

DAILY STUDY: THIS IS TRUE

Following Christ in an Age of Fragmented Knowing

INTRODUCTION:

We are living in a time when truth feels harder to find than ever. Between the noise of the internet, the pace of cultural change, and the polarization of our communities, many of us feel the weight of not knowing what to trust — or even how to think about truth anymore. We scroll, we listen, we react, and yet clarity often feels just out of reach. Whether you've felt confused, overwhelmed, frustrated, or even discouraged about what's real and what's reliable, you're not alone. These next six weeks are designed to gently walk with you through this very human experience, not with judgment or oversimplification, but with the compassion and wisdom of Jesus Himself.

In this series, we're going to explore a different way of approaching truth — not as a weapon to win arguments, not as a badge to prove we're right, and not as something we must grasp perfectly in order to belong. Instead, we'll journey into truth as Scripture presents it: truth as relationship, truth as humility, truth as community, and ultimately truth as a Person — Jesus Christ. Together, we will look at how modern life has shaped our way of knowing, how our stories and biases impact what we see, how the internet forms our imagination, and how the Spirit invites us into a deeper, freer, more Christ-centered way of seeing the world. You don't need to be a philosopher or theologian to take this journey — you just need an open heart and a willingness to let Jesus lead.

Our hope for these weeks is simple: that you would breathe a little easier, listen a little deeper, and learn to recognize the voice of Jesus with greater clarity. We pray that as you engage in the sermons, small groups, devotionals, and conversations, you'll discover that truth in the Christian story is not something to fear — it is something that leads us into freedom. Let's step into these six weeks together with curiosity, grace, and the expectation that God still reveals Himself to ordinary people who seek Him. Welcome to the journey.

Pastor Timothy Gillespie

DAILY STUDY: THIS IS TRUE
Following Christ in an Age of Fragmented Knowing

WEEK 1 - The Crisis of Knowing: Why Truth Feels Fractured

WEEK 1 - MONDAY

Truth as Revelation, Not Certainty

John 14:6; John 18:37–38

The question “What is truth?” isn’t new. Pilate’s voice echoes through time, weary and suspicious, shaped by power struggles and political pressure. His question sounds like modern people scrolling endlessly, skeptical of everything and trusting nothing.

When Jesus responds, He doesn’t give an explanation.
He gives **Himself**.

“I am the way, the truth, and the life.”

The Greek word Jesus uses here, **aletheia**, means “unveiled” or “revealed.” Truth is not primarily a fact we discover. It’s a Person who reveals Himself. This is a deeply Christian idea: truth is relational, not merely conceptual.

The modern world taught us to equate truth with *certainty*. The postmodern world taught us to equate truth with *perspective*. But Jesus teaches us that truth is an **encounter**.

Not a proposition.
Not a platform.
Not a political stance.
A relationship.

Think about Peter in Matthew 16. Jesus asks, “Who do you say I am?” Peter answers, “You are the Christ,” and Jesus tells him:

“Flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father in heaven.”

Truth is **revealed**, not merely deduced. This doesn’t mean Christians lack confidence. It means our confidence comes from our connection to Christ—not our mastery of ideas.

In an age of constant noise and infinite content, Christians hold a deeper conviction: Truth is something (and Someone) you receive, not something you conquer. This turns our spiritual journey from a quest for perfect certainty into a posture of open-handed receptivity:

“Lord, unveil what I cannot see.”
“Reveal what I cannot understand.”
“Show me truth in Your timing.”

To know Jesus is to become more humble, not more rigid.
To follow the Truth is to become more loving, not more argumentative.
To belong to Christ is to let Him be the One who reveals what is real.

The deepest truth is not what you know, but who knows you.

1. **Where have you confused Christian faith with the need to feel certain?**
 2. **How does seeing truth as *revelation* rather than *achievement* change your relationship with Jesus?**
 3. **What part of your life needs the prayer, “Lord, unveil what I cannot see”?**
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WEEK 1 - TUESDAY

How We Know What We Know

Proverbs 18:17; James 1:19

One of the most important spiritual disciplines in our age is slowing down long enough to ask: “How did I come to believe what I believe?”

We often assume our beliefs are the product of intelligence or logic — when in reality, they are shaped by:

- the family we grew up in
- the community that formed us
- the sources we trust
- our emotional history
- the stories we love
- the fears we carry
- the people we hope to please

Epistemology — the study of how we know what we know — is not abstract. It’s personal.

The internet has flattened the world so completely that we rarely pause to examine how our knowing is being shaped. Algorithms subtly curate our attention. Search engines learn our fears, preferences, and patterns. Our feeds increasingly show us what confirms our assumptions, not what challenges them.

This is why Proverbs warns us:

“The first to speak seems right, until another comes and questions him.”

In other words:

Slow down.

Listen longer.

Ask better questions.

Seek wisdom before reacting.

James echoes this beautifully:

“Be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry.”

Anger accelerates our “knowing.”

Love slows it down.

Humility opens us.

Fear closes us.

The Christian way of knowing requires *epistemic humility* — a willingness to acknowledge we see only in part (1 Cor. 13:12). This humility is not weakness. It’s wisdom.

When we remember that our knowledge is partial, shaped, influenced, and often distorted, we become more like Christ:

- patient
- thoughtful
- curious
- compassionate

You don’t have to distrust everything. You just have to distrust your impulse to rush.

To know as Christ knows, we adopt His posture: Slow. Present. Listening. Discerning. Compassionate. This is how Christians remain faithful in a fragmented information age.

