



New Christians:

Growing and Maturing in Christ

Note:

This series will focus on foundational principles of faith, spiritual growth, and practical application, making it suitable for new believers eager to deepen their relationship with Christ.

Each Lesson will consist of the following:

- Lesson Illustration
- Key Scriptures
- The Focus of the Lesson
- Key Points
- Three Discussion Questions
- Notes section for teachers

The student will be able to have the class do the following:

- Read the key scriptures and ask what stands.
- Spend 5 minutes on each key point.
- Spend 5 minutes on each discussion question.



Weekly Lessons

1. *The Foundations of Faith*
2. *Knowing God Personally*
3. *The Power of the Bible*
4. *Prayer - Communicating with God*
5. *The Holy Spirit - Our Helper and Guide*
6. *Identity in Christ*
7. *Overcoming Temptation and Sin*
8. *Fellowship and Community*
9. *Serving Others - Living Out Our Faith*
10. *Sharing Your Faith*
11. *Spiritual Growth - Taking Steps Forward*
12. *Persevering in Faith - Staying the Course*

Week 1

The Foundations of Faith

Lesson Illustration:

The great architect Frank Lloyd Wright was given the challenge of building the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo, one of the most earthquake-prone cities in the world. Wright's investigation showed that a solid foundation could be "floated" on a sixty-foot layer of soft mud underlying the hotel, which would provide a shock-absorbing but solid support for the immense building. Shortly after the hotel was completed it withstood the worst earthquake in fifty-two years, while lesser buildings fell in ruins around it.

Key Scripture:

Hebrews 11:1-3

1 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. **2** For by it the people of old received their commendation. **3** By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

Ephesians 2:8-10

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, **9** not a result of works, so that no one may boast. **10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

The Focus:

Understanding faith, the role of grace, and assurance of salvation.

Key Points:

1. Defining faith and trust in God's promises.
2. Recognizing salvation as a gift of grace, not works.
3. Building confidence in our salvation and God's faithfulness.

Week 1 cont.

Discussion Questions:

1. What does faith mean to you, and how does it impact your daily life?
2. Why is it important to understand that salvation is a gift from God rather than something we earn?
3. What helps you feel secure in your relationship with God?

Notes:

Week 2

Knowing God Personally

Lesson Illustration:

Imagine you enter a large, beautiful mansion you've always wanted to explore. Each room is uniquely designed, and the details captivate you: beautiful artwork, intricate architecture, and more than you could ever fully appreciate in one visit.

However, when you reach the heart of the mansion—the one room everyone wants to enter—you find the door locked. You peer through the window, but it's frustrating because you can only see a small portion of what's inside. No matter how hard you try, the door won't budge, and every attempt to enter is blocked.

Then, someone walks up and hands you the key. With it, you open the door and walk in. Now, you can explore the room freely, seeing every detail, understanding the purpose of each piece, and fully appreciating the space. You no longer feel like an outsider looking in—you're experiencing the room as it was designed to be experienced.

Key Scripture:

Jeremiah 9:23-24

23 Thus says the Lord: “Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, **24** but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the Lord.

John 17: 1-5

1 When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, **2** since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. **3** And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. **4** I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. **5** And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.

Week 2 cont.

The Focus:

Growing a personal relationship with God.

Key Points:

1. God's character and His desire for us to know Him.
2. Building a relationship through Jesus.
3. Ways to pursue closeness with God through prayer and worship.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does knowing God personally differ from just knowing about Him?
2. What steps can you take to deepen your relationship with God?
3. How does seeing God as a loving Father shape the way you relate to Him?

Notes:

Week 3

The Power of the Bible

Lesson Illustration:

Imagine a hiker who sets off on a trail through a thick forest, determined to reach a beautiful destination at the mountaintop. As the sun begins to set, however, shadows lengthen, and eventually, the hiker finds themselves surrounded by darkness. No longer able to see the trail, they stumble, feeling disoriented and afraid, not knowing what lies ahead or even where the path begins.

Then, they remember a small lamp they packed, and as they turn it on, a soft light shines on the path directly in front of them. It doesn't illuminate the entire forest or reveal the mountaintop, but it provides just enough light to see each step along the way, preventing them from stumbling over obstacles and helping them steadily move forward.

As the hiker continues, they gain confidence in the light guiding them. Even though the way is still shadowed beyond the lamp's reach, they find peace and trust that the lamp will keep them safe until they reach their destination.

Key Scripture:

2 Timothy 3:12-17

12 Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, **13** while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. **14** But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it **15** and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. **16** All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, **17** that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Psalms 119: 105

105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

Week 3 cont.

