

## Week 5: “Our God Who Is Building His Kingdom”

### Wk 5 - Day 1: Genesis 5

**Explanation:** Genesis 5 is a genealogy that traces the line from Adam to Noah. For modern readers, genealogies can feel like filler, but in Scripture they function like theological signposts. This chapter quietly says: God’s plan is still moving forward. Even after the fall (Genesis 3) and the violence of Cain’s line (Genesis 4), God preserves a line through which His purposes continue. A repeated rhythm runs through the chapter: a name, a lifespan, children, and then the sobering refrain...“and he died.” It’s a reminder that the torment of sin can not be escaped by human effort; the curse still affects every generation. Yet the genealogy itself is also hopeful: life continues, families continue, and most of all God’s plan continues. Through the generations listed, we find that God continues building His kingdom and coming after His people, no matter what. In the middle of the chapter, one life breaks the pattern: Enoch. Twice we read that Enoch “walked with God” (Genesis 5:22, 24). The Hebrew idea behind “walk” often carries the sense of a daily, ongoing way of life built on steady fellowship, not occasional spirituality. This points to a life built on more than just living for the status quo or trying to get by. Then comes the striking line: “and he was not, for God took him.” Rather than experiencing death, Enoch was taken directly into the presence of the Lord. Enoch’s removal from death was not random or arbitrary, it was a testimony that God values faithfulness. His life reminds us that God’s kingdom is built through lives deeply rooted in relationship with Him.

**Application:** God builds His kingdom through faithfulness over time, not just dramatic moments. He uses ordinary lives, lived over long periods of time, to carry His promises forward. This chapter challenges our obsession with speed, visibility, and instant impact. Kingdom work often looks like slow obedience (ex. raising the next generation, honoring God in the routine, walking with God when no one applauds.) If your life feels ordinary, we can be encouraged knowing that God has written history through ordinary people. Your faithfulness today matters more than immediate results. Even when you cannot see it, God is using your obedience as part of something far bigger than you realize. Yet even while God is doing something bigger than we can see, it is easy to lose sight of that truth in daily life. When faithfulness feels repetitive and results seem invisible, the temptation is to move from walking with God to merely enduring life. Survival mode often sets in when faith becomes routine rather than relationship. Thriving begins when we slow down enough to truly walk with God, listen to Him, and trust Him with the deeper places of our lives. God’s kingdom is built not just through people who endure, but through people who live in close communion with Him.

#### Response:

- How does a chapter focused on generations challenge modern “quick results” Christianity?
- Enoch is described as someone who “walked with God.” What do you think that looked like in his life? What might it look like now?
- What does “thriving” spiritually look like to you, and how is it different from simply getting by?
- What is one “quiet” act of obedience you could commit to this week that contributes to God’s long-term work?

### Wk 5 - Day 2: Matthew 5

**Explanation:** Matthew 5 opens the Sermon on the Mount, where Jesus teaches what life looks like under God’s reign. The kingdom He teaches us about is not merely a future hope but God’s rule reshaping hearts here and now. The section often referred to as the Beatitudes begin with “Blessed...” The Greek word *makarios* speaks of deep flourishing, more than temporary happiness. What’s shocking is who Jesus calls “blessed”: the poor in spirit, the meek, the merciful, the peacemakers, those who mourn, those persecuted. Jesus is not glorifying pain, rather He’s redefining who is truly secure under God’s rule. Jesus then calls His followers salt and light. Both metaphors carry deep meaning. Salt preserves, creates thirst, adds flavor, heals, and purifies. In the same way, we are meant to preserve what is good, bring life and meaning, create spiritual thirst, and live faithfully in a world that is decaying and confused. Light helps people see clearly and find their way. When God’s people live out His truth and love, they make what is good and right easier to see. The point is that God builds His kingdom in the world through a people who live differently, distinct in character, visible in goodness. Jesus then presses deeper by showing that the kingdom is not just external compliance, it’s heart transformation. He demonstrates how the sins we often excuse or ignore are actually seeds of a much deeper sin problem. Anger becomes a murder-seed; lust becomes an adultery-seed. Jesus isn’t only intensifying rules, He’s exposing roots. God’s kingdom does not settle for surface morality; it seeks inner renewal. Kingdom life isn’t legalism; it’s Christ-shaped righteousness, an integrity that flows from the inside out.

**Application:** God builds His kingdom by building kingdom people. The Beatitudes describe the kind of heart God uses: humble, teachable, merciful, pure, peace-making. If we want to participate in God’s kingdom work, the first place God works is in us. Being salt and light means your ordinary life becomes part of God’s strategy. Your responses, your speech, your purity, your forgiveness, these are not “small” things. They are the bricks and beams of kingdom influence. God’s kingdom advances not just through sermons and programs, but through people living the Sermon on the Mount in every day life.

#### Response:

- Which of Jesus’ instructions in this chapter do you find most difficult to accept or live out and why?
- What might it look like for a church to be salt and light in a community instead of just a gathering place? Where do you think God has specifically placed you to be salt or light right now?
- In what ways is Jesus’ definition of what it means to be “blessed” different from how our culture defines happiness? How do you think these things lead to a “blessed” life?
- If forgiveness is a kingdom value, what does refusing to forgive reveal about you and how might it affect your walk with God and relationship with others?

## Wk 5 - Day 3: Ezra 5

**Explanation:** Ezra 5 describes a turning point in rebuilding the temple. The work had stalled due to opposition, and the people had concentrated on building their own houses instead of the house of the Lord, but now God raises up prophets—Haggai and Zechariah—to speak courage into the people. We learn that God’s kingdom building is not powered only by human resolve, it’s renewed by God’s Word. As the people restart the work, officials question their authority. Instead of panicking or fighting, the people explain their identity and mission: they are servants of “the God of heaven and earth,” rebuilding what was destroyed. They acknowledge their past sin and exile, but they also testify to God’s mercy and restoration. A crucial line appears: “the eye of their God was on the elders of the Jews” (Ezra 5:5). That is covenant language of God’s watchful care, protection, and active oversight. Opposition is real, but so is God’s attention. The king’s officials investigate, but they allow the work to continue while they search records. Even governmental process becomes a channel God uses to move His purpose forward. Ezra 5 shows that kingdom-building often happens amid resistance, accusations, and delays. Yet God is not absent in the administrative details. He can advance His work even through slow systems and skeptical authorities.