- 1. Who or what shapes how you know things right now?**
- 2. Where do you feel pressure to react quickly rather than discern slowly?**
- 3. How would your week change if you practiced James 1:19 literally?**

WEEK 1 - WEDNESDAY

Stories Shape Seeing

Psalm 119:105; Luke 24:13–35

When Jesus rose from the dead, He didn’t appear to the disciples with a lecture, a doctrinal outline, or a bullet-point list. He met two discouraged travelers and did something deeply epistemological.

He re-narrated their story. He told them the Scriptures again — but this time as the story that pointed to Him. And only *after* the story was reinterpreted could they recognize Him.

This is a profound truth: We see what our story trains us to see.

We notice what our worldview teaches us to notice.

We recognize what our narrative prepares us to recognize.**

This is why two people can read the same Bible passage and walk away with opposite conclusions. It's why two people can experience the same event and interpret it differently. It's why culture wars aren't really about events — they're about stories.

Every person lives inside a “master narrative” that shapes:

- what we fear
- what we trust
- what we value
- what we assume
- what we hope
- what we think is possible

The Scriptures are not merely a set of theological claims. They are the **true story of the world** — the story that forms us to recognize Jesus. Psalm 119 says God's Word is “a lamp to my feet.” Lamps do not change the terrain. They change how we see it. Scripture functions this way too.

Too often, Christians treat the Bible as a database of answers. But Jesus treats it as a formative story — one that reshapes our imagination, heals our vision, and restores our ability to see truth.

When truth feels fragmented, we anchor ourselves not in better arguments but in a better story.

A story of:

- creation
- covenant
- incarnation
- crucifixion
- resurrection
- new creation

This is the story that makes sense of our own experience.

- 1. What story has shaped the way you see the world — your family story, cultural story, political story, or God's story?**
- 2. How has Scripture re-narrated your life in the past?**
- 3. Where do you need Jesus to walk with you and “open the Scriptures” again?**

WEEK 1 - THURSDAY

Deconstructing Certainty, Reconstructing Trust

1 Corinthians 8:1–3; 1 Corinthians 13:12

Certainty feels safe.

Uncertainty feels scary.

So we spend much of our lives clinging to what we can control: information, arguments, opinions, positions, labels.

But Paul says something radical:
“Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.”

Knowledge alone creates spiritual inflation. Only love creates spiritual formation.

Paul also teaches that our knowing is always **partial**, always **incomplete**, always **“through a glass dimly.”** That is not a failure — it’s a feature of Christian faith.

Faith does not begin with certainty.
Faith begins with **trust**.

Certainty says: “I must be right.”
Trust says: “God will guide me.”

Certainty says: “I must defend the truth.”
Trust says: “Truth Himself is defending me.”

Certainty is about control.
Trust is about relationship.

In a world obsessed with winning arguments, Christians are called to something deeper: Epistemic humility — a way of knowing shaped by love, formed in community, and grounded in Christ.

When something shakes your certainty — a crisis, a question, a doubt — it is not the end of your faith. It might be the beginning of *real* faith. Often, God loosens our grip on certainty so He can strengthen our grip on Him.

Deconstruction becomes holy when it leads to reconstruction in Christ.
Uncertainty becomes sacred when it leads to deeper dependence.

Doubt becomes a doorway when it invites us into trust. What if the very places you feel least certain are the places Jesus is calling you to follow Him more intimately?

- 1. Where in your life are you clinging to certainty instead of trusting Jesus?**
- 2. How does it feel to acknowledge that your knowledge is partial?**
- 3. What would trusting God — not outcomes — look like this week?**

WEEK 1 - FRIDAY
Embodied Truth & Epistemic Humility
Micah 6:8; John 8:31–32

Truth in Scripture is never just something to believe. It is always something to **become**. Jesus says, “If you hold to my teaching... then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” Notice the order:

1. Follow Me.
2. Live My way.
3. Then you’ll understand.

Christian knowing flows from Christian living. The Hebrew prophets understood this long before Jesus spoke it. Micah famously declared: “Do justice, love mercy, walk humbly with God.”

Justice.

Mercy.

Humility.

This is truth embodied.

In Hebrew thought, “truth” (*emet*) implies stability, faithfulness, reliability. Truth is something you *walk in*, not something you *win with*.

This is why truth cannot be separated from virtues like humility, compassion, and justice. If our truth does not make us more like Christ, it is not Christian truth.

You know someone is walking in truth not when they win arguments, but when:

- their presence feels safe
- their humility is evident
- their attention is loving
- their words build life
- their actions reflect Jesus

Truth is not merely a belief system; it is a formation system.

In a culture fractured by misinformation, tribal identity, and suspicion, Christians witness to Jesus by becoming:

- calm in chaos
- humble in conflict
- curious in confusion
- loving in disagreement
- faithful amid uncertainty

This is the embodied truth that sets us free — and draws the world to Christ.

- 1. Who in your life embodies truth in a way that feels safe, humble, and Christlike?**
- 2. Where is Jesus inviting you to walk more humbly this week?**
- 3. What small act of embodied truth could you practice today?**

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WEEK 2 - Algorithms of Belief: Attention, Formation & Christian Discernment

WEEK 2 - MONDAY

The Battle for Attention

Proverbs 4:23

“Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.”

If this proverb were written today, it might read:

“Above all else, guard your attention.”

In Hebrew thought, the *heart* (*lev*) was the seat of desire, imagination, and decision. It included what we today call “the mind.” Everything a person loved, feared, valued, and believed was rooted in the heart.

In the digital age, the heart’s doorway is **attention**.

Every app, platform, notification, headline, and ping is competing for one thing — **your sustained focus**. Not because they want to inform you, but because they want to shape you.

What you repeatedly attend to becomes your internal world.

Sociologist Shoshana Zuboff says we live in an era of “behavioral futures markets,” where our attention is bought and sold to predict what we will do next. Your attention shapes your habits. Your habits shape your loves. And your loves shape your life.