The Focus:

The Bible's purpose, reliability, and how to study it.

Key Points:

1. The Bible as God's inspired Word and life guide.
2. Approaching Scripture for personal growth.
3. Techniques for meaningful Bible study.

Discussion Questions:

1. How has the Bible impacted your understanding of God so far?
2. What challenges do you face when reading or understanding Scripture?
3. How can you make reading the Bible a regular part of your life?

Notes:

Week 4

Prayer: Communicating with God

Lesson Illustration:

Picture someone who wants to listen to a special radio program that only broadcasts once a day. Eagerly, they turn on their radio, but all they hear is static. They adjust the antenna, twist the dial, and reposition the radio, hoping to pick up the signal. Finally, after careful tuning, the broadcast comes in clear, and they can hear every word. Now, instead of frustrating static, there's a clear voice speaking directly to them, guiding them, answering questions they didn't know they had, and leaving them feeling understood and at peace.

What changed? The radio was always broadcasting; the person just had to tune in to the right frequency.

Key Scripture:

Matthew 6:9-13

7 And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. **8** Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. **9** Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. **10** Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. **11** Give us this day our daily bread, **12** and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. **13** And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Philippians 4:4-7

4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. **5** Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; **6** do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. **7** And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Week 4 cont.

The Focus:

The purpose and power of prayer.

Key Points:

1. Viewing prayer as a two-way conversation.
2. Jesus' model of prayer as a guide.
3. Practicing regular, honest communication with God.

Discussion Questions:

1. What do you find most challenging about prayer?
2. How does understanding prayer as a conversation change your approach to it?
3. How can you apply the structure of the Lord's Prayer to your own prayers?

Notes:

Week 5

The Holy Spirit: Our Helper and Guide

Lesson Illustration:

Imagine a mountain climber attempting to reach the summit of a towering peak. The climber is excited but soon realizes that the journey is far more treacherous and difficult than they anticipated. The trail becomes narrow and steep, and fog begins to settle, making it hard to see where to step next.

Just when the climber feels lost, their guide—a seasoned mountaineer who knows every inch of the trail—appears. This guide isn't there just to point the way from a distance but walks closely alongside the climber. When the path is tricky, the guide steadies them; when obstacles arise, the guide offers advice on how to overcome them. The guide doesn't remove every challenge, but their presence makes the journey possible and brings the climber confidence, strength, and peace.

The climber reaches the summit, not by their own knowledge or strength alone, but with the help of the guide who never left their side.

Key Scripture:

John 14:25-31

25 “These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. **26** But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. **27** Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. **28** You heard me say to you, ‘I am going away, and I will come to you.’ If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. **29** And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place you may believe. **30** I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no claim on me, **31** but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us go from here.

Week 5 cont.

Acts 1:6-9

6 So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” 7 He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” 9 And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight.

The Focus:

Understanding the role of the Holy Spirit.

Key Points:

1. The Spirit as our Helper, Teacher, and Comforter.
2. Recognizing the Spirit’s guidance and power.
3. Walking in step with the Spirit daily.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does the Holy Spirit help you in your daily life?
2. When have you felt the guidance or comfort of the Holy Spirit?
3. What steps can you take to be more sensitive to the Holy Spirit’s leading?

Notes:

Week 6

Identity in Christ

Lesson Illustration:

Imagine someone attending a large conference where everyone wears a name tag. Each tag not only shows their name but also their job title and achievements. Some tags are covered with impressive titles, while others show struggles or labels they've been given by others over the years. As this person looks down at their tag, they see words that don't fully represent who they are—titles, accomplishments, even failures that they now feel define them.

Suddenly, a conference organizer walks over, hands them a new tag, and says, "This one has been updated." The new tag doesn't list their job, their achievements, or any of the labels they've carried around. Instead, it simply says, "Beloved Child of God." As they put on this new tag, they realize how freeing it is to be identified by something that doesn't depend on titles, successes, or failures. The only label that truly defines them is who they are in the eyes of God.

Key Scripture:

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

16 From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. **17** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. **18** All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; **19** that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. **20** Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. **21** For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Week 6 cont.

Galatians 2:17-21

17 But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we too were found to be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin? Certainly not! **18** For if I rebuild what I tore down, I prove myself to be a transgressor. **19** For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. **20** I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. **21** I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.

The Focus:

Embracing our new identity in Christ.

Key Points:

1. Being transformed into a new creation in Christ.
2. Living from our new identity rather than old patterns.
3. Accepting our worth and value in God's eyes.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does knowing you're a "new creation" in Christ affect the way you see yourself?
2. What old habits or mindsets do you struggle to let go of?
3. What does it mean to you to live with Christ at the center of your identity?