**Application:** In times of challenge, struggle, and hardship, we are often tempted to neglect the things of God and turn our focus toward our own pursuits. Remember that adversity does not mean what we are doing for the Lord is pointless, it often means it’s significant. When God calls you to build—your family, your character, your ministry, your church, your integrity, you should expect resistance. The question is not whether opposition will come, but whether discouragement will deter you or God’s Word will direct you. God builds His kingdom not merely through human perseverance, but through Spirit-empowered courage anchored in His Word. Any work of God that isn’t built on the Word of God will never prosper. What is built on preference will crumble; what is built on Scripture will stand. Ezra 5 also encourages us that the “eye” of God is upon His people. You may feel watched by critics, but you are first watched by God—with care, not condemnation. You and I are always rebuilding His great kingdom, grounded in the precepts and priorities of the One who is constantly renewing and rebuilding us.

## Wk 5 - Day 4: Acts 5

**Explanation:** Acts 5 opens with the sobering account of Ananias and Sapphira. As the early church grows, generosity and unity are evident among believers. However, this couple pretends to give fully while secretly withholding part of the proceeds from selling land. The issue was not the amount given, it was the deception. Peter makes it clear that they were not lying to people alone, but to God. Their sin was not robbing God of His money, but robbing God of His glory. This moment shows us something essential about the nature of God’s kingdom. It is not built on reputation, image, or outward performance, but on truth and holiness. God is forming a people whose lives are real before Him, not staged for others. Ananias and Sapphira wanted the reputation of sacrifice without the reality of surrender. God intervenes dramatically, preserving the church’s foundation and showing that while His kingdom advances in power, it must also remain pure. The result is not collapse, but reverent awe. We see that, “great fear came upon the whole church.” This is not panic but holy reverence, the kind of respect that leads people to take God seriously and walk more carefully before Him.

The chapter then shifts from purity to power. As the apostles continue performing signs and preaching openly, opposition intensifies. They are arrested again and commanded to stop speaking in Jesus’ name. Their response becomes one of the most defining kingdom statements in Scripture: “We must obey God rather than men.” Their loyalty to God’s authority outweighed any desire for safety or approval. Even after being beaten, they leave rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer for Jesus’ name. Acts 5 shows that God builds His kingdom through truthful hearts and courageous obedience. Hypocrisy is confronted, faithfulness is strengthened, and the message continues to spread. God’s kingdom is not fragile. It grows through purity and perseverance.

**Application:** God is not just building a large kingdom, He’s building a holy one. Integrity matters. Private honesty matters. Motives matter. It is possible to look committed on the outside while holding something back on the inside. But God sees both. Sincerity means our private devotion matches our public confession. It means we are more concerned with being faithful than being impressive. When faith becomes about appearances, it weakens the foundation of what God is building and undermines our witness to the world. But when we choose honesty, even when it exposes weakness, God strengthens us. If God is building His kingdom through us, then sincerity is not optional, it’s essential. The question is not, “Do others think I am faithful?” but “Is my heart truly surrendered to God?”

Acts 5 also reminds us that kingdom work will face resistance. Cultural pressure, criticism, or personal cost do not mean God’s work has failed. Sometimes obedience leads to discomfort. But when we choose faithfulness over fear, we participate in something eternal. God’s kingdom is unstoppable, not because it avoids opposition, but because it advances through people who obey Him above all else.

### Response:

- The people didn’t deny their past failure—they admitted exile came because of sin. Why is honesty about the past important for healthy rebuilding?
- What does this passage reveal to you about the power of God’s Word in seasons of discouragement?
- How does this chapter challenge the idea that obedience should always feel safe or comfortable?
- What does the phrase “the eye of their God was on them” suggest about God’s involvement in everyday challenges?

### Response:

- Why is it so easy to unintentionally drift into caring more about how we appear than who we truly are before God?
- What pressures in modern culture encourage Christians to “perform” their faith rather than live it?
- What does “We must obey God rather than men” look like in today’s culture?
- In what way does the attitude of these early believers towards suffering differ from how believers often respond to pressure and persecution today?
- What kinds of modern pressures might tempt believers to stay quiet about their faith?

## Wk 5 - Day 5: Psalm 127

**Explanation:** Psalm 127 is a “Song of Ascents,” likely sung by worshipers traveling to Jerusalem. It centers on one clear truth: God is the true Builder. The psalm opens with the powerful statement, “Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain.” The word “vain” means empty, pointless, or without lasting result. The message is not that effort is wrong, but that effort without God at the center ultimately lacks permanence. The psalm continues with the image of a watchman guarding a city. Even vigilance and protection are insufficient without God’s oversight. The writer is correcting our tendency towards self-reliance. Human planning, strength, and sleepless striving cannot replace dependence on God. What good is your woking, watching, and waking if the Lord is not with you?

The final verses shift to children, calling them a “heritage” and a “reward.” In biblical culture, children represented legacy, future security, and strength. The image of arrows in a warrior’s hand suggests intentional shaping. Arrows do not aim themselves, they are purposefully crafted and directed. The point is that building God’s kingdom includes investing in the next generation.

**Application:** This psalm challenges our culture of overwork and control. We often try to build our careers, families, ministries, reputations, and futures through constant effort and worry. But Psalm 127 reminds us that striving without surrender leads to exhaustion, not lasting impact. God is not asking us to stop working, rather He is asking us to stop carrying what only He can carry. There is a difference between faithful labor and anxious striving. Faithful labor trusts God with the outcome, while anxious striving assumes everything depends on us. When we try to build without prayer, without dependence, or without seeking God’s direction, we may succeed outwardly but still miss what truly matters.