This is why wisdom literature emphasizes attentiveness:

- “Incline your ear to wisdom.”
- “Fix your gaze directly before you.”
- “Bind these words to your heart.”

Attention is not just cognitive; it is deeply spiritual.

When your attention is constantly fractured, your spirit feels fractured. You sense it in your anxiety, your restlessness, your mental clutter, your distractibility in prayer. Not because you lack willpower, but because your attention is being pulled apart.

The attention economy forms us without our consent — unless we consciously re-anchor our attention in Christ.

To “guard your heart” today might mean:

- silencing notifications
- resisting the urge to check everything
- slowing your scroll
- practicing Scripture before screens
- noticing what draws you toward fear or outrage

The world disciplines your attention toward chaos.
Jesus disciplines your attention toward peace.

The battle for truth begins with the battle for attention.

1. **What captures your attention most easily? What does that reveal about your desires?**
2. **How does your digital environment affect your emotional and spiritual life?**
3. **What practice could help you “guard your heart” this week?**

WEEK 2 - TUESDAY

Be Careful How You Hear

Luke 8:18

“Therefore consider carefully **how** you listen.”

Jesus didn’t say, “Be careful what you listen to,” though that matters.
He said, “Be careful how.”

We tend to assume hearing is passive — that whatever enters our ears simply becomes information. But Jesus teaches that spiritual hearing is selective, interpretive, shaped by desire, story, wounds, loves, and fears.

In cognitive psychology, this is called **attentional bias** — we notice what confirms our assumptions, ignore what challenges them, and interpret everything through our internal lens.

The internet amplifies this tendency through **algorithmic filtering**, constantly feeding us what resonates with our existing preferences. Over time, we hear more of some things and less of others, not because we chose it, but because an algorithm did.

But Jesus calls us into **discerned listening** — a posture that:

- slows down our reactions
- questions our assumptions
- tests our feelings
- seeks wisdom over validation
- listens prayerfully, not reactively

“How you hear” shapes what you believe.

A simple example:

If you hear Scripture defensively, you read it to protect your ego.

If you hear Scripture humbly, you read it to be transformed.

If you hear correction as an attack, you shut down.

If you hear correction as love, you grow.

If you hear disagreement as a threat, you become rigid.

If you hear disagreement as an invitation, you become wise.

Jesus wants to recalibrate not just **what you hear**, but **how your soul receives reality**.

Algorithms discipline us into quick hearing.

Jesus disciples us into deep hearing.

1. **How do you tend to “hear” — reactively, defensively, curiously, prayerfully?**
 2. **What internal filters (fear, pride, past experiences) most affect how you hear truth?**
 3. **Ask Jesus: “Teach me how to hear with Your heart.” What comes to mind?**
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WEEK 2 - WEDNESDAY

The Soul Becomes What It Beholds

2 Corinthians 3:18

“We all... beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed.”

Gregory of Nyssa wrote in the 4th century:

“The soul becomes what it beholds.”

Modern neuroscience agrees. What you repeatedly expose your mind to literally reshapes your neural pathways. Attention becomes architecture.

This is why repetition is the mother of formation. The things you behold — the images, words, stories, voices, emotions — slowly sculpt your inner world.

Consider how often your devices ask for your gaze:

- “Watch this next...”
- “Read this next...”
- “Don’t miss...”
- “Stay updated...”

Digital environments are designed to be **sticky** — not because you need the content, but because your attention is profitable.

But Scripture invites you into a different kind of beholding:

- “Fix your eyes on Jesus.”
- “Set your mind on things above.”
- “Meditate on these things.”
- “Your Word is my delight.”

The promise in 2 Corinthians 3:18 is stunning:
You become more like Christ simply by beholding Christ.

Not by trying harder. Not by perfect discipline. But by turning your gaze toward Him again and again.

The question is never *if* you are being formed. The question is *into what*.

If you behold fear, you internalize fear.
If you behold outrage, you become outraged.
If you behold envy, you become restless.
But if you behold Christ, you become like Him.

Attention is worship. Beholding is transformation.

1. **What do you “behold” most consistently in your week?**
 2. **How does your digital consumption shape your vision of God, yourself, and the world?**
 3. **What is one practical way you can “behold Christ” more intentionally this week?**
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WEEK 2 - THURSDAY

The Illusion of Knowing

1 Corinthians 8:1–3

“Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.”

In a world flooded with information, we often mistake **familiarity** for **understanding**.

Scrolling through Christian posts does not make us spiritually wise.
Consuming theological content does not necessarily make us Christlike.
Being informed does not equal being formed.

Paul warns that “knowledge puffs up.” The Greek word here is *phusioi* — meaning inflated, swollen, distended. It’s an image of **intellectual pride** without spiritual substance.

We live in an age where we can Google anything but understand almost nothing. Information is abundant; wisdom is scarce.

The internet often produces:

- instant opinions without reflection
- certainty without humility
- confidence without community
- assumptions without discernment

Paul's corrective is profound:

"If anyone imagines he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know."

True Christian knowing is rooted in **love**, not ego.

This means:

- Knowledge must lead to humility, not superiority.
- Knowledge must grow compassion, not division.
- Knowledge should deepen dependence on Christ, not increase self-reliance.
- Knowledge is not about being right; it is about becoming righteous.

The illusion of knowing is one of the enemy's greatest tools today. If the internet can make you feel knowledgeable without being transformed, you will never pursue deeper formation.

Jesus doesn't just want to teach you truth. He wants to make you **true** — the kind of person whose life bears witness to Him.

