



THE GOSPEL PROJECT FOR STUDENTS
DAILY DISCIPLESHIP GUIDE

VOLUME 8

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Printed in the United States of America.

The Gospel Project® for Students Daily
Discipleship Guide (ISSN 2163-0917; Item

005854133) is published quarterly by Lifeway
Christian Resources, 200 Powell Place, Suite 100,
Brentwood, TN 37027,

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DAILY DEVOTIONS

In addition to the group portions of this study, the **Daily Discipleship Guide** also includes five days of devotions following each session. As we journey through the storyline of Scripture over the course of three years, we won't have time to cover some sections of the Bible. These devotions will help with that, filling in the gaps in the biblical storyline and allowing more opportunities to cover biblical themes and insights not discussed during group time. These devotions help you know how to read and interpret the Bible for yourself. Symbols for the Seven Arrows reading method are provided at the beginning of each week's devotions as a reminder of common questions to ask about Scripture as you read each day. The devotion pages are perforated so that you can take them home with you.

SEVEN ARROWS

OF BIBLE READING



What does this passage say?



What did this passage mean to its original audience?



What does this passage tell us about God?



What does this passage tell us about man?



What does this passage demand of me?



How does this passage change the way I relate to people?



How does this passage prompt me to pray?

DAY ONE
EXODUS 14:19-31

Can you imagine how the Israelites felt as they came up on the body of water? The situation wasn't too desperate: the Egyptians hadn't blocked them, the water in front of them, and nowhere to go. Can you picture walking on the beach through the middle of the sea, knowing that just a few minutes earlier, there was no way out? They had been slaves in Egypt for 400 years before God used Moses to rescue them, so we can understand why confusion they had when God powerfully parted the waters. Not long after this miraculous moment, the people started complaining about hunger, accusing God of leading them into the wilderness to die. An obvious looking to, we get frustrated with the Israelites and are shocked that they were to go back to Egyptian slavery. But imagine if they were reading a story about you: the sea had God had wanted to rescue you, would they also get frustrated over how quickly you forget and turn to worldly concerns to satisfy your desires on the sea?

Why do we so easily forget? Our words, bodies, and minds are broken. Sin easily distracts us with a promise of temporary pleasure, but God is more wonderful than those fleeting moments. By sending Jesus to save the penitent for your sins, he has done more for you than anything the world can offer you. When you call on the Lord for salvation, you become the dwelling place for the Holy Spirit, who works to transform your heart and mind. The next time you find yourself in a desperate situation, remember that the same power that parted the Red Sea is the same power that saves you.

REFLECT

- WHEN YOU FACE A CHALLENGING SITUATION, WHAT IS THE FIRST THING YOU TURN TO AS A WAY OF ESCAPE? WHY?
- RECALL A RED SEA MOMENT—WHEN YOU THOUGHT THAT A GOOD OUTCOME WAS IMPOSSIBLE. HOW DID GOD MAKE A WAY AND WORK IT OUT?

PRAY

GOD, THANK YOU FOR ALL THE WAYS YOU HAVE RESCUED ME. IF ALL YOU EVER DID WAS SAVE ME FROM MY SINS, THAT WOULD BE ENOUGH. HELP ME TO ALWAYS REMEMBER THE SIGNS AND WONDERS YOU HAVE USED TO RESCUE ME.

DO YOU
THINK YOU
JUST

PRAY

THANK YOU FOR YOUR UNWAVERING FAITHFULNESS TO LOVE AND TAKE CARE OF ME. I TRUST THAT YOU ARE WORKING ALL THINGS FOR MY GOOD, EVEN WHEN I CAN'T SEE IT. HELP ME TO WALK CONFIDENTLY INTO THE UNKNOWN BECAUSE YOU ARE THERE.

DAY THREE
JOHN 4:39-45

Have you ever been to a family game in your hometown? An interesting thing happens as the athletes on the field go up and sit on the bench as adults. People often tell me that in who they were when they were children.

