



NEW TESTAMENT 2019

Come, Follow Me— For Individuals and Families

Living, Learning, and Teaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ

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Feel free to adapt the schedule to account for Sundays when regular Church meetings are not held. For example, you could cover two weeks of outlines in one Sunday lesson when ward or stake conferences or temple dedications are held. You may also need to adapt the study schedule if in your area Easter and Christmas are observed on dates other than those listed in this resource.



Conversion Is Our Goal

The aim of all gospel learning and teaching is to deepen our conversion and help us become more like Jesus Christ. For this reason, when we study the gospel, we're not just looking for new information; we want to become a "new creature" (see 2 Corinthians 5:17). This means relying on Christ to change our hearts, our views, our actions, and our very natures.

But the kind of gospel learning that strengthens our faith and leads to the miraculous change of conversion doesn't happen all at once. It extends beyond a classroom into an individual's heart and home. It requires consistent, daily efforts to understand and live the gospel. True conversion requires the influence of the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Ghost guides us to the truth and bears witness of that truth (see John 16:13). He enlightens

our minds, quickens our understanding, and touches our hearts with revelation from God, the source of all truth. The Holy Ghost purifies our hearts. He inspires in us a desire to live by truth, and He whispers to us ways to do this. Truly, "the Holy Ghost . . . shall teach [us] all things" (John 14:26).

For these reasons, in our efforts to live, learn, and teach the gospel, we should first and foremost seek the companionship of the Spirit. This goal should govern our choices and guide our thoughts and actions. We should seek after whatever invites the influence of the Spirit and reject whatever drives that influence away—for we know that if we can be worthy of the presence of the Holy Ghost, we can also be worthy to live in the presence of Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ.

Using *Come, Follow Me*— *For Individuals and Families*

Who Is This Resource For?

This resource is for every individual and family in the Church. It is designed to help you learn the gospel—whether on your own or with your family. If you haven't studied the gospel regularly in the past, this resource can help you get started. If you already have a good habit of gospel study, this resource can help you have more meaningful experiences.

How Should I Use This Resource?

Use this resource in any way that is helpful to you. You may find it helpful as a guide or aid for personal and family scripture study. You could also use it for family home evening. The outlines highlight important principles found in the New Testament, suggest study ideas and activities for individuals and families, and provide places to record your impressions.

You and your family may already be studying the gospel regularly. Maybe you have a goal to read the Book of Mormon. Or maybe you are reading another book of scripture for a seminary or institute class. *Come, Follow Me* is not meant to replace or compete with the good things you are doing. There may be ways to learn from the New Testament regularly and still accomplish your other scripture study goals. For example, you might continue reading the Book of Mormon for your personal scripture study and read the New Testament with your family (or vice versa). Or, as you read the New Testament, you could look for Book of Mormon passages that reinforce what you are learning. Follow the Spirit's guidance to determine how to approach your own study of the word of God.

How Does This Resource Relate to What Happens at Church?

The outlines in this resource are organized according to a weekly reading schedule. The lessons taught in Primary and Sunday School classes follow the same schedule. To support your efforts to learn and live the gospel at home, your teachers will give you opportunities to share your experiences, thoughts, and questions about the scripture passages that you have been studying during the week.

Come, Follow Me—For Primary and *Come, Follow Me—For Sunday School* include outlines for every week of the year except for the two Sundays when general conference is held. When regular Church meetings are not held because of stake conference or any other reason, you are invited to continue studying the New Testament at home. Your Church classes may skip the lessons scheduled for those dates or combine two lessons to keep up with the schedule.

Do I Need to Follow the Schedule?

The schedule will help you keep up with the material covered in Sunday classes, but don't feel bound by it; the schedule is simply a guide to help you pace yourself. The important thing is that you are learning the gospel individually and as a family.





Ideas to Improve Your Personal Scripture Study

Here are some simple ways to enhance your study of the word of God in the scriptures:

Look for Truths about Jesus Christ

The scriptures teach us that all things testify of Christ (see 2 Nephi 11:4; Moses 6:63), so look for Him in the events, stories, and teachings of the New Testament. Consider noting or marking verses that teach about the Savior and how to follow Him.

Look for Inspiring Words and Phrases

You may find that certain words and phrases in the scriptures impress you, as if they were written specifically for you. They may feel personally relevant and inspire and motivate you. Consider marking them in your scriptures or writing them in a study journal.

Look for Gospel Truths

Sometimes gospel truths (often called doctrine or principles) are stated directly, and sometimes they are implied through an example or story. Ask yourself, “What eternal truths are taught in these verses?”

Listen to the Spirit

Pay attention to your thoughts and feelings, even if they are unrelated to what you are reading. Those impressions may be the very things that your Heavenly Father wants you to learn.

Liken the Scriptures to Your Life

Consider how the stories and teachings you are reading apply to your life. For example, you could ask yourself, “What experiences have I had that are similar to what I am reading?” or “How can I follow the example of this person in the scriptures?”

Ask Questions as You Study

As you study the scriptures, questions may come to mind. These questions might relate to what you are reading or to your life in general. Ponder these questions and look for answers as you continue studying the scriptures.

Use Scripture Study Helps

To gain additional insights into the verses you read, use the footnotes, the Topical Guide, the Bible Dictionary, the Guide to the Scriptures (scriptures.lds.org), and other study helps.

Record Your Thoughts and Feelings

There are many ways to record the impressions that come as you study. For example, you could mark a meaningful word or phrase and record your thoughts as a note in your scriptures. You could also keep a journal of the insights, feelings, and impressions you receive.

Study the Words of Latter-day Prophets and Apostles

Read what latter-day prophets and apostles have taught about the principles you find in the scriptures (for example, see conference.lds.org and Church magazines).

Share Insights

Discussing insights from your personal study is not only a good way to teach others, but it also helps strengthen your understanding of what you have read.

Live by What You Learn

Scripture study should not only inspire us—it should lead us to change the way we live. Listen to what the Spirit prompts you to do as you read, and then commit to act on those promptings.



President Thomas S. Monson said: “As we read and ponder the scriptures, we will experience the sweet whisperings of the Spirit to our souls. We can find answers to our questions. We learn of the blessings which come through keeping God’s commandments. We gain a sure testimony of our Heavenly Father and our Savior, Jesus Christ, and of Their love for us. When scripture study is combined with our prayers, we can of a certainty know that the gospel of Jesus Christ is true. . . . As we remember prayer and take time to turn to the scriptures, our lives will be infinitely more blessed and our burdens will be made lighter” (“We Never Walk Alone,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2013, 122).



Ideas to Improve Your Family Scripture Study

Regular family scripture study is a powerful way to help your family learn the gospel. How much and how long you read as a family is not as important as being consistent in your efforts. As you make scripture study an important part of your family life, you will help your family members come closer to Jesus Christ and build their testimonies on the foundation of His word. Consider the following questions:

- How can you encourage family members to study the scriptures on their own?
- What can you do to encourage family members to share what they are learning?
- How can you emphasize the principles you are learning in the New Testament in everyday teaching moments?

Remember that the home is the ideal place for gospel learning. You can learn and teach the gospel at home in ways that are not possible in a Church class. Be creative as you think of ways to help your family learn from the scriptures. Use some of the following ideas to enhance your family scripture study:

Share Meaningful Scriptures

Give family members time to share scripture passages that they have found meaningful during their personal study.

Use Your Own Words

Invite family members to summarize in their own words what they learn from the scriptures you study.

Apply the Scriptures to Your Life

After reading a scripture passage, ask family members to share ways the passage applies to their lives.

Ask a Question

Invite family members to ask a gospel question, and then spend time looking for verses that can help answer the question.

Display a Scripture

Select a verse you find meaningful, and display it where family members will see it often. Invite other family members to take turns selecting a scripture to display.

Make a Scripture List

As a family, choose several verses that you would like to discuss during the coming week.

Memorize Scriptures

Select a scripture passage that is meaningful to your family, and invite family members to memorize it by repeating it daily or playing a memorization game.

Share Object Lessons

Find objects that relate to the chapters and verses that you are reading as a family. Invite family members to talk about how each object relates to the teachings in the scriptures.

Pick a Topic

Let family members take turns choosing a topic that the family will study together. Use the Topical Guide, the Bible Dictionary, or the Guide to the Scriptures (scriptures.lds.org) to find scripture passages about the topic.

Draw a Picture

Read a few verses as a family, and then allow time for family members to draw something that relates to what you read. Spend time discussing one another's drawings.

Act Out a Story

After reading a story, invite family members to act it out. Afterward, talk about how the story relates to the things that you are experiencing individually and as a family.



Elder David A. Bednar taught: “Each family prayer, each episode of family scripture study, and each family home evening is a brushstroke on the canvas of our souls. No one event may appear to be very impressive or memorable. But just as the yellow and gold and brown strokes of paint complement each other and produce an impressive masterpiece, so our consistency in doing seemingly small things can lead to significant spiritual results” (“More Diligent and Concerned at Home,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2009, 19–20).



Additional Resources

All of these resources can be found in the Gospel Library app and on LDS.org.

Church Magazines

The *Friend*, *New Era*, *Ensign*, and *Liahona* magazines provide stories and activities that can supplement the principles you are teaching from *Come, Follow Me—For Individuals and Families*.

Hymns and the Children’s Songbook

Sacred music invites the Spirit and teaches doctrine in a memorable way. In addition to the print versions of *Hymns* and the *Children’s Songbook*, you can find audio and video recordings of many hymns and children’s songs at music.lds.org and in the LDS Music app.

New Testament Stories

New Testament Stories (2005) can help children learn the doctrine and stories found in the New Testament. You can also find videos of these stories in the Gospel Library app and at medialibrary.lds.org.

Seminary and Institute Manuals

Seminary and institute manuals provide historical background and doctrinal commentary for principles and accounts found in the scriptures.

Media Library

Artwork, videos, and other media can help you and your family visualize the doctrine and stories found in the New Testament. Visit medialibrary.lds.org to browse the Church’s collection of media resources, including the Bible Videos series, which depicts events in the New Testament.

Gospel Topics

At topics.lds.org you can find basic information about a variety of gospel topics, along with links to helpful resources, such as related general conference addresses, articles, scriptures, and videos. You can also find Gospel Topics Essays, which offer in-depth answers to gospel questions.

True to the Faith

If you need additional help understanding basic gospel principles, consider looking in *True to the Faith* (2004). This resource consists of an alphabetical list of gospel topics explained in simple terms.