This psalm also challenges how we view legacy. God’s kingdom is not built only through public achievements but through daily investment in people, especially the next generation. What good are a lovely house and a big income if the people in your lire are robbed of the joys of a happy home? Children are a gift and a heritage, so appreciate them guard them, and cultivate godliness in them. We should also realize that whether it’s our children, our fellow small groups members, or even our coworkers, the investment we make in others is long-term kingdom work. What we build in others often outlives what we build for ourselves. Psalm 127 invites us to shift from control to trust, from pressure to partnership with God. When God is the Builder, our work becomes worship, and our rest becomes an act of faith.

### **Response:**

- What does it mean to you to “labor in vain”? Can you think of examples in modern life?
- In what areas of life are people most tempted to build without depending on God?
- What are some areas of your life you sometimes find yourself doing good things for God but not truly trusting Him?
- How does this psalm challenge the way we define success?

## Week 6: “Our God Who Sees Us”

### Wk 6 - Day 1: Genesis 6

**Explanation:** Genesis 6 opens with a sobering picture of humanity spiraling deeper into corruption. The chapter says that the Lord “saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth.” The word saw is important. God is not distant or unaware. He sees clearly both evil and righteousness. God saw a world of people who were inwardly corrupt, outwardly violent, and upwardly rebellious. The text says that every intention of the thoughts of people’s hearts was continually evil. That language is strong. It shows that sin had moved beyond actions into motivation. This wasn’t occasional failure; it was a pattern of rebellion. And God was grieved. The Hebrew word used here carries the idea of deep sorrow or pain, which reveals to us that God’s heart is not cold toward sin, rather He is deeply affected by it. But in the middle of darkness, one sentence changes everything: “But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.” Again, the language of sight appears. God saw the corruption of the world, but he also saw Noah. The word “favor” (often translated grace) means unearned kindness. Noah was not perfect, but he walked with God in a world that ignored Him. God sees both the brokenness of the world and the faithfulness of individuals. He sees wickedness, and He sees obedience. Nothing escapes His attention. The chapter ends quietly but powerfully: “Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.” After describing widespread corruption, violence, and grief, Scripture closes the chapter not with chaos but with obedience.

**Application:** It is easy to feel unnoticed in today’s world. You may feel overlooked at work, misunderstood at home, or invisible in your efforts to live faithfully. But Genesis 6 reminds us that God sees. God sees when the world grows darker. He sees injustice, cruelty, and compromise. But He also sees quiet obedience. He sees the parent trying to lead well. He sees the believer choosing integrity even when it means making sacrifices. He sees the person who walks with Him when no one else does. You may not feel impressive. You may not feel powerful. But you are never unseen. But inside this message of comfort is also a challenge. If God sees us fully, that means that He’s sees the intentions of the heart, not just outward behavior. He knows our motives. He sees what no one else can. Genesis 6 reminds us that when God sees the world, He also sees the one who obeys. You may not feel influential. You may not see immediate results. But obedience still matters. God notices!

### Wk 6 - Day 2: Matthew 6

**Explanation:** Matthew 6 continues Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount and centers on a powerful repeated phrase: “Your Father who sees in secret...” or as some translations say, “who sees everything.” Jesus addresses three spiritual practices: giving, praying, and fasting. In each case, He warns against doing them “to be seen by others.” The issue isn’t the action itself, but the motive behind it. The Greek word for hypocrite used here referred to an actor wearing a mask. Jesus is confronting performative religion, spirituality done for applause rather than relationship. Instead, Jesus emphasizes that God sees what is hidden. When you give quietly, pray privately, or fast sincerely, God notices. He is not impressed by public displays but by authentic devotion.

In the middle of the chapter, Jesus teaches the Lord’s Prayer. It begins with “Our Father,” reminding us that the One who sees us is not distant, He is relational. The prayer focuses first on God’s name, kingdom, and will before personal needs. That order teaches trust and alignment. Later in the chapter, Jesus shifts to anxiety and treasure. He tells His followers not to worry about tomorrow because their heavenly Father knows what they need. The word for worry carries the idea of being divided or pulled apart internally. Anxiety fractures trust. But Jesus reminds them that the Father sees even the birds and flowers, and great news for us, He values His children even more. Matthew 6 teaches that God sees motives, private devotion, hidden needs, and anxious thoughts. Nothing about your life is invisible to Him.

**Application:** We must be careful that we are not living for the approval of others, even in spiritual matters. Sometimes we can subtly measure faithfulness by how others respond, but Jesus redirects us to live for an audience of One. Remember that your Heavenly Father sees what no one else sees. He sees when you pray quietly. He sees when you give generously without recognition. He sees when you choose integrity in private. You do not have to advertise your devotion for it to matter! If we do things to win the praise of others, or to be able to compliment ourselves, we get the immediate praise, but lose the eternal reward. This chapter also speaks directly to anxiety. Many of us carry silent worries about provision, the future, or whether we have enough or are enough. But Jesus reminds us that the Father already knows what we need. You are not forgotten. You are not overlooked. You are not carrying your life alone. We lay up treasures in heaven when we consider that all we have belongs to God and use it to magnify His righteousness and advance His Kingdom. When we truly believe that God sees us, we can stop striving for attention and start resting in trust.

#### Response:

- What does seeing God grieve the choices of mankind teach us about His heart? How do you imagine He views the world today?
- How does knowing God sees you bring comfort? How might it also bring conviction?
- What does it take to remain faithful when the culture around you is moving in the opposite direction?
- How does Genesis 6 balance God’s justice and God’s grace? Which do you find easier to understand — and why?
- What does the chapter suggest about the cost and the reward of standing alone for righteousness?