Today's reading is the perfect example of this phenomenon. Jesus met with a Samaritan woman and was flanked with other Samaritans, who were eager to meet him. The Jews were often hostile people from which Jesus descended, and they despised the Samaritans. But Jesus gave them the time and attention anyway. As Jesus left for Galilee, he said that a man, whom he knew better in his hometown, if Jesus was to go to the festival, he would follow. The people would struggle to see him as anyone other than the boy they watched grow up there. They didn't give Jesus the honor he deserved when he arrived in Galilee, some recognized him only because they had seen his works in Jerusalem. The Samaritans believed without seeing, but the Jews needed to see before they believed.

Jesus' mission was to save both the Jews and the Gentiles. Anyone lost in this can call on the name of the Lord and be saved. Though the Jews ultimately rejected Jesus, he became a sacrifice for their sins. His sacrifice was for every person and group, including you.

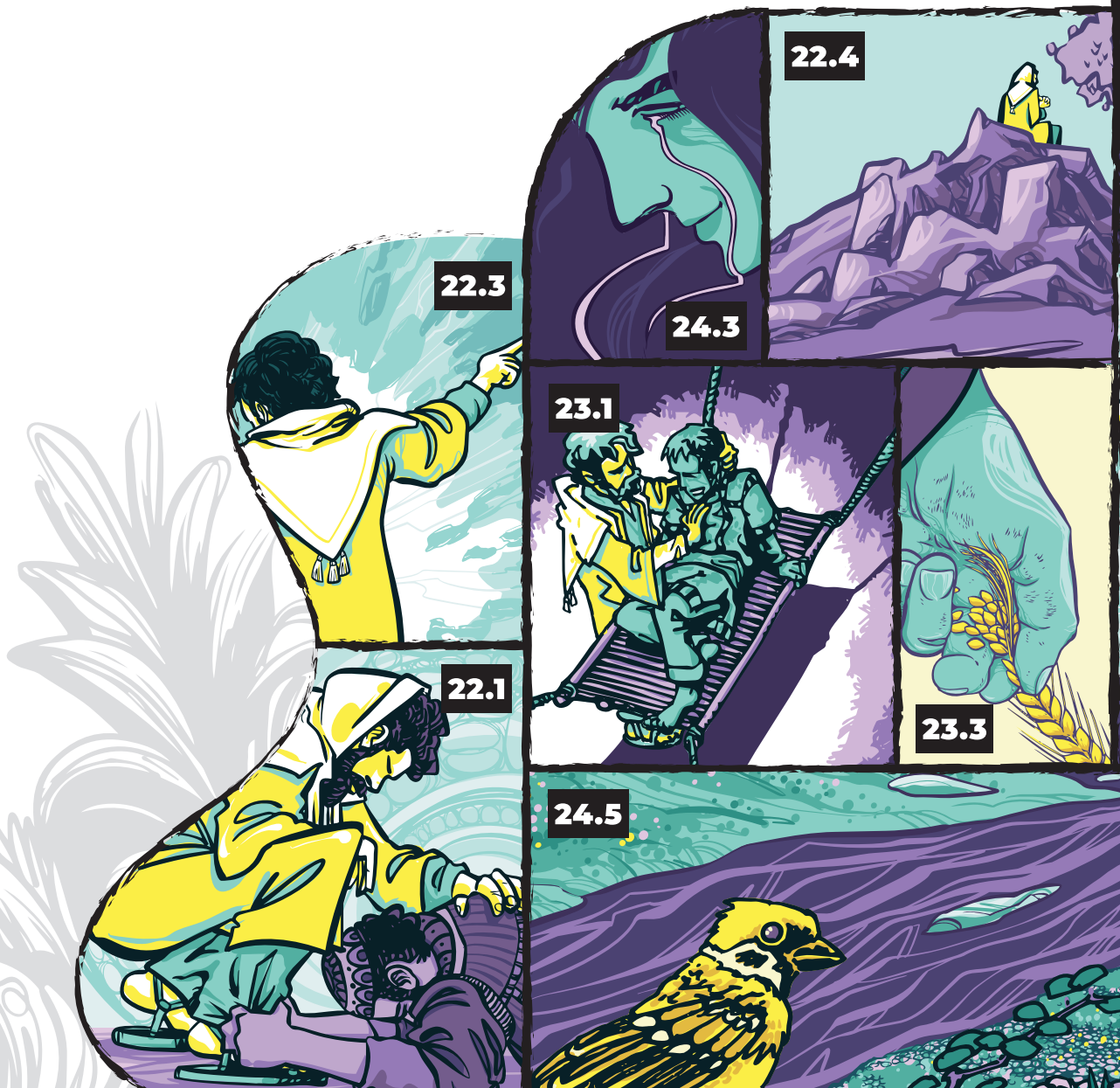
REFLECT

- DO YOU ONLY TRUST GOD WHEN YOU HAVE SEEN HIS WORK? WHAT ABOUT WHEN HE FEELS SILENT?
- WHAT ARE YOU FEELING BECAUSE YOU FEAR GOD CAN'T OR WON'T FOREVER YOUR CONCERNS TO GOD TODAY.

PRAY

THANK YOU, GOD, FOR JESUS'S SACRIFICE FOR MY SINS. THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING ALL PEOPLE TO BLESS WITH YOUR MERCY AND GRACE. HELP ME SHOW THIS LOVE TO EVERYONE TODAY.

THE SON HAS AUTHORITY



22.1 "SIGNS AND WONDERS"

23.3 "THE LORD OF THE SABBATH"

22.2 "ISN'T THIS JOSEPH'S SON?"

23.4 "KINGDOM OF GOD"

22.3 NOT LIKE THE SCRIBES

24.1 "THE ONE"

22.4 DESERTED PLACES

24.2 "GOD HAS VISITED HIS PEOPLE!"

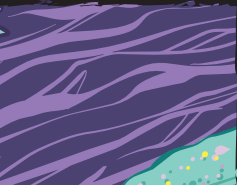