Teaching Young Children

If you have young children in your family, here are some activities that can help them learn:

- *Listen to or act out a story.* Young children love stories—from the scriptures, from your life, from Church history, or from Church magazines. Look for ways to involve them in storytelling. They can hold pictures or objects, draw pictures of what they are hearing, act out the story, or even help tell the story. Help your children recognize the gospel truths in the stories you share.
- *Read a scripture.* Young children may not be able to read very much, but you can still engage them in learning from the scriptures. You may need to focus on a single verse, key phrase, or word. They may even be able to memorize short phrases from the scriptures if they repeat them a few times. As they hear the word of God, they will feel the Spirit.
- *Look at a picture or watch a video.* When you show your children a picture or video related to a gospel principle or scripture story, ask them questions that help them learn from what they are seeing. For example, you could ask, “What is happening in this picture or video? How does it make you feel?” The Gospel Library app, Biblevideos.lds.org, medialibrary.lds.org, and children.lds.org are good places to look for pictures and videos.
- *Sing.* Hymns and songs from the *Children’s Songbook* teach doctrine powerfully. Use the topics index at the back of the *Children’s Songbook* to find songs that relate to the gospel principles you are teaching. Help your children relate the message of the songs to their lives. For example, you might ask questions about words or phrases in the lyrics. In addition to singing, your children can perform actions that go with the songs or listen to the songs as background music while they are doing other activities.
- *Create.* Children can build, draw, or color something related to the story or principle they are learning.
- *Participate in object lessons.* A simple object lesson can help your children understand a gospel principle that is difficult to comprehend. When using object lessons, find ways to let your children participate. They will learn more from an interactive experience than from just watching a demonstration.
- *Role-play.* When children role-play a situation they will likely encounter in real life, they are better able to understand how a gospel principle applies to their lives.
- *Repeat activities.* Young children may need to hear concepts multiple times to understand them. Don’t be afraid to repeat stories or activities often. For example, you might share a scripture story several times in different ways—reading from the scriptures, summarizing in your own words, showing a video, letting your children help you tell the story, inviting them to act out the story, and so on.





He Is Risen, by Del Parson



DECEMBER 31–JANUARY 6

We Are Responsible for Our Own Learning

The purpose of *Come, Follow Me—For Individuals and Families* is to help you come unto Christ and become more deeply converted to His gospel. This resource can help you understand the scriptures and find in them the spiritual strength you and your family need. Then, in your Church classes, you will be prepared to share insights and encourage your fellow Saints in their efforts to follow Christ.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

“What seek ye?” Jesus asked the disciples of John the Baptist (John 1:38). You might ask yourself the same question—for what you find in the New Testament this year will greatly depend on what you seek. “Seek, and ye shall find” is the Savior’s promise (Matthew 7:7). So ask the questions that come to your mind as you study, and then seek diligently for answers. In the New

Testament you will read about the powerful spiritual experiences of disciples of Jesus Christ. As a faithful disciple of the Savior, you can have your own powerful spiritual experiences as you accept the Savior’s invitation, found throughout this sacred volume, “Come, follow me” (Luke 18:22).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

To truly learn from the Savior, I must accept His invitation, “Come, follow me.”

The Savior’s invitation, “Come, follow me,” applies to all—whether we are new on the path of discipleship or have walked it all our lives. This was His invitation to a rich young man who was striving to keep the commandments (see Matthew 19:16–22). What he learned—and what we all must learn—is that being a disciple means giving our whole souls to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. We progress in our discipleship as we identify what we lack, change, and seek to more fully follow Them.

Learning from the Savior starts when we strive to understand what He taught. For example, how does your understanding of forgiveness deepen as you explore the following?

The Savior’s teachings (see Matthew 6:14–15; 18:21–35)

An example from His life (see Luke 23:33–34) _____

However, learning is not complete until we follow the Savior by living what He taught. How can you be more forgiving? _____

If you want to learn more, try this activity with another gospel principle, such as love or humility.

I am responsible for my own learning.

Elder David A. Bednar taught: “As learners, you and I are to act and be doers of the word and not simply

hearers who are only acted upon. Are you and I agents who act and seek learning by faith, or are we waiting to be taught and acted upon? . . . A learner exercising agency by acting in accordance with correct principles opens his or her heart to the Holy Ghost and invites His teaching, testifying power, and confirming witness. Learning by faith requires spiritual, mental, and physical exertion and not just passive reception” (“Seek Learning by Faith,” *Ensign*, Sept. 2007, 64).

What does it mean to take responsibility for your own learning? Look for possible answers in Elder Bednar’s statement and in the following scriptures: John 7:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:21; James 1:5–6, 22; 2:17; 1 Nephi 10:17–19; 2 Nephi 4:15; Alma 32:27; and Doctrine and Covenants 18:18; 58:26–28; 88:118. What do you feel inspired to do to be more active in learning the gospel?

I need to know the truth for myself.

Perhaps you know people who never seem to lose their faith, no matter what happens in their lives. They may remind you of the five wise virgins in the Savior’s parable (see Matthew 25:1–13). What you may not see are their diligent efforts to strengthen their testimonies of the truth. We must all seek diligently to strengthen our testimonies because, as the foolish virgins learned, we cannot borrow conversion from anyone else.

How do we gain and nurture our own testimonies? Write down your thoughts as you ponder the following scriptures: Luke 11:9–13; John 5:39; John 7:14–17; Acts 17:10–12; 1 Corinthians 2:9–11; and Alma 5:45–46. (See also “Testimony,” Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org.)



Each of us must gain a testimony for ourselves.

What should I do when I have questions?

As you seek spiritual knowledge, questions will come to your mind. The following principles can help

you address questions in ways that build faith and testimony:

1. *Seek understanding through divinely appointed sources.* God is the source of all truth, and He reveals truth through the Holy Ghost, the scriptures, and His prophets and apostles.
2. *Act in faith.* If answers don't come right away, trust that the Lord will reveal answers when the time is right. In the meantime, keep living by the truth you already know.
3. *Keep an eternal perspective.* Try to see things as the Lord sees them, not as the world does. View your questions in the context of our Heavenly Father's plan of salvation.



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

MATTHEW 13:1–23

One great way to help your family prepare to learn from the New Testament this year is to review the parable of the sower. Your family might enjoy looking at different kinds of ground near your home to visualize the types of ground described in the parable. What can we do to cultivate “good ground” in our home? (Matthew 13:8).

GALATIANS 5:22–23; PHILIPPIANS 4:8

“We counsel parents and children to give highest priority to family prayer, family home evening, gospel study and instruction, and wholesome family activities. However worthy and appropriate other demands or activities may be, they must not be permitted to displace the divinely appointed duties that only parents and families can adequately perform” (“Letter from the First Presidency,” *Liahona*, Dec. 1999, 1).

The beginning of the new year is a good time to hold a family council about making your home more gospel centered. What ideas come to mind as you read the blessings and counsel in Galatians 5:22–23 and Philippians 4:8? Maybe you could make posters to put around the home to remind yourselves of your goals.

Improving Personal Study

Look for doctrine. A doctrine is an eternal, unchanging truth. President Boyd K. Packer declared that “true doctrine, understood, changes attitudes and behavior” (“Little Children,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 17). As you and your family study the scriptures, look for truths that can help you to live more like the Savior.



Light of the World, by Brent Borup



JANUARY 7-13

Matthew 1; Luke 1

“Be It unto Me according to Thy Word”

As you read and ponder Matthew 1 and Luke 1, record the spiritual impressions you receive. What doctrinal truths do you find? What messages will be of most value to you and your family? The study ideas in this outline may help you discover additional insights.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

From a mortal perspective, it was impossible. A virgin could not conceive. Nor could a barren woman who was well past child-bearing years. But God had a plan for the birth of His Son and of John the Baptist, so both Mary and Elisabeth, against all earthly odds, became mothers. It can be helpful to remember their miraculous experiences whenever we face something

that seems impossible. Can we overcome our weaknesses? Can we touch the heart of an unresponsive family member? Gabriel could easily have been speaking to us when he reminded Mary, “With God nothing shall be impossible” (Luke 1:37). And Mary’s response can also be ours when God reveals His will: “Be it unto me according to thy word” (Luke 1:38).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW AND LUKE

Who were Matthew and Luke?

Matthew was a Jewish publican, or tax collector, whom Jesus called as one of His Apostles (see Matthew 10:3; see also Bible Dictionary, “Publicans”). Matthew wrote his Gospel mainly to fellow Jews; therefore, he chose to emphasize Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah that were fulfilled through Jesus’s life and ministry.

Luke was a gentile (non-Jewish) physician who traveled with the Apostle Paul. He wrote his Gospel after the Savior’s death primarily to a non-Jewish audience. He testified of Jesus Christ as the Savior of both the Gentiles and the Jews. He recorded eyewitness accounts of events in the Savior’s life, and he included more stories involving women compared to the other Gospels.

See also Bible Dictionary, “Gospels,” “Matthew,” “Luke.”

MATTHEW 1:18–25; LUKE 1:28–35

Why did the Savior need to be born of a mortal mother and an immortal Father?

President Russell M. Nelson explained that the Atonement of Jesus Christ “required a personal sacrifice by an immortal being not subject to death. Yet He must die and take up His own body again. The Savior was the only one who could accomplish this. From His mother He inherited power to die. From His Father He obtained power over death” (“Constancy amid Change,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 34).

LUKE 1:5–25, 57–80

God’s blessings come in His own time.

For whatever reasons, God’s timing meant that the blessing Elisabeth and Zacharias desired, to have a child, came much later than they expected. If you find yourself having to wait for a blessing, or if it seems that God isn’t hearing your prayers, the story of Elisabeth and Zacharias can be a reminder that He hasn’t

forgotten you. He has a plan for you, and He always keeps His promises to His righteous Saints. As Elder Jeffrey R. Holland promised, “Some blessings come soon, some come late, and some don’t come until heaven; but for those who embrace the gospel of Jesus Christ, *they come*” (“An High Priest of Good Things to Come,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 38). How did Zacharias and Elisabeth remain faithful? (see Luke 1:5–25, 57–80). Do you find yourself waiting for a blessing? What do you feel the Lord expects of you while you wait?

What other messages might the Lord have for you in this story?



After faithfully waiting, Elisabeth and Zacharias were blessed with a son.

MATTHEW 1:18–25; LUKE 1:26–38

The faithful willingly submit to God’s will.

Like Mary, we sometimes find that God’s plans for our life are quite different from what we had planned. What do you learn from Mary about accepting God’s will? In the following tables, write statements from the angel and Mary (see Luke 1:26–38), along with the messages that you find in their statements:

The angel’s words to Mary	Message for me
“The Lord is with thee” (verse 28).	The Lord is aware of my situation and struggles.

Mary's reactions	Message for me
"How shall this be?" (verse 34).	It's OK to ask questions when I don't understand.

As you read about Joseph's righteous example in Matthew 1:18–25, what do you learn about accepting God's will? What could you learn from Zacharias's and Elisabeth's experiences? (see Luke 1).

See also Mosiah 3:19; Luke 22:42; Helaman 10:4–5; Bible Dictionary, "Gabriel."

LUKE 1:46–55

Mary testifies of Jesus Christ's mission.