#### Response:

- How can good spiritual practices sometimes become performative and what can you do to make sure that you are not doing the right things for the wrong reasons?
- Why do we sometimes crave recognition for obedience?
- What does it look like to “seek first the kingdom” in practical terms?
- If no one else ever noticed your obedience, what would most motivate you to keep living faithfully?
- What is an area in your life you have a tendency to worry about, that you need to remember that God sees and cares?

## Wk 6 - Day 3: Ezra 6

**Explanation:** Ezra 6 records the completion of the temple after years of delay and opposition. The story begins with King Darius ordering a search of the royal archives. The original decree of King Cyrus is found, confirming that the Jews were indeed authorized to rebuild. What seemed uncertain and fragile was actually secure all along. While the builders faced discouragement and political pressure, God had already written provision into the record. He had not forgotten. When the temple is completed, the people celebrate with worship and sacrifice. Their joy is not just about a building — it is about restoration and the visible faithfulness of God. The chapter closes with Passover being celebrated again, a sign that worship and identity are being restored. Ezra 6 teaches that even when progress feels stalled, God sees, remembers, and acts at the right time.

**Application:** There are seasons when obedience feels unnoticed and progress feels slow. Ezra 6 reminds us that God is not absent in those seasons. He sees your faithfulness even when others question it. He sees the work you are doing even when recognition is missing. Sometimes God's answer is already in motion before we see results. While you are building quietly, God may be arranging things you cannot yet see. Delays do not mean God has forgotten you. This chapter also reminds us to celebrate when God answers. It is easy to focus on struggle and forget to rejoice when restoration comes. When God completes something He started in your life, pause and give thanks. You may not see the whole picture, but the God who sees certainly does.

### Response:

- Why is the discovery of the original decree so important in this chapter?
- Why was it important for the people to celebrate after the temple was finished?
- What role does gratitude play in recognizing that God sees us?
- Why do we sometimes forget to celebrate answered prayer?
- What is an situation He has guided you through, a prayer He has answered, or a place He is still working in that you should praise God for today?

## Wk 6 - Day 4: Acts 6

**Explanation:** Acts 6 opens with growth, the number of disciples is increasing. But with growth brings tension. A complaint arises because the widows of the Hellenistic (Greek-speaking) Jews were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. Whether intentional or not, neglect was happening. This is important: God sees not only big miracles and sermons, He also sees overlooked people. The apostles respond wisely. They do not ignore the complaint, nor do they abandon their primary calling to preach and pray. Instead, they appoint seven men “full of the Spirit and wisdom” to oversee the practical need. Ministry to widows was not a small task; it was essential. In the Old Testament, widows represented the vulnerable and caring for them reflected God's heart. The solution shows that God values both the bold proclamation of His truth as well as the practical implications of it. The early church recognized that organization, fairness, and compassion were essential to the operation of God's Kingdom work. Among the seven is a man named Stephen. The chapter ends by describing him as “full of grace and power,” boldly speaking truth even as opposition rises. His face is described as being like the face of an angel, which was a sign of God's visible presence with him. God sees those who are overlooked, those who serve quietly, and those who stand courageously.

**Application:** Sometimes the most painful feeling is being overlooked. Maybe you've worked hard and felt unseen. Maybe you've served faithfully and felt unnoticed. Acts 6 reminds us that God sees what others miss. The widows may have been overlooked in the system, but they were not overlooked by God. He moved the church to correct the problem. This chapter also reminds us that serving behind the scenes matters. The men chosen were not apostles, they were faithful servants. Yet their obedience strengthened the church. God sees the quiet acts of service that hold everything together. It also challenges us to pay attention. Are there people around us who feel overlooked? Being part of God's kingdom means reflecting His heart by noticing those who others ignore. You may not be on a stage, you may not have a spotlight, but you are seen by the God who builds His church. As D.L. Moody once said, “There are many of us that are willing to do great things for the Lord; but few of us are willing to do little things.”

### Response:

- What does this chapter teach us about our concern for the vulnerable?
- Why were men “full of the Spirit and wisdom” needed for a practical task like food distribution?
- Have you ever felt overlooked? How does this chapter speak to that experience?
- What might God be asking you to notice that others are ignoring?
- What are some little things or small areas that others might see as insignificant but God values?

## Wk 6 - Day 5: Psalm 33

**Explanation:** Psalm 33 is a song of praise that celebrates God's power, authority, and watchful care. It begins with a call to rejoice and sing because the Lord's Word is upright and His work is done in faithfulness. The psalm reminds us that God created the world simply by speaking. His word formed the heavens. His breath filled them with life. This establishes something foundational: the God who sees us is the God who rules over everything. The psalm then contrasts human plans with God's purposes. "The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to nothing... but the counsel of the Lord stands forever." While nations strategize and leaders make plans, God's purposes cannot be overturned and His perspective is eternal. Then comes one of the most comforting sections: "The Lord looks down from heaven; He sees all the children of man." The word "sees" here carries the idea of attentive observation. God is not casually glancing at the world; He is actively watching. He understands hearts and He knows motivations. The psalm makes it clear that military strength, power, and human effort do not ultimately save. "A king is not saved by his great army." Real security comes from the Lord. The chapter ends with trust: "Our soul waits for the Lord; He is our help and our shield." Psalm 33 teaches that God sees everything and His faithful eyes are on those who hope in Him.

**Application:** In a world that feels unstable, Psalm 33 reminds us that God is not overwhelmed. He sees the headlines. He sees global conflict. He sees injustice. He sees uncertainty. But He also sees you. Sometimes we place our trust in systems, leaders, finances, or security. This psalm gently corrects that. True stability comes from trusting the One whose plans stand forever. It is comforting to know that God sees you personally — but it is also reassuring to know He sees the bigger picture. Nothing escapes His notice and nothing ever surprises Him. When life feels uncertain, this chapter invites us to wait, trust, and rest in the God who sees and reigns.

### **Response:**

- What stands out to you about the way God's power is described?
- If God sees the full picture and we only see part, how should that shape our reactions to world events?
- What modern "armies" or sources of security do people rely on today?
- What does it look like to "hope in His steadfast love" in practical terms?