Notes:

Week 7

Overcoming Temptation and Sin

Lesson Illustration:

In parts of Asia and Africa, people use a clever trick to trap monkeys. They take a small jar or hollow coconut with an opening just big enough for a monkey's hand to fit through. Inside, they place a piece of fruit or a nut. When the monkey reaches in and grabs the treat, its clenched fist becomes too large to pull out of the hole. The monkey desperately tries to free itself, but because it won't let go of the bait, it's trapped.

The trap itself is simple. The monkey could easily pull its hand out if it released the treat—but it's the monkey's own grip that keeps it stuck. The harder it pulls, the tighter it's caught.

Key Scripture:

1 Corinthians 10:13-14

13 No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

14 Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.

James 4:1-7

1 What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? **2** You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. **3** You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. **4** You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. **5** Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, "He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us"? **6** But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." **7** Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Week 7 cont.

The Focus:

Recognizing and resisting temptation.

Key Points:

1. Identifying areas of temptation and sin.
2. Learning strategies to resist temptation.
3. Living with God's forgiveness and grace.

Discussion Questions:

1. What are some common sources of temptation you face?
2. How does God's promise in 1 Corinthians 10:13 encourage you?
3. How can you rely on God's strength in moments of weakness?

Notes:

Week 8

Fellowship and Community

Lesson Illustration:

Imagine a charcoal grill filled with hot, glowing coals. Together, these coals burn brightly, producing enough heat to cook food and warm those gathered around. But if you were to take one of the hot coals and place it off to the side, away from the group of coals, what would happen? Slowly but surely, that single coal would start to cool. Separated from the others, it would lose its heat and fade into ash.

But if you take that same coal and place it back with the others, it quickly reignites, its warmth restored by the heat of the group.

This is what fellowship and community are like in our spiritual lives. Together, as part of the Body of Christ, we share faith, encourage each other, and build each other up, like those coals burning brightly. But if one of us isolates ourselves—whether by neglecting fellowship, facing struggles alone, or pulling away—we begin to lose our spiritual “heat.” Just like the lone coal, we cool down, becoming spiritually weak.

Key Scripture:

Hebrews 10: 19-25

19 Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, **20** by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, **21** and since we have a great priest over the house of God, **22** let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. **23** Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. **24** And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, **25** not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Week 8 cont.

Acts 2:42-47

42 And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. **43** And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. **44** And all who believed were together and had all things in common. **45** And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. **46** And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, **47** praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

The Focus:

Building Christian relationships and support.

Key Points:

1. The importance of fellowship for spiritual growth.
2. Finding encouragement and accountability in community.
3. Being active in the life of the church.

Discussion Questions:

1. What role has community played in your spiritual journey?
2. How does Christian fellowship strengthen your faith?
3. What are ways you can contribute to building community in your church?

Notes:

Week 9

Serving Others: Living out Our Faith

Lesson Illustration:

Once upon a time, there was a young girl walking along a beach covered with thousands of starfish that had been washed ashore by the tide. As she walked, she noticed that the sun was rising, and soon the starfish would dry out and die if they remained on the sand.

Determined to make a difference, she began picking up the starfish, one by one, and throwing them back into the ocean. An elderly man saw her and approached, chuckling to himself. “What are you doing, little girl?” he asked. “There are so many starfish on this beach. You can’t possibly make a difference.”

The girl paused, picked up another starfish, and threw it into the water. She turned to the man and said, “I made a difference for that one!”

Key Scripture:

Matthew 25:31-40

31 “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. **32** Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. **33** And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. **34** Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. **35** For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, **36** I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ **37** Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? **38** And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? **39** And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ **40** And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’

Week 9 cont.

1 Peter 4:8-11

8 Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. **9** Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. **10** As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: **11** whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

The Focus:

Discovering and using spiritual gifts to serve.

Key Points:

1. Jesus' call to serve others in love.
2. Identifying our unique gifts and talents.
3. Serving as an expression of Christ's love.

Discussion Questions:

1. How has serving others impacted your relationship with Christ?
2. What gifts or talents do you feel God has given you?
3. What practical ways can you serve in your church or community?

Notes:

Week 10

Sharing Your Faith

Lesson Illustration:

Imagine you're in a completely dark room. You can't see your hand in front of your face. It feels disorienting and scary. Now, when you turn on a small flashlight or light a candle, that tiny beam of light pierces through the darkness. Suddenly, the room feels safer; you can see where you're going, and the fear subsides. In the same way, our faith acts as a light in the darkness of this world. Jesus calls us to be the light of the world (Matthew 5:14-16). When we share our faith, we're like that flashlight, illuminating the path for those who may be lost, confused, or in despair.