Mary's words in Luke 1:46–55 foretold aspects of the Savior's mission. What do you learn about Jesus Christ from Mary's statements? What additional insights do you gain about the blessings that the Savior offers by comparing these verses with Hannah's words in 1 Samuel 2:1–10 and with Jesus's Beatitudes in Matthew 5:4–12? What does the Spirit teach you as you ponder these insights?



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

MATTHEW 1:1–17

As your family reads the genealogy of Jesus, you might explain that it traces His royal lineage through Joseph back to King David. This lineage was significant because it had been prophesied that the Messiah would come through the lineage of David (see Jeremiah 23:5–6). This could be a good opportunity to discuss your own family history and share some stories about your ancestors. How does knowing about your family history bless your family?

MATTHEW 1:20; LUKE 1:13, 30

Why might the people in these verses have been fearful? What causes us to feel fearful? How might God be asking us to "fear not"?

LUKE 1:37

To help your family build faith that "with God nothing shall be impossible," you could search Luke 1 together and find things God did that might be considered impossible. What other stories could they share—from the scriptures or their own lives—in which God did seemingly impossible things? Searching through the *Gospel Art Book* could help them think of ideas.

Improving Our Teaching

Apply the scriptures to our lives. After reading a scripture passage, invite family members to apply it to their lives (see *Teaching in the Savior's Way*, 21). For instance, how can we apply what we learn about responding to the Lord's call from the reactions of the individuals in Matthew 1 and Luke 1?



Blessed Art Thou among Women, by Walter Rane



Let Us Adore Him, by Dana Mario Wood

JANUARY 14–20

Luke 2; Matthew 2

We Have Come to Worship Him

Begin by reading [Luke 2](#) and [Matthew 2](#), and pay attention to any spiritual insights you receive. The study ideas in this outline can help you identify some of the most important and relevant principles in these chapters.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

From the day of His birth, it was clear that Jesus was no ordinary child. It wasn't just the new star in the heavens or the joyous angelic proclamation that made Jesus's infancy unique. It was also the fact that such a variety of faithful people—from different nations, professions, and backgrounds—felt immediately drawn to Him. Even before He uttered His invitation to "come, follow me," they came (Luke 18:22). Not

everyone came to Him, of course—there were many who paid Him no notice, and a jealous ruler even sought His life. But the humble, pure, devoted seekers of righteousness found what they were seeking in Him. Their devotion inspires our own, for the "good tidings of great joy" brought to the shepherds were for "all people," and the "Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" was born that day unto all of us (see Luke 2:10–11).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

LUKE 2:1–7

Jesus Christ was born in humble circumstances.

Although Jesus Christ had glory with God the Father “before the world was” (John 17:5), He was willing to be born in lowly circumstances and live among us on earth. As you read Luke 2:1–7, what do you notice about the humble circumstances of His birth? Try to identify a detail or insight in this story that you hadn’t noticed before. What do you learn about the Savior from the circumstances of His birth? How do these insights affect your feelings toward Him?

See also the video “The Nativity” (LDS.org).

LUKE 2:8–38; MATTHEW 2:1–12

There are many witnesses of the birth of Christ.

The birth and infancy of Christ were marked by witnesses and worshippers from many walks of life—humble shepherds who visited the stable, wealthy Wise Men who brought gifts to His home, a widow who served in the temple, and a faithful disciple who anxiously anticipated the coming Messiah. As you explore their stories, what do you learn about ways to worship and witness Christ?

Witness of Christ	What do I learn about worshipping and witnessing?
Shepherds (Luke 2:8–20)	
Simeon (Luke 2:25–35)	
Anna (Luke 2:36–38)	
Wise Men (Matthew 2:1–12)	

See also 1 Nephi 11:13–23; 3 Nephi 1:5–21; “Shepherds Learn of the Birth of Christ” and “The Christ Child Is Presented at the Temple” (videos, LDS.org).

MATTHEW 2:13–23

Parents can receive revelation to protect their families.

Joseph never could have done what he was asked to do—protect Jesus in His childhood—without heaven’s help. Like the Wise Men, he received a revelation that warned him of danger. As you read about Joseph’s experience, think about physical and spiritual dangers that face families today. Ponder experiences when you have felt God’s guidance in protecting you and your family or loved ones. Consider sharing these experiences with others. What can you do to receive such guidance in the future?

Additionally, you might consider watching the video “The First Christmas Spirit” (LDS.org) for a depiction of what Joseph may have felt as he faced the responsibility of caring for the Son of God.



“Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?” (Luke 2:49).

LUKE 2:40–52

Even as a youth, Jesus was focused on doing His Father’s will.

As a young man, the Savior taught the gospel so powerfully that even the teachers in the temple were astonished at His “understanding and answers” (Luke 2:47). What do you learn from these verses about the Savior as a young man? How are young people you know trying to be “about [their] Father’s business”?

(Luke 2:49). How have youth and children helped you gain a deeper understanding of the gospel? What else do you learn from the example of Jesus's childhood in Luke 2:40–52 and in Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 3:24–26 (in the Bible appendix)?

What is the Joseph Smith Translation?

Because “many plain and precious” truths were lost from the Bible over the centuries (1 Nephi 13:28; see also Moses 1:41), the Lord commanded Joseph Smith

to make an inspired revision of the Bible, known as the Joseph Smith Translation. Many revisions made by the Prophet are included in the appendix of the Latter-day Saint edition of the scriptures. The LDS edition of the King James Version of the Bible also contains footnotes with the Prophet's revisions. Joseph Smith's translation of Matthew 24, known as Joseph Smith—Matthew, can be found in the Pearl of Great Price. For more information, see Bible Dictionary, “Joseph Smith Translation”; “Bible, Inerrancy of,” Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org.



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

LUKE 2

Invite family members to select a person described in Luke 2, read a few verses about that person's interactions with the Savior, and share something that they learned that increases their faith in Jesus Christ. Sing together “Mary's Lullaby” or “The Nativity Song” (*Children's Songbook*, 44–45, 52–53). What do we learn from these songs about the Savior's birth?

LUKE 2:49

What is the “Father's business”? (see Moses 1:39). What do we learn about that business from this story and from other things Jesus did and taught throughout His life? Consider writing down some ways your family can participate in the Father's business and placing them in a jar. During the coming week, when your family is looking for ways to do Heavenly Father's work, they can select ideas from the jar. Plan a time when you will share your experiences.

LUKE 2:52

What can we learn from Luke 2:52 about how Jesus developed in His life? In what ways can family members increase “in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man”?

Improving Personal Study

Use scripture study helps. To gain additional insights as you study the scriptures, use resources like the footnotes, Topical Guide, Bible Dictionary, Guide to the Scriptures, and other study helps such as LDS.org and the *New Testament Student Manual* (Church Educational System manual, 2014).



The Savior of the World came to earth in humble circumstances.



JANUARY 21–27

John 1

We Have Found the Messiah

As you read and ponder John 1, record the impressions you receive. What messages do you find that will be of most value to you and your family? What could you share in your Church classes?

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

Have you ever wondered whether you would have recognized Jesus of Nazareth as the Son of God if you had been alive during His mortal ministry? For years, faithful Israelites, including Andrew, Peter, Philip, and Nathanael, had waited and prayed for the coming of the promised Messiah. When they met Him, how did they know that He was the One they had been seeking? The same way all of us come to know the

Savior—by accepting the invitation to “come and see” for ourselves (John 1:39). We read about Him in the scriptures. We hear His doctrine. We observe His way of living. We feel His Spirit. Along the way, we discover, as Nathanael did, that the Savior knows us and loves us and wants to prepare us to receive “greater things” (John 1:50).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Who was John?

John was a disciple of John the Baptist and later became one of the first followers of Jesus Christ and one of His Twelve Apostles. He wrote the Gospel of John, several epistles, and the book of Revelation. In his Gospel, he referred to himself as the disciple “whom Jesus loved” and the “other disciple” (John 13:23; 20:3). John’s zeal for preaching the gospel was so strong that he asked to stay on the earth until the Savior’s Second Coming so he could bring souls unto Christ (see D&C 7:1–6).

See also Bible Dictionary, “John” and “John, Gospel of.”

JOHN 1:1–5

Jesus Christ was “in the beginning with God.”

John began his Gospel by describing the work that Christ performed before He was born: “In the beginning . . . the Word [Jesus Christ] was with God.” What do you learn from verses 1–5 about the Savior and His work? You can find helpful clarifications in Joseph Smith Translation, John 1:1–5 (in the Bible appendix). As you begin your study of the Savior’s life, why is it important to know about His premortal work?

See also “Jesus Christ Chosen as Savior,” Gospel Topics, [topics.lds.org](https://www.lds.org/topics).

JOHN 1:1–18

Disciples of Jesus Christ bear witness of Him.

John was inspired to seek the Savior because of the testimony of John the Baptist, who declared that he “was sent to bear witness of . . . the true Light” (John 1:8–9, 15–18). John himself also bore powerful witness of the life and mission of the Savior.

It might be interesting to make a list of truths that John included in his opening testimony of Christ (verses

1–18; see also Joseph Smith Translation, John 1:1–19 [in the Bible appendix]). Why do you think that John began his Gospel with these truths? Consider writing your witness of Jesus Christ—what would you want to share? What experiences have helped you come to know and follow the Savior? Who might be blessed by hearing your testimony?

JOHN 1:12

What does it mean to “become the sons of God”?

Though we are all spirit sons and daughters of God, when we sin we become estranged or separated from Him. Jesus Christ offers us a way back. Through His atoning sacrifice and our obedience to gospel covenants, He “[gives us] power to become the sons [and daughters] of God” once again. We are born again and become reconciled to our Father, worthy of His eternal inheritance and heirs of all that He has (see Romans 8:14–18; Jacob 4:11).

JOHN 1:18

Has anyone seen God?

The Old Testament records examples of people who saw God (see Genesis 32:30; Exodus 33:11; Isaiah 6:5). So why would John the Baptist say that “no man hath seen God at any time”? The Joseph Smith Translation of this verse (see John 1:18, footnote c) clarifies that God the Father does appear to men, and when He does, He bears record of His Son. For example, when He appeared to Joseph Smith in the Sacred Grove, He said to Joseph, “This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!” (Joseph Smith—History 1:17; see also D&C 76:23). There are several other recorded instances where people saw God the Father in vision (see Acts 7:55–56; Revelation 4:2; 1 Nephi 1:8; D&C 137:1–3) or heard His voice bearing record of the Son (see Matthew 3:17; 17:5; 3 Nephi 11:6–7).

JOHN 1:19–23**Who is Elias, and who is “that prophet”?**

The Jewish leaders wondered if John the Baptist was fulfilling ancient prophecy about prophets who would someday come among the people. They asked him if he was Elias, which is a Greek form of *Elijah*, the name of the prophet who was prophesied to restore

all things (see Malachi 4:5–6). They also asked if he was “that prophet,” which may refer to the “Prophet” mentioned in Deuteronomy 18:15. John explained that he was neither of these but that he was the prophet whom Isaiah said would prepare the way for the coming of the Lord (see Isaiah 40:3).