## Week 7: “Our God Who Is Always Faithful”

### Wk 7 - Day 1: Genesis 7

**Explanation:** Genesis 7 records the fulfillment of what God had promised in the previous chapter. God had warned Noah that judgment was coming, He had instructed him to build the ark, and now the moment has arrived. God was very patient and gave the world at least 120 years of opportunity to be saved, but the world refused Noah’s witness and rejected God’s grace. The chapter begins with God saying, “Go into the ark, you and all your household.” God didn’t just warn about coming judgment, He also provided a way to escape it. God’s faithfulness is seen not only in keeping His Word about consequences, but also in keeping His Word about rescue. The rain begins exactly as God said it would! The floodwaters rise exactly as God had described! Over and over, the chapter emphasizes that events happened according to God’s Word. This reminds us that what God says, He does! He always follows through!

Later we find that Noah and his family entered the ark, “and the Lord shut him in.” Noah had done his part, but God also did His. While Noah’s obedient preparation was important, his security and safety was not in his ability, but ultimately rested in God’s hands. If God were not the one in control of the situation, no amount of effort on Noah’s part would have made a difference. This chapter shows us both God’s justice and His faithfulness. He did not ignore sin, but He also did not forget His promise to preserve a remnant. The storm came, but so did God’s protection. His Word proved trustworthy in both judgment and salvation.

**Application:** God’s faithfulness is not selective. He is faithful in warning, faithful in disciplining, faithful in rescuing, and faithful in protecting. Sometimes we focus on the storm with the rain, the rising waters, and the destruction. But we must also see the ark. The same rain that brought judgment to the world brought deliverance to Noah. God did not promise Noah an easy season. He promised protection in the middle of it. There are seasons when life feels like rising waters. Circumstances feel overwhelming. Obedience may feel costly or isolating. Genesis 7 reminds us that when God calls you to obedience, He remains faithful to carry you through what He allows. And that small phrase, “the Lord shut him in,” is a reminder that your security ultimately rests in God’s hands, not your own. You may build in obedience, but God secures in faithfulness. Even when the storm is scary, remember God is steady!

### Wk 7 - Day 2: Matthew 7

**Explanation:** Matthew 7 closes the Sermon on the Mount and brings Jesus’ teaching to a decisive point. After describing what kingdom life looks like, Jesus calls His listeners to respond. The central idea running through this chapter is that God’s Word is trustworthy and our response to it matters. The chapter opens with the well-known teaching, “Judge not, that you be not judged.” Jesus is not forbidding discernment, rather He is warning against hypocritical, self-righteous judgment. The imagery of a speck and a log makes the point clear, we are often blind to our own flaws while quick to critique others. God is faithful and just, and we must approach others with humility, remembering that we too live under His holy standard. Jesus then moves into a section about asking, seeking, and knocking. He reassures His followers that the Father gives good gifts to His children. The emphasis here is on the character of God. Earthly fathers, imperfect as they are, still give good things. How much more will our heavenly Father, who is perfect in all ways, give us what is good? Jesus is demonstrating God’s faithful generosity. Later, He speaks of the narrow gate and the wide gate, false prophets and true fruit. We see that personal faithfulness is revealed over time. Fruit does not appear instantly, but it eventually exposes what kind of tree something is. God’s faithfulness is steady and genuine faith produces visible results. The chapter closes with one of the strongest images in the Sermon on the Mount: the wise man and the foolish man. Both hear Jesus’ words. Both build houses. Both experience storms. The difference is the foundation. The wise man builds a sturdy faith by hearing and doing what God says. The foolish man builds a fragile faith that collapses under pressure because it listens without obeying. The storm reveals what was already true, that God’s Word is always faithful. The question is whether we build our lives on it or not?

**Application:** God’s faithfulness is not fragile. His Word stands whether we obey it or not. But our stability depends on whether we trust and act on what He says. It is easy to listen to sermons, read Scripture, or agree with biblical principles. It is harder to build our lives on them. Obedience is where faith moves from theory to trust. Storms will come, but when our lives are anchored to God’s faithful Word, we will stand firm and unmovable because God is faithful in what He teaches. Our part is to build accordingly. Faithfulness on God’s part calls for faithfulness on ours.

#### Response:

- How does Genesis 7 show that God is faithful even when judgment is involved?
- Why is it sometimes hard to see faithfulness during difficult seasons?
- What does this chapter teach about trusting God before the storm arrives?
- In what ways have you seen God’s faithfulness demonstrated in your life in the midst of negative situations?
- If Noah had waited until the rain started to obey, how might things have been different? What could this teach us?

#### Response:

- Why is it important to know the difference between discernment and judgment?
- What does fruit reveal about a person’s life over time? What are some fruits your life has produced and what does it reveal about you?
- How is it comforting to know that God’s Word does not shift with culture or opinion?
- If a storm hit your life today, would your faith still remain firm? And why or why not?
- What area of obedience feels most challenging right now?

## Wk 7 - Day 3: Ezra 7

**Explanation:** There is a gap of fifty-seven years between the completion of the temple and the arrival of Ezra. Unfortunately, the people had lapsed into sin during this time. While the physical structure of the temple was completed, the spiritual health of the people still needed attention. God's people are badly in need of instruction, and of course their faithful God has not abandoned them in the desperate condition. He prompts Ezra to begin the task of bringing the people back to the Lord. Ezra is described as "a scribe skilled in the Law of Moses." The word "skilled" carries the idea of being ready, quick, or diligent. Ezra was not casually familiar with Scripture, he was deeply trained and devoted to it. More importantly, verse 10 tells us the key to his life: "Ezra had set his heart to study the Law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach His statutes." That order matters. He studied it, obeyed it, and then taught it. Ezra was a gifted man, but he could do nothing unless God was with Him. The chapter repeatedly states that "the hand of the Lord his God was upon him." This phrase signals God's active, favor and guidance in his life and those traveling with him. Ezra's journey from Persia to Jerusalem, his protection, and the king's generous decree were not coincidence, God was continually and faithfully working in his life. Ezra 7 shows us that God was not only restoring a city, He was restoring a people, and He remained faithful to guide every step of the process.

