story?

Along with this series you will find a reading guide full of very short Bible passages. By the end of these four weeks you'll be able to say you know at least something about all 66 books in the Bible! Decide if you're going to use this guide as a group and check back with each other next week.

PRAY

Open to Psalm 119:105, and pray these words of Scripture out loud together ("Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path"). It's okay if your versions are slightly different, God hears!