See also Bible Dictionary, “Elias.”



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

JOHN 1:4–10

How might you help your family visualize what they read about light in these verses? You could let family members take turns shining a light in a dark room and sharing how the Savior is the Light of their lives. Then, as you read John 1:4–10, family members might have additional insight into John’s testimony of Jesus Christ, the Light of the World.

JOHN 1:35–46

Notice John the Baptist’s testimony in verse 36. What were the results of his testimony? (see verses

35–46). What does your family learn from the people described in these verses about how to share the gospel?

JOHN 1:45–51

What did Nathanael do that helped him gain a testimony of the Savior? How have we gained our testimonies?



As we study the scriptures, we will receive inspiration for our lives.

Improving Our Teaching

Share object lessons. Invite family members to find objects that they can use to help them understand principles found in the scriptures you are reading as a family. For instance, they might use a candle to represent the Light of Christ (see John 1:4).



Jehovah Creates the Earth, by Walter Rane



Stained-glass window in Nauvoo Illinois Temple, by Tom Holdman

JANUARY 28–FEBRUARY 3

Matthew 3; Mark 1; Luke 3

“Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord”

Begin by reading Matthew 3; Mark 1; and Luke 3. As you pray for the Holy Ghost to help you understand these chapters, He will give you insights that are especially for you. Record these impressions, and make plans to act on them.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

Jesus Christ and His gospel can change you. Luke quoted an ancient prophecy of Isaiah that described John the Baptist’s mission and the effect that the Savior’s coming would have: “Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth” (Luke 3:5; see also Isaiah 40:4). This is a message for all of us, including

those who think they cannot change or do not need to change. If something as permanent as a mountain can be flattened, then surely the Lord can help us straighten our own crooked paths (see Luke 3:4–5). As we accept John the Baptist’s invitation to repent and change, we prepare our minds and hearts to receive Jesus Christ so that we too can “see the salvation of God” (Luke 3:6).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

THE GOSPEL OF MARK

Who was Mark?

Among the authors of the Gospels, we know the least about Mark. We know that he was a missionary companion of Paul, Peter, and several other missionaries. Many biblical scholars believe that Peter directed Mark to record the events of the Savior's life. Mark's Gospel was likely written before the other three.

See also Bible Dictionary, "Mark."

MATTHEW 3:1–12; MARK 1:1–8; LUKE 3:2–18

Repentance is a mighty change of mind and heart.

The mission of John the Baptist was to prepare the hearts of the people to receive the Savior and become more like Him. How did he do it? He proclaimed, "Repent ye" (Matthew 3:2). He used images such as fruit and wheat to emphasize the importance of repenting in order to receive Christ (see Luke 3:9, 17).

What other images do you find in the accounts of John the Baptist's ministry? Consider marking them in your scriptures or drawing pictures of them in a study journal. What do these images teach about the doctrine and necessity of repentance?

True repentance is "a change of mind, a fresh view about God, about oneself, and about the world. . . . [It means] a turning of the heart and will to God" (Bible Dictionary, "Repentance"). In Luke 3:7–14, what changes did John invite the people to make to prepare to receive Christ? How might this counsel apply to you? How can you show that you have truly repented? (see Luke 3:8).

See also Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 3:4–11 (in the Bible appendix); Bible Dictionary, "John the Baptist"; D. Todd Christofferson, "The Divine Gift of Repentance," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 38–41.

MATTHEW 3:7; LUKE 3:7

Who were the Pharisees and Sadducees?

The Pharisees were members of a Jewish religious party who prided themselves on strict observance of Mosaic law. They tended to reduce religion to the observance of many ceremonial behaviors. The Sadducees were a wealthy Jewish class with significant religious and political influence. They did not believe in the doctrine of resurrection. Both groups had strayed from the original intent of God's laws, and many of their members refused to accept the message of God's prophet, John the Baptist.

See also Matthew 23:27; John 1:19–24; Bible Dictionary, "Pharisees" and "Sadducees."

MATTHEW 3:13–17; MARK 1:9–11; LUKE 3:15–16, 21–22

Jesus Christ was baptized to "fulfill all righteousness."

When you were baptized, you followed the example of the Savior. Compare what you learn from these accounts of the Savior's baptism with what happened during your baptism.

Who baptized Jesus, and what authority did he hold?	Who baptized you, and what authority did he hold?
Where was Jesus baptized?	Where were you baptized?
How was Jesus baptized?	How were you baptized?
Why was Jesus baptized?	Why were you baptized?
How did Heavenly Father show that He was pleased with Jesus?	How did Heavenly Father show that He was pleased when you were baptized? How has He shown His approval since then?

Nephi recorded some important teachings about the Savior's baptism. What do his words in 2 Nephi 31 teach you? Consider recording your baptism experience in a journal.

See also John 1:32–33; Mosiah 18:8–11; Doctrine and Covenants 13:1; 20:37, 68–74; “The Baptism of Jesus” (video, LDS.org).

MATTHEW 3:16–17; MARK 1:9–11; LUKE 3:21–22

Does the Bible teach that the members of the Godhead are three separate beings?

The Bible contains numerous evidences that the members of the Godhead are three separate beings.

For instance, the account of the Savior’s baptism supports the doctrine that God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost are three separate beings. God the Father spoke from heaven, and the Holy Ghost (represented by a dove) descended on the Savior as He was being baptized. Here are some other scriptures that teach this same truth: Genesis 1:26–27; Matthew 17:1–5; John 17:20–23; Acts 7:55–56; and Doctrine and Covenants 130:22.



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

MATTHEW 3

John the Baptist held the Aaronic Priesthood. What can we learn about the Aaronic Priesthood as we study about him? How can John’s example help Aaronic Priesthood holders fulfill their duties? (See also D&C 13:1; 20:46–60.)

MATTHEW 3:11–17; MARK 1:9–11; LUKE 3:21–22

To teach family members about baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost, consider displaying a dirty object and letting family members wash it with water. How does this activity represent baptism? Then ask family members to talk about some of the cleansing

characteristics of fire. Why is the gift of the Holy Ghost described as a “baptism of fire”? (See Bible Dictionary, “Holy Ghost.”)



When we are baptized, our sins are washed away.

MATTHEW 3:17; MARK 1:11; LUKE 3:22

When have we felt that God has been pleased with us? What can we do as a family to please God?

Improving Personal Study

Ask the Lord for help. The scriptures were given by revelation, and to truly understand them we need personal revelation. The Lord has promised, “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you” (Matthew 7:7).



John the Baptist Baptizing Jesus, by Greg K. Olsen



Christ Triumphs over Satan, by Robert T. Barrett

FEBRUARY 4–10

Matthew 4; Luke 4–5

“The Spirit of the Lord Is upon Me”

Begin by reading Matthew 4 and Luke 4–5, and pay attention to any insights you receive. The study ideas in this outline can help you identify important principles in these chapters.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

From His youth, Jesus seemed to be aware that He had a unique, sacred mission. But as Jesus prepared to begin His earthly ministry, the adversary sought to plant doubt in the Savior’s mind. “*If thou be the Son of God,*” Satan said (Luke 4:3, italics added). But the Savior had communed with His Father in Heaven. He knew the scriptures, and He knew who He was.

To Him, Satan’s offer—“All this power will I give thee” (Luke 4:6)—was a hollow one, for the Savior’s lifelong preparation allowed Him to receive “the power of the Spirit” (Luke 4:14). So despite temptation, trials, and rejection, Jesus Christ never wavered from His appointed work: “I must preach the kingdom of God . . . for therefore am I sent” (Luke 4:43).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

MATTHEW 4:1–2

Communing with God prepares me to serve Him.

To prepare for His mission, Jesus went into the wilderness “to be with God” (Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 4:1 [in Matthew 4:1, footnote *b*]). Think of what you do to feel close to God. How does this prepare you for the work He wants you to do?

MATTHEW 4:1–11; LUKE 4:1–13

Jesus Christ set the example for me by resisting temptation.

Sometimes people feel guilty when they are tempted to sin. But even the Savior, who lived “without sin” (Hebrews 4:15), was tempted. It can be comforting to know that because Christ also faced and overcame temptations, He knows the temptations we face and can help us overcome them (see Hebrews 2:18; Alma 7:11–12).

As you read Matthew 4:1–11 and Luke 4:1–13, what do you learn that can help you when you face temptations? You could organize your thoughts in a table like this one:

Jesus Christ	Me
What did Satan tempt Christ to do? <i>Use His power to satisfy His hunger.</i>	What does Satan tempt me to do?
Why was Christ prepared to resist temptation? <i>He fasted; He went to be with God; He knew the scriptures.</i>	How can I be prepared to resist temptation?

What additional insights do you gain from the Joseph Smith Translation of Matthew 4? (see footnotes throughout Matthew 4).

See also 1 Corinthians 10:13; Alma 13:28; Moses 1:10–22; “Temptation,” Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org.

LUKE 4:16–32

Jesus Christ is the prophesied Messiah.

If you were asked to describe what Jesus Christ was sent to earth to do, what would you say? In Luke 4:18–19, the Savior described aspects of His own mission by quoting one of Isaiah’s prophecies about the Messiah (see Isaiah 61:1–2). What do you learn about His mission as you read these verses?



Jesus Christ testified that He is the Messiah.

Although the Jews had been waiting for centuries for Isaiah’s prophecy to be fulfilled, many did not accept that Jesus was the Messiah when He declared, “This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears” (Luke 4:21). As you read Luke 4:20–30 (see also Mark 6:1–6), try to put yourself in the place of the people of Nazareth. Is there anything that might prevent you from fully accepting Christ as your personal Savior?

See also Mosiah 3:5–12; “Jesus Declares He Is the Messiah” (video, LDS.org).

MATTHEW 4:18–22; LUKE 5:1–11

As I trust in the Lord, He can help me reach my divine potential.

President Ezra Taft Benson taught, “Men and women who turn their lives over to God will discover that He can make a lot more out of their lives than they can” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Ezra Taft Benson* [2014], 42). This is what happened to Peter and his

fellow fishermen. Jesus helped them realize that they could do more than catch fish—they could become “fishers of men” (Matthew 4:19; see also Luke 5:10). To help them see this, Jesus used experiences that were familiar to them.

When have you felt the Savior calling you to follow Him? How can you show the Lord that you are willing to “[forsake] all” (Luke 5:11) to follow Him? Ponder these questions as you read Matthew 4:18–22 and Luke 5:1–11.

See also “Come, Follow Me,” *Hymns*, no. 116.