- 1. Where have you mistaken information for wisdom?**
- 2. How might pride masquerade as "knowledge" in your life?**
- 3. What practice this week could cultivate humility instead of certainty?**

WEEK 2 - FRIDAY

Freedom in a Fragmented World

John 8:31–32

"If you abide in my word... you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

Jesus does not say we will be set free by:

- more information
- clearer arguments
- political victories
- perfect certainty
- winning debates

He says freedom comes from **abiding** — from staying, dwelling, remaining in His word.

To abide is to refuse spiritual hurry.
To abide is to resist fragmentation.
To abide is to live from a center deeper than your notifications.
To abide is to anchor your identity not in headlines or algorithms but in the voice of Truth Himself.

The Greek word for “know” here is *gnōsis* — experiential, relational knowing. Jesus is saying:

“Live in Me, and you will discover the truth that frees you.”

This is not individualistic freedom.
It is not the freedom to believe whatever feels right.
It is not the freedom of self-invention.

It is the freedom of seeing reality as God sees it:

- yourself as beloved
- others as image-bearers
- the world as redeemable
- Christ as Lord

When you live in Jesus’ truth, you are no longer a passive consumer of digital meaning.
You are a participant in God’s reality.

Nothing fragments you.
Nothing manipulates you.
Nothing steals your peace.

Because truth is no longer an argument. It is a relationship.

- 1. What does “abiding” look like for you in practical terms?**
- 2. Where do you sense Jesus inviting you into deeper freedom?**
- 3. What fragmented places in your life need His wholeness this week?**

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WEEK 3 - The Truth We Tell - Story, Testimony, and Christian Epistemology

WEEK 3 - MONDAY

When Truth Speaks Your Name

John 20:14–16

Mary Magdalene stands in the garden, heart broken, vision blurred by tears, surrounded by uncertainty. The world as she knew it has shattered. She stands at the tomb looking for *information*, trying to make sense of what she sees. But truth does not come to her as clarity or explanation. Instead, it comes as a **voice**. A person. Someone who speaks her name.

“Mary.”

And her world rearranges itself.

Truth, in Scripture, is always more personal than conceptual. It is always God revealing Himself before God explaining Himself. Mary recognizes Jesus not because she solved the mystery of the resurrection, but because **He called her by name**. Truth does not begin in certainty; it begins in encounter. Your story with God is not a product of your insight — it is a response to His initiative.

Sometimes we search desperately for answers when what we really need is presence. Sometimes truth feels distant until Jesus speaks directly into the landscape of our life. There is no testimony without this moment — the moment when the Truth reveals Himself *to you*, not in general terms, but in the language of your life, your wounds, your questions, your desires.

We often ask, “How do I explain my faith?” Mary reminds us the real testimony is: “*He found me. He knows me. He called my name.*” This is not merely a story we tell. It is the story that tells **us** who we are.

1. **When in your life has God “spoken your name”?**
 2. **How did that moment shape what you believe to be true?**
 3. **What part of your life needs to hear His voice again?**
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WEEK 3 - TUESDAY

The Stories We Trust Shape the World We See

Luke 24:30–31

The Emmaus disciples walked beside Jesus, talked with Jesus, listened to Jesus — and yet they could not see Him. Their grief, disappointment, and shattered expectations formed a story that made recognition impossible. We often assume truth is blocked by ignorance, but Scripture shows it is often blocked by the *stories we trust*.

Before Jesus opens their eyes, He opens the **Scriptures**. He re-narrates their understanding of God, Israel, the Messiah, and suffering. Only then do they see. Their story had to change before their vision could.

This is deeply human. We interpret reality through the narratives we carry. If your story is “Nothing can change,” hope will seem naïve. If your story is “I am alone,” God’s presence will seem unlikely. If your story is “I must protect myself,” love will seem dangerous.

Jesus does not dismiss our stories; He transforms them. He invites us into the larger narrative of redemption, where pain is not final, expectations are not ultimate, and death does not get the last word. Testimony always begins here — in the moment when God gently unravels the old story that blinded us and replaces it with one in which He is Lord.

Once the disciples’ story changed, the world made sense again. Their eyes opened. Their hearts burned. They ran back to Jerusalem with a message that carried resurrection in every breath.

Truth becomes visible when we trust the story Jesus tells.

- 1. What story shapes how you currently see God or yourself?**
- 2. How might Jesus be rewriting that story even now?**
- 3. What would it take for you to trust His story more than your own?**

WEEK 3 - WEDNESDAY

Your Life Is a Testimony Being Written

Acts 4:19–20

Peter and John stand before authorities who hold religious power, legal power, and social power. Everything in the moment suggests silence. Yet their response is simple and courageous:

“We cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.”

They do not offer a theological treatise. They do not propose a philosophical defense. They testify. They speak out of lived experience — not speculation, not theory, but encounter. Their story carries authority because the risen Christ shaped it.

Your testimony does not need to be dramatic. It does not need to be complete. It does not need to be eloquent. It needs only to be **true** — true to your encounter with Jesus, true to the

ways He has met you, true to the transformation unfolding within you. A testimony is not a performance; it is an act of gratitude. A witness doesn't have to explain everything — only to be honest about what they have seen.

Even now, the Spirit is writing your story in real time. Some parts are clear. Others remain unresolved. Some contain joy, others sorrow, others confusion. But every chapter that includes God will become a testimony of faithfulness. Every place where grace interrupts your life becomes a place where truth is revealed.

You are not just telling a story. You are becoming one.

- 1. What part of your story are you most grateful Jesus stepped into?**
 - 2. What part of your story feels “unfinished” and needs trust rather than control?**
 - 3. Who in your life needs to hear even a small piece of what God has done for you?**
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WEEK 3 - THURSDAY

The Courage to Tell the Truth About Yourself

Psalm 51:6

“Surely You desire truth in the inward being.”