23.1 "YOUR SINS ARE FORGIVEN"

24.3 "THE ONE HE FORGAVE MORE"

23.2 SEND THEM OUT

24.4 "TEACH US TO PRAY"

24.5 "HOW THE WILDFLOWERS GROW"



"SIGNS AND WONDERS"

unit 22 | session 1



CHRIST CONNECTION

Jesus responded to those who came to Him in faith for physical healing. In a greater way, all who come to Jesus in faith for salvation from sin are forgiven and restored with God.

BELIEVING BEFORE SEEING

This week, we're covering the passages and main points below. But we encourage you to dig in and read all of the content on this timeline.

John 4

DESPERATION LEADS US TO JESUS

JOHN 4:46-48

46 He went again to Cana of Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine. There was a certain royal official whose son was ill at Capernaum. 47 When this man heard that Jesus had come from Judea into Galilee, he went to him and pleaded with him to come down and heal his son, since he was about to die. 48 Jesus told him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will not believe."

BELIEF LEADS TO HEALING

JOHN 4:49-54

49 "Sir," the official said to him, "come down before my boy dies." 50 "Go," Jesus told him, "your son will live." The man believed what Jesus said to him and departed. 51 While he was still going down, his servants met him saying that his boy was alive. 52 He asked them at what time he got better. "Yesterday at one in the afternoon the fever left him," they answered. 53 The father realized this was the very hour at which Jesus had told him, "Your son will live." So he himself believed, along with his whole household. 54 Now this was also the second sign Jesus performed after he came from Judea to Galilee.

MAIN POINT.

Faith is believing Jesus's words before seeing His works.