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

MATTHEW 4:1–2; LUKE 4:1–2

Jesus had been fasting before He was tempted by the adversary. What insights can we gain from this account about the power of fasting? The information in “Fasting and Fast Offerings,” Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org might help you lead a family discussion about fasting. You could invite family members to share experiences they have had with fasting. Perhaps your family could prayerfully make plans to fast together for a specific purpose.

MATTHEW 4:3–4; LUKE 4:3–4

When Satan tempted Christ to turn a stone to bread, he challenged Christ’s divine identity by saying, “*If thou be the Son of God*” (Matthew 4:3, italics added). Why

does Satan try to make us doubt our divine identities? How does he try to do this? (See also Moses 1:10–23.)

JOSEPH SMITH TRANSLATION, MATTHEW 4:11

After Jesus was physically and spiritually tested, His thoughts turned to the needs of John the Baptist, who was in prison: “And now Jesus knew that John was cast into prison, and he sent angels, and, behold, they came and ministered unto him [John]” (Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 4:11 [in Matthew 4:11, footnote a]). How are we blessed as we follow Christ’s example of thinking of others before ourselves? How can we follow His example?

LUKE 4:16–21

Do we know anyone who is brokenhearted or who needs to be “set at liberty”? (Luke 4:18). How can we help others receive the Savior’s healing and deliverance? You might also discuss how performing temple ordinances helps bring “deliverance to the captives” (Luke 4:18).

Improving Our Teaching

Live the gospel of Jesus Christ. “Perhaps the most important thing you can do [as a parent or teacher] is to . . . live the gospel with all your heart. . . . This is the principal way to qualify for the companionship of the Holy Ghost. You don’t have to be perfect, just diligently trying—and seeking forgiveness through the Savior’s Atonement whenever you stumble” (*Teaching in the Savior’s Way*, 13).



The Call, by Jorge Cocco



FEBRUARY 11–17

John 2–4

“Ye Must Be Born Again”

As you read John 2–4, the Spirit will teach you things about your own conversion. Make note of His promptings. You may find additional spiritual insights from the study ideas in this outline.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

At a marriage feast in Cana, Christ changed water into wine—an event John called the “beginning of miracles” (John 2:11). That’s true in more than one sense: while it was the first miracle Jesus performed publicly, it can also symbolize another miraculous beginning—the process of our hearts being transformed as we become ever more like our Savior. This miracle of a lifetime begins with the decision to follow Jesus Christ, to change and live a better life

through Him. Ultimately this change can become so complete that becoming “born again” is one of the best ways to describe it (John 3:7). But rebirth is just the beginning of the path of discipleship. Christ’s words to the Samaritan woman at the well remind us that if we continue on this path, eventually the gospel will become “a well of water” inside us, “springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:14).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

JOHN 2:1–11

The power of Jesus Christ can change me.

As you read about the Savior changing water into wine in John 2:1–11, what insights do you gain about the power of Christ to change you?

You may gain additional insights by considering the perspectives of the different people who were there, such as Mary, the disciples, and others. How might these people have experienced the miracle? You could compare what you learn about miracles in these verses with what Jesus Christ taught Nicodemus (see John 3:1–8) and the woman at the well (see John 4:3–26).

JOHN 3:1–21

I must be born again to enter the kingdom of God.

When Nicodemus came to Jesus in private, he was a cautious observer. Later, however, he publicly defended Jesus (see John 7:45–52) and joined the believers at the Savior's burial (see John 19:38–40). What teachings do you find in John 3:1–21 that might have inspired Nicodemus to follow Jesus and be born again?

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, "Being born again, comes by the Spirit of God through ordinances" (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 95). What role did your baptism (being "born of water" [John 3:5]) and confirmation (being born "of the Spirit" [John 3:5]) play in being born again? What are you doing to continue this process of change? (see Alma 5:11–14).

See also Mosiah 5:7; 27:25–26; "Salvation," Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org; David A. Bednar, "Ye Must Be Born Again," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2007, 19–22.

JOHN 3:16–17

Heavenly Father shows His love for me through Jesus Christ.

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland taught, "The first great truth of all eternity is that God loves us with all of His heart, might, mind, and strength" ("Tomorrow the Lord Will Do Wonders among You," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2016, 127). How have you felt the love of God through the gift of His Son?

The sacrament provides a time to reflect on the love of God and the gift of His Son. What hymns help you feel this love? Consider watching the video of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir singing "I Stand All Amazed" (LDS.org). What could you do to make the sacrament more meaningful?

JOHN 4:24

Is God a spirit?

Some may be confused by Jesus's statement that God is a spirit. The Joseph Smith Translation of this verse provides an important clarification: "For unto such hath God promised his Spirit" (in John 4:24, footnote *a*). Modern revelation also teaches that God has a body of flesh and bones (see D&C 130:22–23; see also Genesis 5:1–3; Hebrews 1:1–3).

JOHN 4:7–26

Christ offers me His living water.

What might Jesus have meant when He told the Samaritan woman that whoever drinks the water He offers will never thirst? How is the gospel like living water?



Christ's gospel is the living water that nourishes our soul.

One of the Savior's messages to the Samaritan woman was that how we worship is more important than where we worship (see John 4:21–24). What are you doing to “worship the Father in spirit and in truth”? (John 4:23).

See also Guide to the Scriptures, “Worship”; Dean M. Davies, “The Blessings of Worship,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2016, 93–95.



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

JOHN 2–4

As your family reads these chapters this week, pay special attention to how the Savior used everyday things—birth, wind, water, and food—to teach spiritual truths. What items in your home can you use to teach spiritual truths?

JOHN 2:18–22

As you avoid things that would make your home unclean physically and spiritually, it can become a sacred place—like the temple. What does your family need to keep out of your home so it will be a sacred place? What will you do to keep those things out?

JOHN 3:1–6

Ask family members to think about the miracle of pregnancy and birth—the process of creating a living, moving, intelligent being. Christ taught that we must be reborn before entering the kingdom of God. Why is rebirth a good metaphor for the change required of us before we can enter the kingdom of God? How have we experienced the process of spiritual rebirth?

JOHN 3:16

Invite family members to restate this verse in their own words as if they were explaining it to a friend. How has Christ helped us feel God's love in our lives?

JOHN 4:5–15

What was the Savior teaching us when He compared His gospel to living water? Consider holding up a glass of water and asking your family to describe the qualities of water. Why do we need to drink water every day? Why might Jesus Christ have compared His gospel to “a well of water springing up into everlasting life”? (John 4:14).

Improving Personal Study

Look for symbols. The scriptures often use objects, events, actions, or teachings to represent spiritual truths. These symbols can enrich your understanding of the doctrine being taught. For example, the Savior likened conversion to rebirth.



Living Water, by Simon Dewey



Sermon on the Mount, by Jorge Cocco

FEBRUARY 18–24

Matthew 5; Luke 6

“Blessed Are Ye”

Pay attention to impressions you receive as you read Matthew 5 and Luke 6, and record them in a study journal. This outline can help you identify some of the most important and relevant principles in these chapters.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

By this point in His ministry, it was clear that Jesus’s teachings would be unlike what the people of His time were used to hearing. The poor will receive the kingdom of God? The meek will inherit the earth? Blessed are the persecuted? The scribes and Pharisees were not teaching such things. And yet to those who truly understood God’s law, these doctrines felt right. “An

eye for an eye” and “hate thine enemy” were lesser laws (Matthew 5:38, 43), given to a people who were unwilling to live the higher law. But Jesus Christ had come to fulfill the lower law and teach a higher law (see 3 Nephi 15:2–10) designed to help us one day become “perfect, even as [our] Father which is in heaven is perfect” (Matthew 5:48).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

MATTHEW 5:1–12; LUKE 6:20–26

Lasting happiness comes from living the way Jesus Christ taught.

Everybody wants to be happy, but not everyone looks for happiness in the same places. Some search for it in worldly power and position, others in wealth or in satisfying physical appetites. Jesus Christ came to teach the way to lasting happiness, to teach what it truly means to be blessed. What do you learn about obtaining lasting happiness from Matthew 5:1–12 and Luke 6:20–26? How is this different from the world's view of happiness?

What questions or impressions come to your mind as you read each verse? What do these verses teach you about being a disciple of Jesus Christ? What do you feel inspired to do to develop the qualities described in these verses?

See also John 13:17; 3 Nephi 12:3–12; “Sermon on the Mount: The Beatitudes” (video, LDS.org).

MATTHEW 5:13

Why did the Savior compare His disciples to salt?

Salt has long been used to preserve, flavor, and purify. Salt also had religious meaning for the Israelites. It was associated with the ancient practice of animal sacrifice under the law of Moses (see Leviticus 2:13; Numbers 18:19). When salt loses its savor, it becomes ineffective, or “good for nothing” (Matthew 5:13). This happens when it is mixed with or contaminated by other elements. As disciples of Christ, we keep our “savor” by avoiding spiritual contamination from the world. This allows us to fulfill our preserving and purifying work as the salt of the earth—for example, through sharing the gospel and being an influence for good in the world (see D&C 103:9–10).



“Ye are the salt of the earth” (Matthew 5:13).

MATTHEW 5:17–48; LUKE 6:27–35

The law of Christ supersedes the law of Moses.

The disciples may have been surprised to hear Jesus say that their righteousness needed to exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees (see Matthew 5:20), who prided themselves on how well they kept the law of Moses. But Jesus taught a higher law that not only elevates our actions but also the thoughts and feelings that inspire them. This higher law required much more: the heart, soul, and mind (see Matthew 22:37).

As you read Matthew 5:21–48 and Luke 6:27–35, consider marking both the behaviors required in the law of Moses (“Ye have heard that . . .”) and what Jesus taught to elevate them.

For example, what did Jesus teach in Matthew 5:27–28 about our responsibility over our thoughts? How can you gain more control over the thoughts that come into your mind and heart? (see D&C 121:45).

See also “Sermon on the Mount: The Higher Law” (video, LDS.org).

MATTHEW 5:48**Does Heavenly Father really expect me to be perfect?**

President Russell M. Nelson taught:

“The term *perfect* was translated from the Greek *teleios*, which means ‘complete.’ . . . The infinitive form of the verb is *teleiono*, which means ‘to reach a distant end, to be fully developed, to consummate, or to finish.’ Please note that the word does not imply ‘freedom from error’; it implies ‘achieving a distant objective.’ . . .

“ . . . The Lord taught, ‘Ye are not able to abide the presence of God now . . . ; wherefore, continue in patience until ye are perfected’ [D&C 67:13].

“We need not be dismayed if our earnest efforts toward perfection now seem so arduous and endless. Perfection is pending. It can come in full only after the Resurrection and only through the Lord. It awaits all who love him and keep his commandments” (“Perfection Pending,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 86, 88).

See also Philippians 3:13–15; 2 Peter 1:3–11; Revelation 3:21–22; 3 Nephi 27:27; Moroni 10:32–33; Doctrine and Covenants 76:69.