Testimony is not only about telling the truth about God; it is also about telling the truth about *ourselves*. One reason stories are powerful is because they are honest. Another reason they are difficult is because they are honest.

We often fear our weaknesses becoming visible. We fear being misunderstood, judged, exposed, or dismissed. But the power of testimony lies not in presenting a perfected narrative but in revealing the places where God is working, healing, forgiving, and transforming.

David's prayer in Psalm 51 is a testimony of profound honesty. He tells the truth about his failure — not to condemn himself, but to encounter the mercy that only rises to meet what is revealed. God desires truth in the inward being because inward truth is the soil where grace takes root.

Your testimony carries weight not because you are impressive, but because God is present. When you speak honestly about where Christ met you — in fear, in loss, in anger, in pride, in shame — others see that God meets people where they actually are, not where they pretend to be.

People are not transformed by our false strengths.
They are transformed by God's real presence within our real stories.

Honesty becomes the doorway to freedom — for you, and for those who hear you.

1. **What difficult part of your story might God be inviting you to speak truthfully about?**
 2. **How does honesty—rather than perfection—make your testimony more powerful?**
 3. **Where do you need to invite God’s mercy into your story today?**
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WEEK 3 - FRIDAY

The Story God Is Still Writing

Philippians 1:6

“He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion.”

One of the quiet fears many Christians carry is that their story is not “good enough” to tell. It feels incomplete, unresolved, or too ordinary. But Scripture teaches us that testimony is not the celebration of finished lives — it is the celebration of **a faithful God in the midst of unfinished people.**

Paul reassures the Philippians that God is the One writing the story. Their transformation is not their burden to manage; it is God’s work to complete. Testimony, then, is not a victory speech at the end of a journey. It is the willingness to say:

“Here is what God has begun.
Here is where grace is moving.
Here is what I am learning to trust.”

Your story, even now, is mid-sentence. And this is good news. It means God is not done. It means hope is still unfolding. It means your next chapter may reveal something about Christ you cannot yet imagine.

The world needs testimonies of unfinished people following a faithful God. This is how others find courage — not through perfect stories, but through stories that are still being redeemed.

You are not waiting for a story to tell.
You are living one right now.

1. **What part of your “unfinished story” do you sense God shaping right now?**
2. **How does believing God is still writing your story give you hope or courage?**
3. **Who could you bless by sharing a small piece of your ongoing journey?**

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WEEK 4 - Focus: When Truth Becomes a Weapon - Recovering Humility

WEEK 4 - MONDAY

The Burden of Being Right

1 Corinthians 8:1–3

There is a particular weight that comes with believing you must always be right. Most of us learn this weight early in life — perhaps from our families, faith communities, or cultural expectations. The need to be right can feel like a kind of righteousness, a moral high ground we must occupy at all costs. But Paul warns us that knowledge, even when it’s accurate, can inflate us to the point we become unrecognizable. The burden of rightness often hides a deeper fear — that if our certainty cracks, everything else might crumble with it.

Paul’s simple phrase, “knowledge puffs up,” is not a condemnation of truth-seeking but an invitation to notice what happens when truth stops being a gift and becomes a weapon. When certainty is used to shield us from vulnerability, we use truth to position ourselves over others instead of beside them. We stop listening. We stop seeing. We stop loving. In the end, we stop growing.

The irony is that the more tightly we grip certainty, the more fragile we become. Humility, on the other hand, does not fear being wrong because it is anchored not in perfection but in love — a love strong enough to hold our questions, mistakes, and incomplete understanding. When Paul says that “whoever loves God is known by God,” he shifts the focus from what we know to Who knows us. Truth becomes relational, not positional. Being known by God is the beginning of humility, and humility is the beginning of wisdom.

- 1. When in your life have you felt the burden of needing to be right?**
 - 2. How has certainty sometimes protected you from vulnerability?**
 - 3. What would it feel like to rest in being known by God rather than being right?**
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WEEK 4 - TUESDAY

The Stones We Hold

John 8:7

There is a quiet but sobering truth in the story of the woman caught in adultery: everyone in that moment is holding something. The Pharisees hold stones — symbols of certainty, judgment, and justified anger. The woman holds shame. The crowd holds curiosity, maybe even fear. But Jesus holds none of these. He bends down into the dust, the posture of someone utterly unthreatened by either sin or self-righteousness.

The stones in the hands of the accusers reveal how truth can become destructive when it is severed from humility. By all accounts, they are correct about the law. They are confident, prepared, and eager to enforce what they believe is righteous. But Jesus exposes something deeper: their application of truth is devoid of self-awareness. “Let the one who is without sin cast the first stone,” He says — a sentence so simple and so devastating that it dissolves the entire project of weaponized truth in a single breath.

We all hold stones at times — harsh interpretations, rigid expectations, unspoken judgments, quiet condemnations. Sometimes our stones are theological, sometimes relational, sometimes internal. The invitation of Jesus is not to deny truth, but to approach it with such humility that our hands slowly open and the stones fall. Truth is never meant to be held as a weapon; it is meant to be lived as a reflection of the One who is gentle and humble in heart.

- 1. What “stones” — judgments, assumptions, rigid views — are you holding today?**
 - 2. How does Jesus invite you to hold truth more gently?**
 - 3. Who might be blessed by your decision to release a stone?**
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WEEK 4 - WEDNESDAY

Seeing Through a Dim Mirror

1 Corinthians 13:12

Paul’s words about seeing “through a glass dimly” are both humbling and liberating. They remind us that no matter how much we study, pray, or engage with Scripture, our understanding is always partial. This is not a flaw in the Christian life but an essential part of it. God is infinite; we are not. Our knowing is always dependent, contingent, and incomplete.