THEOLOGY CONNECTION



JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

Justification refers to the moment when a person is declared innocent before God based on the righteousness of Jesus's atoning death (Rom. 8:33-34). This act of declaration takes place through faith in Jesus and not as a result of human works or effort (Eph. 2:8-9). Through justification, a person is made to be in right standing before God, changing what was once a strained and hostile relationship to one of adoption into the family of God.

DISCUSSION



DESPERATION LEADS US TO JESUS

JOHN 4:46-48

- What's the difference between a normal need and a huge, urgent, desperate feeling? When have you felt desperate?
-  • Why does our sin make us desperate for God? Why can't we fix it?
-  • When we're desperate, why do we often run to other things or people instead of Jesus? How does everything else fail us?

BELIEF LEADS TO HEALING

JOHN 4:49-54

-  • What does it really mean to believe in Jesus?
-  • Why do you think we sometimes struggle to believe what Jesus says or to trust His promises?
- What does Jesus's ability and willingness to heal people like the royal official's son reveal about Him?



IN WHAT SITUATION IS JESUS ASKING YOU TO TRUST HIM BEFORE SEEING THE RESULTS? WHAT WOULD IT LOOK LIKE TO HAVE FAITH BEFORE SEEING THE OUTCOME?

CULTURAL CONNECTION

Have you ever wrestled with why God heals some people and not others? Christians aren't unaffected by the effects of living in a fallen, broken world. Jesus often healed people's sicknesses and diseases, and Scripture encourages us to pray for healing when we are sick (James 5:14,16). Sometimes God heals, but sometimes He chooses not to heal on this side of eternity. If you've walked through a situation where God didn't answer a prayer for healing, you aren't alone in feeling disappointed, hurt, or confused. We don't have to hide our hurt or disappointment from God. Instead, we go to Him; we hold on to the truth that He is our good, loving Father, who uses everything—even what's painful—to draw us close and make us more like Jesus (Rom. 8:28). We can invite Jesus into our suffering, knowing He understands our weaknesses and struggles because He also suffered here (Heb. 4:15). God always heals those who seek Him for spiritual healing. All who confess Jesus as Lord are saved (Rom. 10:9), and we have hope that no matter what happens on earth, we will spend eternity in heaven with no more pain, sickness, or disease.



DAY ONE

EXODUS 14:19-31



Can you imagine how the Israelites felt as they came up on the body of water? The situation must've felt desperate: the Egyptians behind them, the water in front of them, and nowhere to go. Can you picture walking on dry land through the walls of the sea, knowing that just a few minutes earlier, there was no way out? They had been slaves in Egypt for 400 years before God sent Moses to rescue them, so we can understand any confusion they had when God powerfully parted the waters. Not long after this miraculous moment, the people started complaining about hunger, accusing God of leading them into the wilderness to die. As outsiders looking in, we get frustrated with the Israelites and are shocked that they want to go back to Egypt—to slavery. But imagine if they were reading a story about your life and how God has worked to rescue you; would they also get frustrated over how quickly you forget and turn to worldly comforts to satisfy your desires or to fit in?

Why do we so easily forget? Our world, bodies, and minds are broken. Sin easily distracts us with a promise of temporary pleasure, but God is more wonderful than those fleeting moments. By sending Jesus to take the punishment for your sins, He has done more for you than anything the world can offer you. When you call on the Lord for salvation, you become a home for the Holy Spirit, who works to transform, or completely change, your heart and mind. The next time you find yourself in a desperate situation, remember that the same power that parted the Red Sea is the same power living inside of you.

- **WHEN YOU FACE A HARD OR PAINFUL SITUATION, WHAT IS THE FIRST THING YOU TURN TO AS A WAY OF ESCAPE? WHY?**
- **THINK OF A RED SEA MOMENT—WHEN YOU THOUGHT THAT A GOOD OUTCOME WAS IMPOSSIBLE. HOW DID GOD MAKE A WAY AND WORK IT OUT?**

PRAY

GOD, THANK YOU FOR ALL THE WAYS YOU HAVE RESCUED ME. IF ALL YOU EVER DID WAS SAVE ME FROM MY SINS, THAT WOULD BE ENOUGH. HELP ME TO ALWAYS REMEMBER THE SIGNS AND WONDERS YOU HAVE USED TO RESCUE ME.