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As your family reads the scriptures together, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

MATTHEW 5:1–9

Which principles taught in Matthew 5:1–9 could help your home be a happier place? You might focus on one or two as you study the Sermon on the Mount over the next few weeks. For example, what teachings do your family members find that can help them be peacemakers? (see Matthew 5:21–25, 38–44). What goals can you set? How will you follow up?

MATTHEW 5:14–16

To help your family understand what it means to be “the light of the world,” you could explore some of the sources of light in your home, your neighborhood, and the world. It might be helpful to show what happens when you hide a light. What did Jesus mean when He said, “Ye are the light of the world”? (Matthew 5:14). Who has been like a light for our family? How can we be a light to others? (see D&C 103:9–10).

MATTHEW 5:43–44

Why does the Lord want us to pray for those who have been unkind to us? How can we live this principle in our family?

Improving Our Teaching

Be observant. As you pay attention to what is happening in your children’s lives, you will find excellent teaching opportunities. Your children’s comments and questions throughout the day can also lead to possible teaching moments. (See *Teaching in the Savior’s Way*, 16.)



"Ye are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14).



Jesus Teaching the People by the Seashore, by James Tissot

FEBRUARY 25–MARCH 3

Matthew 6–7

“He Taught Them as One Having Authority”

When we read the scriptures with a question in mind and with a sincere desire to understand what Heavenly Father wants us to know, we invite the Holy Ghost to inspire us. As you read Matthew 6–7, pay attention to these impressions.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

The Sermon on the Mount is one of the best-known discourses in Christianity. The Savior taught with rich images, such as a city set on a hill, lilies of the field, and wolves disguised as sheep. But the Sermon on the Mount is far more than a beautiful speech. The power of the Savior’s teachings to His disciples can

change our lives, especially when we live by them. Then His words become more than words; they become a sure foundation for life that, like the wise man’s house, can withstand the world’s winds and floods (see Matthew 7:24–25).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

MATTHEW 6-7

I should set my heart upon heavenly things.

It's not always easy to prioritize the things of God over the things of the world. Which of the Savior's teachings in Matthew 6-7 help you focus on heavenly things? What thoughts or impressions do you have as you study His words? What are you inspired to do? Consider recording your impressions. For example:

Matthew 6:1-4	I should care more about what God thinks of me than what others think.

MATTHEW 6-7

I can draw closer to God through humble, sincere prayer.

The Sermon on the Mount contains many themes, and the themes you notice will depend, to a degree, on the current circumstances of your life and what the Lord wants to communicate to you.

One theme of Matthew 6-7 is prayer. Take a moment to evaluate your prayers. How do you feel you are doing in your efforts to draw closer to God through prayer? What teachings in Matthew 6-7 inspire you to improve how you pray? Record the impressions you receive through the Spirit. For example:

Matthew 6:9	When I pray, I should treat Heavenly Father's name with reverence.
Matthew 6:10	When I pray, I should express my desire that the Lord's will be done.

You might consider reading the Sermon on the Mount once more, this time looking for another recurring theme or message that is especially applicable to you. Record what you find in a study journal, along with your thoughts and impressions.

MATTHEW 6:7

What does it mean to use "vain repetitions" in prayer?

People often understand "vain repetitions" to mean repeating the same words over and over again. However, the word *vain* can describe something that has no value. Using "vain repetitions" in prayer can mean praying without sincere, heartfelt feeling (see Alma 31:12-23).

MATTHEW 6:9-13

Why don't we recite the Lord's Prayer?

President Russell M. Nelson taught: "The Lord prefaced His prayer by first asking His followers to avoid 'vain repetitions' [Matthew 6:7] and to pray 'after this manner' [Matthew 6:9]. Thus, the Lord's Prayer serves as a pattern to follow and not as a piece to memorize and recite repetitively. The Master simply wants us to pray for God's help while we strive constantly to resist evil and live righteously" ("Lessons from the Lord's Prayers," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2009, 46-47).

MATTHEW 7:1-5

I should judge righteously.

In Matthew 7:1, the Savior may seem to be saying we should not judge, but in other scriptures (including other verses in this chapter), He gives us instructions about how to judge. If that seems puzzling, the Joseph Smith Translation of this verse might help: "Judge not *unrighteously*, that ye be not judged; *but judge righteous judgment*" (in Matthew 7:1, footnote *a*). What do you find in Matthew 7:1-5, along with the rest of the chapter, that helps you know how to "judge righteous judgment"?

See also “Judging Others,” *True to the Faith*, 90–91; Lynn G. Robbins, “The Righteous Judge,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2016, 96–98.

MATTHEW 7:21–23

I come to know Jesus Christ by doing His will.

The phrase “I never knew you” in Matthew 7:23 was changed in the Joseph Smith Translation to “Ye never

knew me” (Matthew 7:23, footnote *a*). How does this change help you better understand what the Lord taught in verses 21–22 about doing His will? How well do you feel you know the Lord? What can you do to know Him better?

See also David A. Bednar, “If Ye Had Known Me,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2016, 102–5.



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you study the Sermon on the Mount with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

MATTHEW 6–7

One way to learn from Matthew 6–7 as a family is to watch the videos “Sermon on the Mount: The Lord’s Prayer” and “Sermon on the Mount: Treasures in Heaven” (LDS.org). Family members could follow along in their scriptures and pause the videos whenever they hear something they want to discuss. This activity could span several days, if needed.

MATTHEW 6:5–13

What can we learn about prayer from the way the Savior prayed? How can we use His prayer as a model to improve our personal and family prayers? (See also

Luke 11:1–13.) If you have younger children, you might practice praying together.

MATTHEW 6:33

What does it mean to “seek . . . first the kingdom of God”? How are we doing this as a family?

MATTHEW 7:1–5

You could use a tiny wood fragment and a large piece of wood to represent a mote and a beam as you discuss the Savior’s teachings about judging others. Consider reading the entry “Judging Others” in *True to the Faith*, 90–91, as part of this discussion.

MATTHEW 7:24–27

To help your family better understand the Savior’s parable of the wise man and the foolish man, you could let them pour water on sand and then on a rock. How can we build our spiritual foundations on a rock?

Improving Personal Study

Share insights. Discussing principles you learn from your personal study is not only a good way to teach others; it also helps strengthen your own understanding. Try sharing a principle you learned from this week’s reading with a family member or in your Church classes.



I Have Prayed for Thee, by Del Parson



Healing in His Wings, by Jon McNaughton

MARCH 4–10

Matthew 8–9; Mark 2–5

“Thy Faith Hath Made Thee Whole”

As you read Matthew 8–9 and Mark 2–5, be responsive to impressions you receive from the Holy Ghost. Consider writing down the promptings you receive and the things you can do to act on those promptings.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

It’s hard to read the New Testament without being impressed by the many accounts of the Savior healing the sick and afflicted—everyone from a woman with a fever to a girl who had been pronounced dead. What messages might there be for us in these miracles of physical healing? Certainly one obvious message is that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, with power over all things, including our physical pains and imperfections.

But another meaning is found in His words to the skeptical scribes: “That ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins” (Mark 2:10). So when you read about a blind person or a leper being healed, you might think of the healing—both spiritual and physical—that you can receive from the Savior and hear Him say to you, “Thy faith hath made thee whole” (Mark 5:34).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

MATTHEW 8–9; MARK 2; 5

The Savior can heal infirmities and sicknesses.

These few chapters record many instances of miraculous healings performed by the Savior. As you study these healings, look for possible messages for you. You might ask yourself: What does the account teach about faith? What does the account teach about the Savior? What does God want me to learn from this miracle?

- A leper (Matthew 8:1–4)
- A centurion's servant (Matthew 8:5–13)
- Peter's mother-in-law (Matthew 8:14–15)
- Two blind men (Matthew 9:27–31)
- A man who was paralyzed (Mark 2:1–12)
- A man possessed by evil spirits (Mark 5:1–20)
- Jairus's daughter (Mark 5:22–23, 35–43)
- A woman with an issue of blood (Mark 5:24–34)

See also Dallin H. Oaks, "Healing the Sick," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2010, 47–50.



Jesus Healing the Sick, by Joseph Brickey, after Heinrich Hofmann

MATTHEW 8:5–13; MARK 5:24–34

I can seek God's help even if I feel undeserving.

The centurion, a Gentile, felt unworthy to have the Savior in his home. The woman with an issue of blood

was considered unclean and was ostracized from Jewish society. Yet the Savior blessed them both. What do you learn from these two accounts about seeking help from the Lord?

MATTHEW 8:18–22; MARK 3:31–35

Being a disciple of Jesus Christ means that I put Him first in my life.

In these verses, Jesus taught that being His disciples requires us to put Him first in our lives, even if that sometimes means we must sacrifice other things that we value. As you study these passages, ponder your own discipleship. Why must disciples be willing to put the Savior first? What might you need to give up in order to put Jesus first? (See also Luke 9:57–62.)

MATTHEW 8:23–27; MARK 4:35–41

Jesus Christ has power to bring peace in the midst of life's storms.

Have you ever felt the way Jesus's disciples did in the storm at sea—watching the waves of water fill the boat and questioning, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?"

In Mark 4:35–41, you will find four questions. List each one, and ponder what it teaches you about facing life's challenges with faith in Jesus Christ. How does the Savior bring peace to the storms of your life?

MATTHEW 9:1–13; MARK 2:15–17

I can defend my beliefs by teaching true principles.

It is sometimes difficult to know how to respond when people criticize our religious beliefs and practices. As you read Matthew 9:1–13 and Mark 2:15–17, look for the criticisms of the accusers and the Savior's responses. Consider marking the criticisms and responses in different colors or writing them down. What do you notice about the way the Savior taught?

How could following His example help you if you have to defend a gospel principle or Church practice?

See also the video “Everyday Example: When Beliefs Are Questioned” (LDS.org).

MATTHEW 9:1–8

Because of repentance, I can be of good cheer.

When a paralyzed man was brought to the Savior, it was obvious to the crowd that he needed to be

healed physically. But Jesus addressed the man’s greater need first—forgiveness of his sins. Even if the man had not been healed physically, he could still have followed Jesus’s counsel to “be of good cheer” (Matthew 9:2). When have you felt joy because you have been forgiven? (See also Alma 36:18–24.)



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you continue learning about the Savior’s ministry with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

MATTHEW 8–9; MARK 2; 5

Consider creating a list of the miracles described in these chapters and finding pictures of some of them (see the *Gospel Art Book* or LDS.org). You might ask each family member to tell about one of the miracles (using a picture if available) and share what they learn from it. You might share some examples of miracles you have witnessed or read about in modern-day Church history.

MATTHEW 9:10–13

What do we learn from the way the Savior treated the publicans and sinners, who were shunned by others?

How can we follow His example as we interact with other people?