This realization can either frustrate us or free us. It frustrates us when we approach truth as something to possess, control, or master. But it frees us when we remember that faith is not built on our ability to grasp everything — it’s built on our willingness to trust the One who holds everything. There is great peace in admitting, “I don’t see the whole picture, but God is faithful.” That posture is not intellectual laziness; it is spiritual maturity.

Seeing dimly teaches us gentleness with others and with ourselves. It softens our instincts to judge quickly or cling rigidly to our perspectives. It invites us into curiosity instead of condemnation. It reminds us that God is patient with our slow learning, our unfolding understanding, and our stumbling attempts to follow Him. Paul’s metaphor encourages us to

be patient with ourselves too — trusting that clarity will come, not from our striving, but from God’s steady guidance.

- 1. Where in your life do you feel the tension of “seeing dimly”?**
 - 2. How can this truth lead you toward gentleness rather than frustration?**
 - 3. What might God be teaching you through the parts you cannot yet see clearly?**
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WEEK 4 - THURSDAY

The Gentle Mind of Christ

Philippians 2:5

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.”

Paul’s invitation is not a call to adopt new ideas but to inhabit a new posture. The mind of Christ is not marked by arrogance or certainty, but by self-giving humility. Christ releases status. Christ relinquishes privilege. Christ refuses to operate from superiority. Christ moves toward others — even those who misunderstand, resist, or reject Him.

To have the mind of Christ is to begin every conversation with curiosity, every disagreement with gentleness, and every truth claim with love. Jesus never used truth to win; He used truth to heal. His authority was not rooted in intellectual dominance but in His unwavering alignment with the Father’s heart.

Humility is not insecurity. It is strength under submission. It is courage wrapped in compassion. It is conviction married to kindness. The mind of Christ is bold enough to speak truth and tender enough to hold the person hearing it.

Imagine if our churches embraced this mind. Imagine if our online presence reflected Christ’s gentleness. Imagine if our families approached disagreements not as battles to win but as opportunities to practice love. The world would encounter a truth that feels less like a weapon and more like an embrace.

- 1. What part of the “mind of Christ” do you find most challenging to embody?**
 - 2. How might humility actually deepen — rather than weaken — your convictions?**
 - 3. Where is Jesus calling you to imitate His way of holding truth this week?**
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WEEK 4 - FRIDAY

Open Hands in a Closed-Fist World

John 8:10–11

The story in John 8 ends quietly. The stones fall. The accusers walk away. The woman stands alone before Christ — vulnerable, exposed, waiting for judgment that doesn’t come. Jesus

looks at her with the gentlest question: “Where are they?” And then, with breathtaking mercy: “Neither do I condemn you. Go now and leave your life of sin.”

Truth and grace meet in the same breath. Jesus does not deny her sin, nor does He allow sin to define her. He tells the truth with such tenderness that it frees rather than wounds. His hands are empty — no stones, no accusations, no desire to punish. His truth is always delivered with open hands.

In a world of clenched fists — fists full of certainties, opinions, outrage, and self-protection — Jesus invites us to open ours. To loosen our grip on harmful forms of truth-telling. To release the pride that keeps us from listening. To unclench the fear that pushes us toward rigidity. To drop whatever stones we still hold.

This is what it means to embody truth in the way of Christ. Not as conquerors, but as healers. Not as the self-assured, but as the self-giving. Not as those who need to be right, but as those who long to be like Jesus.

Truth held with open hands becomes a gift. Truth held with humility becomes beautiful. Truth held with love becomes transformative.

- 1. What “stone” is Jesus asking you to release so you can hold truth with open hands?**
- 2. How might someone experience Jesus through your gentleness this week?**
- 3. What would it look like to let Christ’s mercy shape your truth-telling?**

**DAILY STUDY: THIS IS TRUE:
Following Christ in an Age of Fragmented Knowing**

WEEK 5 - Truth in Community - Why We Need Each Other to Discern Well

WEEK 5 - MONDAY

When Hearing Alone Is Not Enough

Acts 15:6

The early church gathered because the issue before them was too important — and too complex — for individual discernment. The text simply says, “So the apostles and elders met to consider this question.” It is a remarkably humble line. These were apostles. Men who walked with Jesus. Leaders filled with the Spirit. And yet they did not trust themselves alone. They trusted one another.

We often imagine spiritual maturity as independence — the ability to know, decide, and discern without needing anyone to speak into our lives. But Scripture paints a very different picture. Spiritual maturity is marked not by autonomy, but by *belonging*. Not by certainty, but by *humility*. Not by isolation, but by *conversation*.

Listening alone can only take us so far, because we hear through our experiences, our wounds, our desires, and our assumptions. And while God speaks personally to each of us, He rarely speaks *only* to us. He places us in a community so that our listening can be corrected, expanded, sharpened, and matured.

Acts 15 begins with this holy admission:

“We don’t see the whole picture. Let’s listen together.”

This is not weakness. It is wisdom. God does some of His clearest speaking when His people gather, slow down, open their hearts, and make space for one another.

- 1. When have you realized that hearing God alone was not enough — that you needed others to help interpret what you sensed?**
- 2. Why do you think the apostles trusted community over their own individual authority?**
- 3. Where in your life might God be inviting you into deeper shared discernment?**

WEEK 5 - TUESDAY

The Stories That Open Our Eyes

Acts 15:12

After Peter speaks, the room falls quiet, and Paul and Barnabas begin to share stories — stories of Gentiles encountering God, unexpected conversions, miracles among unlikely people. What is striking here is that the early church treats testimony as serious theological evidence. Experience is not dismissed. Lived encounters with God are part of the discernment process.