DAY TWO

HEBREWS 11:1-3

Most of us don't immediately trust people we've just met. Trusting new people is much easier when another trusted friend has already tested and approved of their character and integrity. In a way, the Bible does this for us. Scripture is full of people who lived lives just like us—who faced moments requiring great faith in God to have their back. Because of these testimonies in Scripture, when you surrender your life to Christ through faith, you aren't acting in blind faith. God has proven over and over again that He takes care of His people.

Hebrews 11 is known as the "Hall of Faith" because the people listed there faced circumstances beyond their control. Many times, they didn't know what was going to happen, but they took the next step in faith because they trusted the One guiding their steps. They had unwavering faith in God because they witnessed His unwavering commitment to work all things for their good and His glory (Rom. 8:28).

God is for us; He is committed to us. We can move confidently through the unknown because we know God's character through the stories in His Word. You can't see God with your eyes, but your relationship with Him is as real as it gets, as real as your relationship with your closest friend. If you are waiting for a clear sign from God to know if you can trust Him, you can look in His Word. You can confidently move in faith because God has already proven He is faithful to take care of you.

- **IS IT EASY FOR YOU TO HAVE FAITH IN GOD EVEN THOUGH YOU CAN'T SEE HIM? WHY OR WHY NOT?**
- **WHEN HAVE YOU FACED A SITUATION THAT WAS BEYOND YOUR CONTROL? IN WHAT WAYS DID GOD TAKE CARE OF YOU?**

PRAY

THANK YOU FOR YOUR UNWAVERING FAITHFULNESS TO LOVE AND TAKE CARE OF ME. I TRUST THAT YOU ARE WORKING ALL THINGS FOR MY GOOD, EVEN WHEN I CAN'T SEE IT. HELP ME TO WALK CONFIDENTLY INTO THE UNKNOWN BECAUSE YOU ARE THERE.



DAY THREE

JOHN 4:39-45

Have you ever been to a football game in your hometown? An interesting thing happens as the athletes on the field grow up and sit in the stands as adults. People often still see them as who they were when they were students.

Today's reading is the perfect example of this situation. Jesus met with a Samaritan woman and was flooded with other Samaritans, who were eager to meet Him. The Jews were God's chosen people from which Jesus descended, and they despised the Samaritans. But Jesus gave them His time and attention anyway. As Jesus left for Galilee, He said that a man does not have honor in his hometown. If Jesus was to sit in the football stands in Galilee, the people would struggle to see Him as anyone other than the boy they watched grow up there. They didn't give Jesus the honor He deserved. When He arrived in Galilee, some accepted Him only because they had seen His works in Jerusalem. The Samaritans believed without seeing, but the Jews needed to see before they believed.

Jesus's mission was to save both the Jews and the Gentiles. Anyone lost in sin can call on the name of the Lord and be saved. Though the Jews ultimately rejected Jesus, He became a sacrifice for their sins. His sacrifice was for every person and group, including you.

- **DO YOU ONLY TRUST GOD WHEN YOU HAVE SEEN HIM WORK? WHAT ABOUT WHEN HE FEELS SILENT?**
- **WHAT SINS ARE YOU HIDING BECAUSE YOU FEAR GOD CAN'T OR WON'T FORGIVE YOU? CONFESS THEM TO GOD TODAY.**

PRAY

THANK YOU, GOD, FOR JESUS'S SACRIFICE FOR MY SINS. THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING ALL PEOPLE TO BLESS WITH YOUR MERCY AND GRACE. HELP ME SHOW THIS LOVE TO EVERYONE TODAY.