**Application:** God's faithfulness often shows up in quiet consistency. The temple was built, but God was not done. Sometimes we think once one prayer is answered or one milestone reached, the work is finished. God is faithful not only to build what can be seen, but to renew what cannot. Ezra's example is deeply practical. He set his heart to know God's Word, live it, and share it. It's important to understand that the influence we have is the fruit of faithfulness, but preparation is the root of it. Before Ezra ever stood before the people, he was rooted in Scripture. Before God uses us publicly, He must develop us privately. The repeated phrase "the hand of the Lord was upon him" is a reminder that success is not self-made. When God's hand is on your life, He opens doors you could not open yourself. God is faithful not only to fulfill big promises, but to guide daily steps as we walk closely with Him.

### Response:

- Why is it comforting that God moves hearts and circumstances beyond our control?
- Where have you seen God's "hand" guiding your life?
- What does it look like today to "set your heart" to study and obey God's Word?
- Who are some people God has used in the past to share His instruction, encouragement, and provisions when you needed help for your journey?

## Wk 7 - Day 4: Acts 7

**Explanation:** Acts 7 records Stephen's speech before the Sanhedrin. Accused of speaking against the temple and the law, Stephen responds not with self-defense, but with a sweeping overview of Israel's history. His message highlights one consistent and powerful truth: God has always been faithful, even when His people have not. Stephen begins with Abraham. God called him, promised him land, and began a covenant even before Abraham owned any of it. God's faithfulness started the story. He then moves to Joseph, who was rejected by his brothers, yet God was with him in Egypt. Though betrayed and forgotten, Joseph's suffering became the means of preserving many lives. Then Stephen recounts Moses. Though called by God, Moses was initially rejected by the people he was sent to deliver. Yet God did not abandon His plan. Through signs, wonders, and patience, God remained faithful to bring Israel out of Egypt. Stephen emphasizes a repeated theme: God's chosen servants are often rejected, but God remains faithful to His purpose through it all.

Stephen's speech exposes a pattern: God sends deliverers, the people resist them, yet God continues working. Even the tabernacle and temple were reminders that God's presence was never confined to a building. His faithfulness transcends structures. The chapter climaxes with Stephen boldly confronting his audience, saying they have resisted the Holy Spirit just as their ancestors did. Enraged by his message, they then begin to stone him. But in his final moments, he sees Jesus standing at the right hand of God, a powerful image of divine faithfulness. As he dies, he echoes Jesus' words, asking God to forgive his killers. Stephen's deep trust in God's faithfulness led him to respond with remarkable faithfulness of his own.

**Application:** Remember that God's faithfulness does not depend on human consistency. Throughout history, God has remained steady and constant, even when His people have not. That truth is both humbling and comforting. It is humbling because we often see ourselves in the pattern Stephen describes. We can resist correction, ignore God's direction, or cling to comfort over obedience. Yet God does not abandon His purposes. It is comforting because even when circumstances look like rejection or defeat, God is still at work. Joseph was rejected. Moses was doubted. Stephen was killed. But God's plan did not fail! We should remember that faithfulness from God does not always mean ease for us! Sometimes obedience leads to difficulty. But God's purposes remain unshaken. Even in suffering, Stephen witnesses the presence of Jesus, a reminder that God is never absent in the midst of our hardest moments. Our God is always faithful, both in calling, in patience, in promise, and in presence. This realization ought to inspire us, like it did Stephen, to live faithfully, speak boldly, and suffer willingly for the cause of Christ.

### Response:

- What repeated pattern do you notice in Israel's response to God's chosen leaders? What does this pattern possibly reveal about how we often respond to God's ways?
- Why is it encouraging that God continues working even when people resist Him?
- If God has been faithful to you, what does faithfulness from you look like in return?
- How can remembering God's faithfulness help us speak truth with confidence?
- Where is God calling you to remain faithful even if it costs you something?

## Wk 7 - Day 5: Psalm 46

**Explanation:** Psalm 46 is a song of confidence in the middle of chaos. It opens with one of the most well-known declarations in Scripture: “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.” The word refuge refers to a safe shelter, a place of protection in danger. Strength suggests not only protection but sustaining power. And the phrase “very present” carries the idea of being found, available, and close at hand. God is not distant in crisis, He is near! The psalm describes dramatic instability such as the earth giving way, mountains falling into the sea, waters roaring and foaming. These are images of the most secure parts of creation collapsing. Yet the response is bold: “Therefore we will not fear.” Why? Because God is faithful even when everything else is in turmoil. In contrast to roaring waters, verse 4 describes a calm river whose streams make glad the city of God. While the world shakes, God’s presence brings steady peace. The phrase “God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved” emphasizes that security comes from His presence. The psalm then shifts to nations raging and kingdoms collapsing into political and social upheaval. Yet with a single voice, God “utters His voice, the earth melts.” His authority stands above our human conflict. The psalm closes with the command: “Be still, and know that I am God.” “Be still” can mean to stop striving, to let go, or to cease fighting. It is a call to surrender control and trust God’s sovereignty. The Psalmist celebrates the truth that God’s faithfulness is not dependent on calm circumstances. He is steady when everything else shakes.

**Application:** Psalm 46 meets us in anxious moments. We all experience “earthquake” seasons, unexpected loss, instability, conflict, and uncertainty. This psalm does not deny chaos; it speaks directly into it. God does not promise the absence of trouble. He promises His presence in it. When everything around you feels unstable, you need something unshakable. God is that refuge. “Be still” challenges our instinct to control, fix, or panic. Sometimes faithfulness looks like action. Sometimes it looks like trust. When we choose to stop striving and acknowledge that God is God, we declare that His faithfulness is greater than our fear. God is not only faithful when life is peaceful. He is faithful in the storm, in the shaking, and in the silence.