Discernment falters when we rely only on ideas and ignore experience. It falters when voices with different stories are not welcomed. It falters when we assume our own story is universal, and another's is irrelevant. But when stories are told in honesty and received with humility, something remarkable happens: we begin to see differently.

Sometimes what you need is not a new argument but a new story. Sometimes God expands your understanding of truth through the life of someone who does not look like you or come from the same background. Sometimes clarity comes from the quiet realization that God has been moving outside the boundaries you assumed.

The apostles could not have reached the right conclusion without hearing these stories. Truth did not emerge from a single mind but from many lives being brought to the table.

Your story matters — and so does the story of the person sitting next to you.

- 1. Whose story has expanded your understanding of God?**
- 2. How might someone else's experience help clarify something you are wrestling with?**
- 3. What story from your life might be a gift to someone else's discernment?**

WEEK 5 - WEDNESDAY

Scripture in Conversation, Not Isolation

Acts 15:15–17

After the testimonies and after Peter's humility, James stands and brings Scripture into the conversation. He quotes Amos 9, weaving together what God has done in the past with what God is now doing in the present. This is communal hermeneutics — Scripture interpreted in the midst of listening, story, prayer, and shared wrestling.

James does not use Scripture as a proof-text to silence disagreement. He uses it as a compass to orient the entire community toward God's larger story. Scripture alone is authoritative, but Scripture is never meant to be read *alone*. It must be read with others, in the context of humility and discernment, where different perspectives help uncover meaning we would have missed by ourselves.

Without community, we impose our biases on Scripture.
With community, Scripture imposes its truth upon us.

When we read together, we see the story more fully, understand nuance more deeply, and discover the Spirit's movement more clearly. The Bible becomes not a weapon but a shared well — a source of living water each person draws from for the sake of the whole.

Truth becomes clearer when Scripture is allowed to speak in conversation with real lives and real questions.

- 1. Who do you read Scripture with, formally or informally?**
 - 2. How has community helped you interpret a passage more accurately or deeply?**
 - 3. What might change if you approached Scripture expecting to learn from others, not just by yourself?**
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WEEK 5 - THURSDAY

It Seemed Good to the Holy Spirit and to Us

Acts 15:28

This sentence is one of the most astonishing in the New Testament. It suggests profound humility — not only in relation to the Spirit, but also in relation to each other. The early church does not say, “The Spirit told us clearly,” nor do they say, “We figured it out.” Instead, they choose a posture of shared discernment:

“It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us.”

This phrase acknowledges mystery. It acknowledges human limitation. It acknowledges that even in Spirit-filled community, discernment is sometimes subtle, gradual, and discovered in the “seeming.” They hold the decision lightly, yet faithfully. They are confident in the Spirit but humble about their experience of the Spirit.

Christian discernment is rarely about absolute certainty. It is often about the quiet confidence that emerges when God's people listen deeply, speak honestly, surrender ego, honor each other's voices, and pay attention to the Spirit together.

This is not a weak or slippery truth — it is deeply stable because it is relational. Truth becomes something lived together, carried together, and trusted together. The Spirit does not bypass community; the Spirit inhabits it.

- 1. How does the phrase “It seemed good...” affect the way you think about discernment?**
- 2. Why might the Spirit choose to speak through the “we” instead of the “I”?**
- 3. Where do you sense the Spirit inviting you to trust Him through community?**

WEEK 5 - FRIDAY

Becoming a Community That Discerns Well

Philippians 1:9–10

Paul prays that the Philippians would “abound in love... so that you may discern what is best.” This is a remarkable prayer because it links love and discernment inseparably. Paul suggests that the ability to recognize truth — to see what is right, wise, and good — emerges from a heart shaped by love. Not from intelligence. Not from certainty. Not from experience. From love.

Discernment is not merely a cognitive skill. It is a relational virtue. When a community is filled with love — patient, curious, forgiving, listening love — clarity grows. When a community becomes defensive, rigid, fearful, or proud, clarity disappears. The community in Acts 15 did not discern well because they were impressive theologians. They discerned well because they surrendered their pride, trusted one another, honored each person’s voice, and listened together for the Spirit.

We become that kind of community by practicing humility, opening our lives to others, and telling the truth gently — both about God and about ourselves. And when we do, the Spirit shapes our collective mind into something wiser, softer, and more like Christ.

Your discernment is not something you carry alone. God has placed you in a body so that your mind, your decisions, your hopes, and your questions are held by others. We discern well only when we discern together.

- 1. What would it look like for your community or small group to “abound in love” so that it can discern better?**
 - 2. What role might you play in making your community safer, humbler, or more attentive to the Spirit?**
 - 3. Whose voice do you need to invite into your discernment this week?**
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**DAILY STUDY: THIS IS TRUE:
Following Christ in an Age of Fragmented Knowing**

WEEK 6 - You Will Know the Truth: How Jesus Rewrites our Way of Knowing

WEEK 6 - MONDAY

When Truth Finds You First

Acts 9:3–5

Truth often arrives not when we go looking for it, but when **it comes looking for us**. Paul wasn't seeking Jesus on the Damascus Road. He was seeking to silence those who followed Jesus. He believed he already had truth — and believed it with fierce certainty. But then Jesus interrupts him with a question that cuts through all his confidence: *"Why are you persecuting Me?"*

This moment reveals something profound: Christian truth is not primarily discovered through study or logic. It is **revealed** through encounter. Jesus does not argue with Paul. He does not dismantle Paul's theology point by point. Instead, He reveals Himself — and in that revelation, everything Paul "knew" dissolves in the light of who Jesus truly is.

There are times in our lives when truth must break in from the outside. Not because we are stubborn or foolish, but because we are limited. Our perspectives are shaped by our histories, our fears, our desires, our interpretations. We cannot unblind ourselves. Only an encounter with Jesus — sometimes dramatic, sometimes gentle — breaks through the fog and leads us into clarity we could never achieve alone.