DAY FOUR

PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7

What is your definition of the word “anything”? As it is used in this Scripture, it includes everything; nothing is left out. Think back to this week’s lesson. The father was desperate for his son’s healing. When Jesus told him that his son was healed, the man believed, even though he hadn’t seen his son yet.

When you read, “Don’t worry about anything,” your mind may go to a situation that is the exception. You may feel like your situation is beyond help, even from God. You may believe that God can work things out for other people, but your case is different, too difficult.

What Scripture says is true: No situation in your life is too far out of God’s reach for Him to take care of. Everything means everything. The Scripture goes on to say that you only need to turn over everything to God through prayer. He cares. He wants to meet you where you are. He wants to take the burden you are carrying and replace your anxiety with peace. When you let go of control and give it over to God, the peace that surpasses all understanding—a supernatural calm—will cover your mind and dissolve the worry. Because of Jesus and with the help of the Holy Spirit, we have access to peace. You can’t do anything to earn it; instead, the God of all creation sees you, cares about you, and takes care of you. He sent Jesus to create a way for you to experience His peace. You must simply believe.

- **THINK OF A TIME WHEN YOU REALLY NEEDED GOD’S PEACE. DID YOU PRAY TO HIM ABOUT IT? HOW DID YOU KNOW HE GAVE YOU PEACE?**
- **DO YOU BELIEVE THAT GOD CARES FOR YOU AND WANTS TO TAKE CARE OF YOU IN EVERY SITUATION? WHY OR WHY NOT?**

PRAY

GOD, YOU SEE ME, YOU KNOW ME, AND YOU CARE ABOUT ME. AND I’M GRATEFUL. THANK YOU FOR YOUR PEACE IN ALL SITUATIONS—EVEN THE ONES THAT CAUSE ANXIETY TO RISE IN MY MIND. I GIVE IT ALL TO YOU. THANK YOU FOR TAKING IT FROM ME.





DAY FIVE

JOHN 4:51-53

What is the most painful situation or season you have ever been in? Was finding meaning in it easy or difficult? Your hardest, most desperate situations can be used for good and for God's glory. Saying we believe this is easy, but actually believing it is more difficult when you're in the middle of desperate times. Those times test whether or not we believe what we claim. In today's passage, the father learns that his son was healed in the same moment Jesus said he was healed. This moment could have easily been overlooked or missed. In today's culture, we tend to believe that miracles like this don't happen. How often do we miss the opportunity to point others to Jesus because we do not see Jesus's work happening right in front of us?

This father didn't miss it; he knew Jesus had healed his son. The most painful moment of his life was redeemed—rescued—by Jesus, and he told everyone about it. We can use this story as a model for us to imitate, or copy: The father invited Jesus into a very desperate situation because he knew Jesus was the only One who could fix it. Then, he invited everyone else into the story so that they could see that Jesus could help them too.

What about you? What painful situation are you in right now, and how have you looked to Jesus to redeem it? Friend, Jesus redeeming the hardest seasons of your life is just as possible for you as it was for this young boy and his father. The next step for you is simple: Invite Jesus to fix it, and then tell anyone who will listen about His goodness.

- **DO YOU STRUGGLE TO ALLOW GOD TO USE YOUR DIFFICULT SEASONS FOR YOUR GOOD AND HIS GLORY? EXPLAIN.**
- **THINK OF A TIME WHEN YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW WENT THROUGH PAIN BUT WERE ABLE TO USE IT POINT OTHERS TO JESUS. WHAT DOES THIS SHOW YOU ABOUT OUR PAIN?**

PRAY

THANK YOU, GOD, FOR WORKING ALL THINGS FOR MY GOOD AND YOUR GLORY. YOU ARE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN REDEEM MY PAIN. PLEASE GIVE ME THE COURAGE TO USE DIFFICULT SITUATIONS IN MY LIFE TO SPREAD THE MESSAGE OF YOUR GOODNESS AND GRACE.