### **Response:**

- If fear reveals what we trust most, what do your fears say about your foundation?
- How does constant exposure to political news affect your sense of peace and stability?
- When headlines create fear and outrage or you see cultural or political shifts you disagree with, in what ways does Psalm 46 help guide your response?
- Why is it often harder to be still than to act? What does “be still” practically look like in your life?
- What feels unstable in your life right now? How can you anchor yourself in God’s faithfulness this week?

## Week 8: “Our God Who Remembers Us”

### Wk 8 - Day 1: Genesis 8

**Explanation:** At the center of Genesis 8 is a single sentence that changes everything: “But God remembered Noah.” That word remembered does not mean that God forgot and suddenly recalled Noah’s existence. In the Bible, when God “remembers,” it means He turns His attention toward someone in order to act on their behalf. It is covenant language. It signals movement, intervention, and mercy. For months, the floodwaters had covered the earth. Noah and his family were confined inside the ark, surrounded by uncertainty. There are no recorded words from Noah during this time, just waiting. Then comes the turning point: God remembered. God sends a wind over the earth, and the waters begin to recede. The same God who sent judgment now begins restoration and slowly, patiently, the earth dries.

This chapter highlights God’s timing. The waters rise in Genesis 7, but they recede gradually in Genesis 8. God’s remembering does not always mean immediate resolution, it means faithful movement toward fulfillment. When Noah finally exits the ark, his first act is worship. He builds an altar and offers sacrifice to the Lord. God responds with a promise. While the earth may still have been broken, God declared continuity and faithfulness. Genesis 8 teaches us that God’s remembering is not a mental recall but a faithful decision to move on behalf of His people! Praise the Lord for our Lord, who never forgets His own!

**Application:** There are seasons in life that feel like the inside of the ark, confined, uncertain, and quiet. You may be waiting for change, relief, or clarity. Genesis 8 speaks directly into those seasons. God does not forget His people. Just because the rain has not stopped yet does not mean He is unaware. Just because the door is still closed does not mean He has abandoned you. When Scripture says “God remembered,” it means He was already working. Sometimes we measure God’s care by His speed, but Genesis 8 shows that God’s remembering often unfolds gradually. The waters did not disappear overnight. Restoration took time. If you are in a waiting season, remember this: delay is not neglect and silence is not absence. God remembers and when He moves, it is always purposeful. Your role, like Noah’s, may simply be faithful waiting and worship when the door finally opens!

#### Response:

- What stands out to you about Noah’s first action after leaving the ark?
- Why do you think making sure to praise the Lord after catastrophe is so important?
- Have you ever experienced a season where you felt forgotten? What did you learn about God through that experience?
- If you fully believed God remembers you right now, how would that change your anxiety, prayer life, or patience?

### Wk 8 - Day 2: Matthew 8

**Explanation:** Matthew 8 moves from Jesus’ teaching to His action. After the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus demonstrates His authority through healing, deliverance, and power over nature. This chapter shows us that Jesus does not overlook suffering, rather, He sees it and responds to it! The chapter begins with a leper approaching Jesus. In that culture, lepers were isolated, unclean, and socially rejected. Yet Jesus does something radical, He touches him. Before the healing even happens, there is compassion. The leper says, “If you are willing, you can make me clean.” Jesus replies, “I am willing.” That statement reflects not only power but heart. God remembers the outcast. Next, a Roman centurion, a Gentile and an unlikely candidate for faith, asks Jesus to heal his servant. Jesus marvels at his faith and heals from a distance. This moment shows that God’s remembering is not limited by nationality, status, or proximity. He sees faith and responds to it wherever it is found. Peter’s mother-in-law is healed. Many who are demon-possessed are delivered. Then comes the storm on the sea. In this moment we find the disciples panicking while Jesus sleeps. They cry, “Lord, save us,” and He calms the wind and waves with a word. We see that the same authority that heals disease commands nature. When chaos surrounds them, Jesus is still present. Matthew 8 shows that whether the storm is physical, spiritual, or emotional, Jesus is not unaware. He sees, He remembers, and He acts.

**Application:** We can sometimes fall into the trap of feeling as though Jesus is unwilling to give us what we want, even unwilling to answer us, but this passage clearly shows us that this is not true of His character. Jesus is willing to help us, just like he helped the leper, the centurion, the possessed, and His disciples.. Each situation is different, but in every case Jesus responds. That is the heart of God. Sometimes we assume God remembers others but not us. We think our need is too small, too needy, or too complicated. But Matthew 8 shows that no situation is beneath His attention. If you are feeling overlooked, afraid, or uncertain, this chapter reminds you that Jesus sees you. There may be areas in your life where the Lord seems to be withholding something you want, but consider that it may be God’s way of giving you something better, teaching you something new, or drawing you to himself. It’s not that He’s unwilling or has forgotten, but rather His way of working toward a higher purpose!

#### Response:

- Is there anything you are asking God for that He seems unwilling to give? What better thing might He be trying to give you or teach you?
- What does the centurion’s faith teach about trust and humility?
- Why do we sometimes panic even when we know Jesus is near?
- If Jesus responded personally to every need in this chapter, what does that suggest about how He views your needs?

## Wk 8 - Day 3: Ezra 8

**Explanation:** Ezra 8 records the journey from Babylon back to Jerusalem. Unlike earlier chapters that focus on kings and decrees, this chapter centers on preparation, prayer, and trust. Ezra gathers families to return with him, but he notices something missing, no Levites are present. The Levites were responsible for assisting in temple worship. Instead of ignoring the problem, Ezra pauses and sends for the right people. This detail shows careful leadership and dependence on God's order. Before beginning the journey, Ezra proclaims a fast at the river Ahava. Why? Because the road ahead is dangerous. The group is carrying silver and gold for the temple, a tempting target for bandits. Yet Ezra refuses to request a military escort from the king. He had already told the king that "the hand of our God is for good on all who seek Him." To ask for soldiers now might appear inconsistent with that confession of trust. Instead, they fast and pray. Verse 23 says, "So we fasted and implored our God for this, and He listened to our entreaty." It's a reminder that when God's people seek Him, He faithfully moves on their behalf. The journey takes about four months. They arrive safely in Jerusalem, and the treasures are weighed carefully. The people of Israel are remembered by Almighty God, who guarded them on their journey and delivered them to safety, and he does the same for us too!