Consider the people around you—friends, family, coworkers—who may be walking through difficult times or searching for hope. Just as a small light can illuminate a dark room, a simple word of encouragement or sharing your testimony can have a profound impact on someone's life.

Key Scripture:

Matthew 28:16-20

16 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. **17** And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted.

18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **19** Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Week 10 cont.

1 Peter 3:13-17

13 Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? **14** But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, **15** but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, **16** having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. **17** For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.

The Focus:

The importance of witnessing and sharing the gospel.

Key Points:

1. Understanding the Great Commission.
2. Developing confidence to share our faith.
3. Sharing personal testimonies of God's work in our lives.

Discussion Questions:

1. What fears or challenges do you face in sharing your faith?
2. How can you prepare to share your testimony?
3. What opportunities do you have to share the love of Christ with others?

Notes:

Week 11

Spiritual Growth: Taking Steps Forward

Lesson Illustration:

Consider the life cycle of a tree. It begins as a tiny seed, buried in the soil. At first, the seed must break open to push through the dirt—a challenging process, but necessary for growth. As the seedling breaks through the surface, it reaches for the sunlight, growing taller and stronger.

Over time, the tree will encounter storms, droughts, and other challenges. However, each of these experiences helps the tree develop deep roots and a sturdy trunk. The struggles it faces contribute to its strength, allowing it to weather future storms. Just as trees need sunlight, water, and care to grow, we also require spiritual nourishment. We need prayer, scripture, and fellowship with others to thrive in our faith. In our spiritual journeys, we may encounter struggles and challenges that test our faith. Just as the tree must push through the soil, we often have to take steps forward, even when it's difficult. These experiences can strengthen our faith, deepen our understanding, and lead to significant spiritual growth.

Key Scripture:

Philippians 3:12-16

12 Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. **13** Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, **14** I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. **15** Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. **16** Only let us hold true to what we have attained.

Week 11 cont.

2 Peter 3:14-18

14 Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace. **15** And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, **16** as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures. **17** You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability. **18** But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

The Focus:

Embracing continuous growth in Christ.

Key Points:

1. The process of maturing in faith.
2. Setting personal spiritual goals.
3. Remaining consistent despite challenges.

Discussion Questions:

1. What areas of your spiritual life do you want to grow in?
2. How do you respond when you encounter obstacles in your faith?
3. What steps can you take to pursue deeper maturity in Christ?

Notes:

Week 12

Persevering in Faith: Staying the Course

Lesson Illustration:

Imagine a marathon runner at the start of a race. As they stand at the starting line, excitement fills the air. The gun goes off, and they take off running with energy and enthusiasm. But as the miles wear on, fatigue sets in. Their legs ache, and the finish line seems far away. At some point, the runner may face temptation to stop and give up, especially when they see others quitting or slowing down. Yet, what keeps them going? It's the vision of the finish line, the crowd cheering them on, and the realization that every step brings them closer to their goal. Throughout the race, there may be hills, weather changes, or unexpected obstacles, but a committed runner focuses on perseverance. They remind themselves why they started and the joy that awaits at the finish line. In our faith journeys, we often find ourselves running a marathon rather than a sprint. Life can be filled with challenges, doubts, and hardships that tempt us to give up. Yet, we are called to persevere, to keep our eyes on Jesus, who is the author and perfecter of our faith (Hebrews 12:1-2). Just as the marathon runner draws strength from their training and the support of others, we find strength through prayer, scripture, and the encouragement of fellow believers. Staying the course requires dedication, but the rewards of faithfulness—spiritual growth, peace, and a deeper relationship with God—are worth every effort.

Key Scripture:

James 1:2-8

2 Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, **3** for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. **4** And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. **6** But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. **7** For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; **8** he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

Week 12 cont.

Hebrews 12:1-2

1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, **2** looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

The Focus:

Strengthening endurance and faithfulness.

Key Points:

1. Holding onto faith through trials.
2. Finding joy and hope in difficult times.
3. Looking to Jesus as our ultimate example of perseverance.

Discussion Questions:

1. What has been your biggest challenge in staying faithful to Christ?
2. How does keeping an eternal perspective help you endure hardships?
3. Who are some people in your life who inspire you to persevere in faith?

Notes:



Free Resources

1. Blue Letter Bible
(<https://www.blueletterbible.org/>)
2. Got Questions
<https://www.gotquestions.org/>
3. The Bible Project
<https://bibleproject.com/>