MATTHEW 9:36–38

How can you help your family understand the Savior’s plea for more laborers to help share the gospel? You could do something as simple as working together at a task that would take a lot longer for one person, such as cleaning the kitchen after dinner. What can we do to share the message of the gospel?

MARK 4:35–41

Could this account help family members when they feel afraid? Perhaps they could read verse 39 and share experiences when the Savior helped them feel peace during times of turmoil or fear.

Improving Our Teaching

Be available and accessible. Some of the best teaching moments start as questions or concerns in the hearts of family members. Let family members know through your words and actions that you are eager to hear them (see *Teaching in the Savior’s Way*, 16).



Christ and the Palsied Man, by J. Kirk Richards



MARCH 11-17

Matthew 10-12; Mark 2; Luke 7; 11

“These Twelve Jesus Sent Forth”

As you read Matthew 10-12; Mark 2; and Luke 7; 11, make note of the impressions you receive from the Holy Ghost. Consider pondering and recording them.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

Word of Jesus’s healing miracles was spreading quickly. Multitudes followed Him, hoping for relief from their sicknesses. But when the Savior looked upon the multitudes, He saw more than their physical ailments. Filled with compassion, He saw “sheep having no shepherd” (Matthew 9:36). “The harvest truly is plenteous,” He observed, “but the labourers are few” (Matthew 9:37). So He called twelve

Apostles, “gave them power,” and sent them to teach and minister “to the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matthew 10:1, 6). Today the need for more laborers to serve Heavenly Father’s children is just as great. There are still twelve Apostles, but there are more disciples of Jesus Christ than ever before—people who can declare to all the world, “The kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matthew 10:7).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

MATTHEW 10

The Lord gives His servants power to do His work.

The instruction Jesus gave in Matthew 10 was to His Apostles, but we all have a part in the Lord's work. What power did Christ give His Apostles to help them fulfill their mission? How can you access His power in the work you have been called to do? (see 2 Corinthians 6:1–10; D&C 121:34–46).



The Twelve Apostles perform the Lord's work today.

As you read the commission Christ gave to His Apostles, you might receive impressions about the work the Lord wants you to do. A chart like the following could help you organize your thoughts:

Matthew 10	Impressions I receive
The Savior gave His disciples power.	God will give me the power I need to do my work.

See also Articles of Faith 1:6; Bible Dictionary, "Apostle"; "Jesus Calls Twelve Apostles to Preach and Bless Others" (video, LDS.org).

MATTHEW 10:17–20

When I am in the Lord's service, He will inspire me with what to say.

The Lord foresaw that His disciples would be persecuted and questioned about their faith—something

similar to what disciples today may experience. But He promised the disciples that they would know by the Spirit what to say. Have you had experiences when this divine promise was fulfilled in your life, perhaps when you bore your testimony, gave a blessing, or had a conversation with someone? Consider sharing your experiences with a loved one or recording them in a journal.

See also Luke 12:11–12; Doctrine and Covenants 84:85.

MATTHEW 10:34–39

What did Jesus mean by "I came not to send peace, but a sword"?

Elder D. Todd Christofferson taught: "I'm confident that a number of you have been rejected and ostracized by father and mother, brothers and sisters as you accepted the gospel of Jesus Christ and entered into His covenant. In one way or another, your superior love of Christ has required the sacrifice of relationships that were dear to you, and you have shed many tears. Yet with your own love undiminished, you hold steady under this cross, showing yourself unashamed of the Son of God" ("Finding Your Life," *Ensign*, Mar. 2016, 28).

This willingness to lose cherished relationships in order to follow the Savior comes with a promise that "he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it" (Matthew 10:39).

MATTHEW 11:28–30

Jesus Christ will give me rest when I rely on Him and His Atonement.

We all carry burdens—some resulting from our own sins and mistakes, some caused by the choices of others, and some that are nobody's fault but are simply part of life on earth. Regardless of the reasons for our struggles, Jesus pleads with us to come unto Him so He can help us bear our burdens and find relief (see also Mosiah 24). Elder David A. Bednar taught, "Making and keeping sacred covenants yokes us to and with the Lord Jesus Christ" ("Bear Up Their Burdens with Ease," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 88).

With this in mind, ponder questions like the following to better understand the Savior's words in these verses: "How do my covenants yoke me to and with the Savior?" "What do I need to do to come unto Christ?" or "In what sense is the Savior's yoke easy and His burden light?"

What other questions come to your mind as you read? Record them and search for answers this week in the scriptures and the words of the prophets. You may find answers to some of your questions in Elder David A. Bednar's message referenced above.

LUKE 7:36–50

As I am forgiven of my sins, my love for the Savior deepens.

Do you see yourself in the account in these verses of the Savior's visit to Simon the Pharisee? Are you ever like Simon? What can you do to follow the woman's example of showing humility and love for Jesus Christ? When have you experienced the tenderness and mercy that the Savior showed the woman? What do you learn from these verses about how forgiveness strengthens our love for the Savior?



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

MATTHEW 10:40

As we consider the messages of the most recent general conference, how are we doing as a family at receiving and following the counsel of modern-day Apostles? How is our obedience to their counsel bringing us closer to Jesus Christ?

MATTHEW 11:28–30

You can help your family visualize the Savior's teachings in these verses by having them take turns trying to pull something heavy, first by themselves and then with help. What are some of the burdens we carry? What does it mean to take Christ's yoke upon ourselves? The picture accompanying this outline could help you explain what a yoke is.

MATTHEW 12:10–13; MARK 2:23–28

How can we "do well" on the Sabbath day? (Matthew 12:12). In what ways can the Savior heal us on the Sabbath?

Improving Personal Study

Listen to the Spirit. As you study, pay attention to your thoughts and feelings (see D&C 8:2–3), even if they seem unrelated to what you are reading. Those impressions may be the very things God wants you to know and do.



The Savior said, "Take my yoke upon you" (Matthew 11:29).



MARCH 18–24

Matthew 13; Luke 8; 13

“Who Hath Ears to Hear, Let Him Hear”

As you read Matthew 13 and Luke 8; 13, think about how you will prepare yourself to “hear” and appreciate the Savior’s teachings in these parables. What will you do to apply these teachings in your life?

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

Some of the Savior’s most memorable teachings were in the form of simple stories called parables. These were more than just interesting anecdotes about ordinary objects or events. They contained profound truths about the kingdom of God for those who were spiritually prepared. One of the first parables recorded in the New Testament—the parable of the sower (see Matthew 13:3–23)—invites us to examine our readiness to receive God’s word. “For whosoever receiveth,”

Jesus declared, “to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance” (Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 13:10 [in Matthew 13:12, footnote *a*]). So as we prepare to study the Savior’s parables—or any of His teachings—a good place to start is to examine our hearts and determine whether we are giving the word of God “good ground” in which to grow, blossom, flourish, and produce fruit that will bless us and our families in abundance (Matthew 13:8).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

MATTHEW 13

What is “the kingdom of heaven” that Christ referred to in Matthew 13?

In this chapter, “the kingdom of heaven” refers to Christ’s true Church, which is the kingdom of heaven on earth. For more information, see Bible Dictionary, “Kingdom of heaven or kingdom of God.”

MATTHEW 13:3–23; LUKE 8:4–15

My heart must be prepared to receive the word of God.

Why is it that some hearts are receptive to truth while others seem to resist it? Reading the parable of the sower can provide a good opportunity to think about how you receive truth from the Lord. It might be helpful to first match verses 3–8 of Matthew 13 with the interpretations provided in verses 18–23. What can you do to cultivate “good ground” in yourself? What might be some “thorns” that keep you from truly hearing and following God’s word?

See also Luke 13:34; Mosiah 2:9; 3:19; Alma 12:10–11; 32:28–43; Dallin H. Oaks, “The Parable of the Sower,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2015, 32–35.

MATTHEW 13:24–35, 44–52

Jesus’s parables help me understand the growth and destiny of His Church.

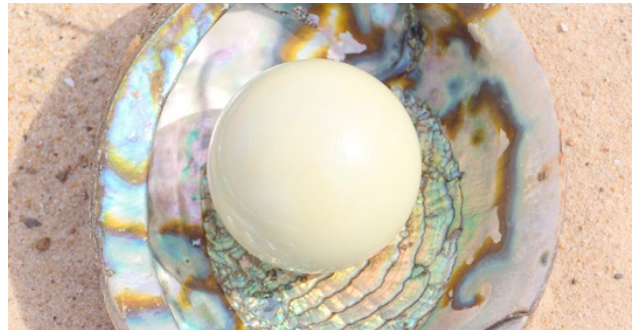
The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that the parables in Matthew 13 describe the growth and destiny of the Church in the latter days (see *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 293–303). As you read these parables, write down what they teach you about the Lord’s Church (you may want to refer to what the Prophet Joseph taught about some of these parables):

- The wheat and the tares (13:24–30, 36–43): *The wicked and the righteous grow together until the end of the world.*

- The mustard seed (13:31–32):
- The leaven (13:33):
- The hidden treasure and the pearl of great price (13:44–46):
- The net (13:47–50):
- The householder (13:52):

After pondering these parables, what do you feel inspired to do to participate more fully in the work of Christ’s latter-day Church? What questions come to mind that can help you apply these parables? For instance, “What am I willing to sacrifice for the Church?”

See also Bible Dictionary, “Leaven,” “Parables.”



The gospel of Jesus Christ is a “pearl of great price” (Matthew 13:46).

MATTHEW 13:24–30, 36–43

The righteous must grow among the wicked until the end of the world.

One way to analyze this parable is to draw a picture of it and label it with the interpretations in Matthew 13:36–43 and Doctrine and Covenants 86:1–7. A tare is a “poisonous weed, which, until it comes into ear, is similar in appearance to wheat” (Bible Dictionary, “Tares”). What truths in this parable inspire you to remain faithful in spite of the wickedness in the world?

LUKE 8:1–3**In what ways did “certain women” minister to the Savior?**

“Female disciples traveled with Jesus and the Twelve, learning from [Jesus] spiritually and serving Him temporally. . . . In addition to receiving Jesus’s

ministering—the glad tidings of His gospel and the blessings of His healing power—these women ministered to Him, imparting their substance and devotion” (*Daughters in My Kingdom* [2011], 4). Women who followed the Savior also bore powerful testimony of Him (see Linda K. Burton, “Certain Women,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2017, 12–15).



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you study the Savior’s teachings with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

MATTHEW 13

As your family members read the Savior’s parables, they might enjoy thinking of their own parables that teach the same truths about the kingdom of heaven (the Church), using objects or situations that are familiar to them.

MATTHEW 13:3–23; LUKE 8:4–15

What can we do as a family to cultivate “good ground” in our hearts and in our home? (Matthew 13:23). If you have younger children in your family, it could be fun to invite family members to act out different ways to prepare our hearts to hear the word of God while other family members guess what they are doing.