Truth finds us first.

And when it does, it doesn't condemn. It calls us by name.

- 1. Has Jesus ever interrupted your certainty the way He interrupted Paul's?**
- 2. What might Jesus be asking you today that reframes what you believe you know?**
- 3. How can you remain open to truth that arrives from beyond your expectations?**

WEEK 6 - TUESDAY

The Gift of Not Seeing Clearly

Acts 9:8–9

When Paul opens his eyes after encountering Jesus, he can't see. Literal blindness becomes a symbol for the collapse of his internal way of knowing. It's as though Jesus presses "reset" on Paul's vision — a holy pause between the world he once knew and the world he is about to see.

Most of us resist seasons where clarity disappears. We feel anxious when answers dissolve, when familiar categories fail, when long-held assumptions crumble. Yet the Scriptures are full of people whom God leads through a temporary darkness before ushering them into light. Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Mary, the disciples, and Paul—all walked through disorientation on the way to revelation.

Blindness is not punishment.
Blindness is preparation.
It creates space for new sight.

Sometimes Jesus must unsettle us before He can free us. Old frameworks must be surrendered before new vision can be received. The "not knowing" becomes sacred ground because it loosens our grip on the certainty that once held us captive. When Paul is blind, he is finally ready to be led. He is finally ready to listen. He is finally ready to receive truth as a gift rather than defend it as a possession.

What if the places where you feel least certain are the very places Jesus is preparing your heart to see more clearly?

1. **Where in your life do you feel "blind" or unable to see clearly right now?**
2. **How might that space be an invitation rather than a threat?**
3. **How could uncertainty become a spiritual practice rather than a spiritual crisis?**

WEEK 6 - WEDNESDAY

New Sight, New Knowing

John 8:31–32

Jesus does not separate knowing from **abiding**. He does not say, "If you study enough, you will know the truth," or "If you get the doctrine right, you will know the truth." He says, "If you abide in My word... you will know the truth." Truth is not the reward for mastering Christian information. It is the fruit of living in the presence of Christ.

This is a radically different way of knowing. It is relational, not performative. It is experiential, not merely cognitive. It is slow, like fruit growing on a vine. It is tender, like trust unfolding over years. It is vulnerable, like being deeply known by someone who loves you.

Abiding is a posture of staying close — not solving, not striving, not proving, but remaining. It is the long obedience of returning again and again to the One who reveals what is real. When you

abide in Jesus, you begin to see life through His eyes: your wounds, your relationships, your story, your identity, your calling. The truth He reveals is not coercive. It is freeing. It does not tighten your chest; it expands your breath. It does not bind you; it liberates you.

Freedom is not the absence of limits. Freedom is the presence of Christ at the center of your knowing.

- 1. What practices help you “abide” in Jesus rather than rush through life?**
 - 2. What parts of your life begin to change when you remain close to Christ?**
 - 3. How does the idea of truth as “freedom” challenge or comfort you?**
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WEEK 6 - THURSDAY

Seeing the World Through Christ

Colossians 1:15–17

Paul eventually writes one of the most breathtaking statements in all of Scripture: “Christ is the image of the invisible God... and in Him all things hold together.” This is not abstract theology; it is the testimony of a man whose entire way of seeing has been remade.

Christ becomes Paul’s interpretive lens. Everything that once made sense apart from Christ now becomes unintelligible without Him. The law makes sense through Christ. Scripture makes sense through Christ. The world makes sense through Christ. Even Paul’s own story makes sense through Christ.

This is what happens when Jesus rewrites your vision:

You begin to see God not as distant but revealed.

You begin to see others not as obstacles but as image-bearers.

You begin to see suffering not as abandonment but as a place where Christ is present.

You begin to see your past not as wasted but as redeemed.

You begin to see yourself not as condemned but as beloved.

When Christ becomes the center, everything finds coherence. Fragmented pieces align. Disparate experiences find meaning. Confusion gives way to clarity. The truth that once frightened you now frees you.

Seeing the world through Christ does not remove mystery, but it removes despair. It replaces fear with faith, shame with mercy, chaos with hope.

- 1. How has Jesus reshaped your understanding of God?**
 - 2. What part of your story begins to make new sense when viewed through Christ?**
 - 3. Where do you need His lens most today?**
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WEEK 6 - FRIDAY

The Freedom of a New Way of Knowing

John 8:36

Freedom is not a feeling. It is not a personality trait. It is not even the absence of constraints. Freedom, in the language of Jesus, is the experience of being fully aligned with truth — truth that is embodied in Him.

“Whom the Son sets free,” Jesus says, “is free indeed.”

Freedom is living in the truth of who God is, who you are, and who others are. It is living from a story that is no longer shaped by lies. It is stepping into a way of knowing that releases fear, loosens shame, heals distortions, and restores dignity. Freedom is not abstract; it is relational. It is the lived experience of abiding in the love of God.

Paul walked into Damascus blind but walked out seeing the world in a way he never had before. Not because he gained more information, but because he encountered the One who is Truth. His freedom didn't begin when his sight returned—it began the moment he surrendered his old way of knowing.

This is where freedom begins for us too.
Not when we understand everything.
Not when we have all the answers.
Not when we've sorted out every theological detail.
But when we finally say:

“Jesus, rewrite my vision.
Show me what is true.”

When you know Him, you know truth.
And when you know truth, you walk free.

- 1. What is one place in your life where Jesus is inviting you into freedom?**
- 2. What would it look like to surrender your “old way of knowing” in that area?**
- 3. Who might notice the difference when you begin to walk in that freedom?**