**Application:** Ezra 8 teaches us what it looks like to trust God in uncertain seasons. There are times when the road ahead feels risky. You may be stepping into something new, carrying responsibility, or facing unknown challenges. Ezra models preparation and prayer before movement. It is significant that Ezra fasted. Fasting is a physical way of expressing spiritual dependence. It says, "We need God more than we need comfort." Sometimes remembering that God remembers us requires slowing down long enough to seek Him intentionally. This chapter also shows the balance between trust and responsibility. They prayed for protection and they carefully weighed the treasures upon arrival. Faith does not cancel wisdom and accountability. God's remembering does not remove the journey, It sustains it. If you are walking through something uncertain, this chapter reminds you that you are not traveling alone. The hand of God still rests on those who seek Him!

### Response:

- Why do you think Ezra was careful to notice the absence of the Levites before moving forward?
- When facing uncertainty, what tends to be your first instinct — planning, worrying, asking for help, or praying?
- Is there any major decision that you need to be more intentional about praying, fasting, and seeking the Lord over?
- How does fasting challenge our culture of comfort and self-reliance?

## Wk 8 - Day 4: Acts 8

**Explanation:** Acts 8 begins in the shadow of Stephen's death. Persecution breaks out against the church in Jerusalem, and believers are scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. At first glance, it looks like tragedy and setback. But what appears to be disruption becomes divine direction. Jesus had told His followers in Acts 1:8 that they would be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. Now, through persecution, that promise begins to unfold. God had not forgotten His mission. He was moving it forward. Philip goes to Samaria and proclaims Christ. Samaritans, long despised and culturally distant from Jews, respond with joy. This demonstrates how the gospel crosses social and ethnic boundaries. This is also an example of how God remembers not just one group of people, but all.

Later in the chapter, Philip is directed by an angel to go to a desert road. This seems inefficient, but on that road is an Ethiopian official reading from the writings of Isaiah. The Spirit tells Philip to approach the chariot, giving him the opportunity to explain the Scripture, lead the man to conversion, and even see him baptized. Acts 8 shows us a church that is forced out of its comfort zone and into its calling. What began as persecution becomes expansion. What looked like scattering becomes sowing. The gospel moves beyond familiar borders and into unexpected places. God's purposes are not fragile. They do not collapse under pressure. They spread. The story moves forward — sometimes through hardship, sometimes through detours, but always toward His greater design.

**Application:** Acts 8 reminds us that what feels like disruption may actually be redirection. Persecution forced the church to move, but it also spread the gospel. Sometimes the seasons we would never choose become the ones God uses most powerfully. This chapter also speaks to personal worth. In the middle of large movements, God notices one Ethiopian official reading Scripture. He arranges a meeting. He answers questions. He brings clarity. That is the heart of God. You may feel like just one person in a large world, but God sees us personally and individually. He sees your questions, your searching, your confusion. You are never just a face or another number in God's family! This account also challenges us to be willing to respond obediently when God's Spirit moves in our hearts. Sometimes following His will means leaving what feels productive to follow His quiet direction. God's remembering does not always look like comfort. Sometimes it looks like movement, change, and unexpected opportunity! Are you ready for what God has for you next?

### Response:

- Why do you think God chose persecution as a tool to scatter the church?
- Why is it significant that the gospel reaches both Samaritans and an Ethiopian official? How might this challenge us to consider the people we are willing to witness to?
- Where might God be redirecting you right now?
- Who is someone in your life who might be spiritually searching like the Ethiopian official?
- Why do we sometimes hesitate when God opens a door? What are some of the barriers that keep us from seizing the opportunities God puts before us?

## Wk 8 - Day 5: Psalm 8

**Explanation:** Psalm 8 is a song of wonder. It begins and ends with the same declaration: “O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is Your name in all the earth!” This repetition frames the entire psalm with praise. The psalmist looks upward at the heavens, the moon, and the stars and is overwhelmed by the greatness of God’s creation. The word “majestic” speaks of glory, weight, and honor. God’s name carries authority over all creation. Yet in the middle of that cosmic perspective comes a deeply personal question: “What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You care for him?” The phrase “mindful” carries the idea that we have seen all throughout this week of remembering, paying attention to, or taking notice of. David stands beneath the vast sky and asks: Why would a God this great pay attention to someone this small? The answer is astonishing. Humanity is crowned “with glory and honor” and given stewardship over creation. Though small compared to the universe, humans are given dignity and responsibility. Psalm 8 reveals to us both humility and worth as we consider that we are not the center of the universe, but yet we are still deeply valued within it.

**Application:** When we feel insignificant, this psalm reminds us that God is mindful of us. You are not an accident. You are not overlooked. The Creator of the stars has given you dignity and purpose. When we feel self-important, this psalm humbles us. The universe does not revolve around us. Our value is a gift, not an achievement. It also challenges how we view responsibility. Being “crowned with glory and honor” means our lives matter. How we live, steward, and reflect God matters. Psalm 8 invites us to live in awe — not anxiety. In humility — not comparison. In gratitude — not self-exaltation. The God who formed the heavens has chosen to be mindful of you.

### **Response:**

- What does it mean that God is “mindful” of humanity?
- How does this truth challenge feelings of insignificance?  
How does it challenge pride?
- How should knowing our dignity shape the way we treat others?
- Where do you most struggle — with feeling too small or too self-reliant?  
Why?
- What practical step can you take to live with greater gratitude this week?