MATTHEW 13:13–16

How can you help your family members understand the importance of willingly receiving Christ’s word? For example, you might cover a family member’s ears while you quietly read Matthew 13:13–16. What did that family member understand from the verses? What role do our eyes, ears, and hearts play in receiving the word of God? What are ways that we close our eyes, ears, and hearts to the word of God?

MATTHEW 13:44–46

What do the two men in these parables have in common? Are there additional things we should be doing as individuals and as a family to put the kingdom of God first in our lives?

LUKE 13:11–17

How can we follow the example of the Savior and deliver people from bondage?

Improving Our Teaching

Memorize a scripture. Select a scripture passage that is particularly meaningful to your family, and invite family members to memorize it. Elder Richard G. Scott taught, “A memorized scripture becomes an enduring friend that is not weakened with the passage of time” (“The Power of Scripture,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 6).



Parable of the Sower, by George Soper



Feed Them, by Jorge Cocco

MARCH 25–31

Matthew 14–15; Mark 6–7; John 5–6

“Be Not Afraid”

As you read Matthew 14–15; Mark 6–7; and John 5–6, look for truths that are meaningful to you. You might ask yourself questions such as “How do the accounts in these chapters relate to me?” “What messages do I find for my life?” or “What would I like to share with my family or with others?”

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

What could have inspired Peter to leave the safety of his boat in the middle of the Sea of Galilee during a boisterous storm? What led him to believe that if Jesus could walk on water, he could too? We can't know for certain, but perhaps Peter understood that the Son of God came not just to do wonderful things for the people but to empower people like Peter to do wonderful things too. Jesus's invitation, after all, was “Come, follow me” (Luke 18:22). Peter had accepted this invitation once, and he was willing to accept it again, even if it meant facing his fears and doing

something that seemed impossible. Perhaps the Lord will not ask us to step out of a boat in the middle of a storm or contribute our meager supply of bread when thousands need to eat, but He may ask us to accept directions even when we don't fully understand them. Whatever His invitations to us may be, they may sometimes seem surprising or even frightening. But miracles can happen if we, like Peter, will set aside our fears, our doubts, and our limited understanding and follow Him in faith.



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

JOHN 5:17–47

Jesus Christ honors His Father.

The relationship between Heavenly Father and each of His children is meant to be a sacred one. In these verses, Jesus Christ gave us an inspiring model to follow in our relationship with Heavenly Father. Read John 5:17–47, and mark or note each instance of the word *Father*. How does the Son honor the Father, and how can you follow His example? What do you learn about how the Father feels about the Son? How can strengthening your relationship with Heavenly Father increase your willingness to seek and obey His will?

See also John 17; Jeffrey R. Holland, “The Grandeur of God,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2003, 70–73.

MATTHEW 14:16–21; MARK 6:33–44; JOHN 6:5–14

The Savior can magnify my humble offerings to accomplish His purposes.

Have you ever felt inadequate to meet all the needs you see around you—in your home, in your relationships, or in society? Jesus’s disciples must have felt inadequate when He asked them to feed over five thousand hungry people (see Matthew 14:21) when there were only five loaves of bread and two fish available. As you read about the miracle that happened next, ponder how God might use your humble offerings of service to bless those around you. How might He magnify your efforts as you serve in the Church? Consider this statement from President James E. Faust: “Many nameless people with gifts equal only to five loaves and two small fishes magnify their callings and serve without attention or recognition, feeding literally thousands” (“Five Loaves and Two Fishes,” *Ensign*, May 1994, 5).

MATTHEW 14:22–33; MARK 6:45–52; JOHN 6:15–21

Jesus Christ invites me to set aside my fears and doubts and exercise faith in Him.

Picture in your mind the details of the scene described in Matthew 14:22–33; Mark 6:45–52; and John 6:15–21. Imagine how Peter and the other disciples may have felt. What do you learn about discipleship from the Savior’s words and actions in these verses? What do you learn from the words and actions of Peter? (See also 1 Nephi 3:7.) What is the Lord inviting you to do that might be like stepping out of the boat? What do you find in these verses that gives you courage to exercise your faith in Jesus Christ?

JOHN 6:22–71

As a disciple of Jesus Christ, I must be willing to believe and accept the truth, even when it is hard to do.

The day after Jesus miraculously provided bread for the multitudes in the wilderness, His followers found Him and sought for more food. However, they were disappointed and even offended when He instead offered them a spiritual kind of nourishment—the “bread of life” (John 6:48). Many found this to be a “hard saying” (John 6:60).

Have you ever had an experience when you felt that something the Savior or one of His servants taught was a “hard” or difficult doctrine to accept? Think about such experiences as you read this account, particularly Peter’s words in verses 68–69. What are some “words of eternal life” (John 6:68) that help you stay committed to following the Savior?

See also M. Russell Ballard, “To Whom Shall We Go?” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2016, 90–92.



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

MATTHEW 14:16-21

As you read about the feeding of the five thousand, you could eat some bread and fish and imagine how much it would take to feed five thousand people. How has your family been fed spiritually by Christ? How has He used you to feed others?



Jesus miraculously fed 5,000 people with five loaves and two fishes.

MATTHEW 14:22-33

Your family might enjoy reenacting the story in these verses. Why would the disciples have been scared? Why was Peter able to overcome his fear and leave the boat? How did he show faith even when he began to sink? How are we sometimes like Peter?

JOHN 5:1-16

Invite family members to note instances of the phrase “made whole” in these verses. In what ways can Jesus Christ make people whole? When and how has He made us whole?

JOHN 6:28-58

Give each family member a piece of bread to eat, and discuss the benefits we receive from bread and other healthy foods. Then search these verses together, looking for why Jesus Christ called Himself the “bread of life” (John 6:35).

Improving Personal Study

Seek your own spiritual insights. In your personal and family study, do not limit yourself to the scripture passages addressed in these outlines. The Lord likely has messages for you in these chapters that are not covered here. Prayerfully seek them.



Against the Wind, by Liz Lemon Swindle



The Transfiguration, by Carl Heinrich Bloch

APRIL 1–14

Matthew 16–17; Mark 9; Luke 9

“Thou Art the Christ”

During the next two weeks, ponder Peter’s testimony, found in Matthew 16:15–17, and the testimonies of the prophets and apostles that you will hear during general conference.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

Isn’t it strange that the Pharisees and Sadducees would demand that Jesus show them “a sign from heaven”? Weren’t His many well-known miracles enough? What about His powerful teachings or the multiple ways He had fulfilled ancient prophecies? Their demand was prompted not by a lack of signs but by an unwillingness to “discern the signs” and accept them. (See Matthew 16:1–4.)

Peter, like the Pharisees and Sadducees, witnessed the Savior’s miracles and heard His teachings. But

Peter’s definitive testimony, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,” did not come through his physical senses—his “flesh and blood.” His testimony was revealed to him by our “Father which is in heaven.” *Revelation* is the rock upon which the Savior built His Church then and now—revelation from heaven to His servants. And this is the rock upon which we can build our discipleship—revelation that Jesus is the Christ and that His servants hold “the keys of the kingdom.” When we are built upon this foundation, “the gates of hell shall not prevail against [us].” (Matthew 16:15–19.)



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

MATTHEW 16:13–17; LUKE 9:18–21

A testimony of Jesus Christ comes by revelation.

If Jesus Christ asked people today, “Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am?” their answers would differ from the answers given by people in His time. What modern attitudes toward Jesus have you noticed? How would you respond if Jesus asked you, “Whom say ye that I am?” (See Matthew 16:13–15.)

Ponder your testimony of the Savior and how you received it. What do you learn from Matthew 16:15–17 that could strengthen it? If you would like to learn more about testimony and personal revelation, explore these scriptures: John 15:26; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 2 Nephi 31:18; Alma 5:45–48; and Doctrine and Covenants 8:2–3.

MATTHEW 17:1–9; MARK 9:2–10; LUKE 9:28–36

What happened on the Mount of Transfiguration?

When Jesus took Peter, James, and John to “a high mountain,” He was transfigured (or glorified) before them. Moses and Elias (Elijah) also appeared and bestowed priesthood keys on the Apostles. These keys enabled them to lead Christ’s Church on the earth after His Resurrection (see Bible Dictionary, “Transfiguration, Mount of”). These keys were also restored in our day (see D&C 110).

MATTHEW 16:13–19; 17:1–9

What are the “keys of the kingdom of heaven”?

The “keys of the kingdom of heaven” that the Savior promised to give Peter are priesthood keys (Matthew 16:19). “Priesthood keys are the authority God has given to priesthood leaders to direct, control, and govern the use of His priesthood on earth. The

exercise of priesthood authority is governed by those who hold its keys (see D&C 65:2; 81:2; 124:123). Those who hold priesthood keys have the right to preside over and direct the Church within a jurisdiction” (*Handbook 2: Administering the Church* [2010], 2.1.1).



The “keys of the kingdom of heaven” are priesthood keys.

The keys of the priesthood given to Peter and the other Apostles on the Mount of Transfiguration were restored in our day (see D&C 110:11–16). Those who hold priesthood keys include the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and other General Authorities; presidents of temples, missions, stakes, and districts; and bishops, branch presidents, and quorum presidents.

See also Neil L. Andersen, “Power in the Priesthood,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2013, 92–95; *True to the Faith*, 126–27; “Priesthood Keys: The Restoration of Priesthood Keys” (video, LDS.org).

MATTHEW 17:14–21; MARK 9:14–29

When seeking greater faith, I must first hold on to the faith I already have.

The father mentioned in Matthew 17 and Mark 9 had reasons to doubt that Jesus could heal his son. He had asked Jesus’s disciples to heal his son, and they could not. But when the Savior invited him to exercise faith, he did not focus on his doubts. “Lord, I believe,” he

said, and then, in acknowledgment that his faith was not perfect, added, “Help thou mine unbelief.”

What did the Spirit teach you as you read about this miracle? How has Heavenly Father helped you increase your faith? What can you do to build upon the faith

you already have? Perhaps you could compile a list of scriptures, conference messages, or experiences that have strengthened your faith.

See also Jeffrey R. Holland, “Lord, I Believe,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2013, 93–95.



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

MATTHEW 16:13–19; 17:1–9

To teach children about priesthood keys, you could tell Elder Gary E. Stevenson’s story about getting locked out of his car (see “Where Are the Keys and Authority of the Priesthood?” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2016, 29–32). You could let your children use keys to open the house, the car, or other locks. Consider showing a picture of the President of the Church and testifying that he holds all the priesthood keys, just as Peter did.

MATTHEW 17:20

Prophets with faith in Jesus Christ have moved mountains (see Jacob 4:6; Moses 7:13). The following

testimony from Bishop Richard C. Edgley can help make this verse relevant to your family: “I have never witnessed the removal of an actual mountain. But because of faith, I have seen a mountain of doubt and despair removed and replaced with hope and optimism. Because of faith, I have personally witnessed a mountain of sin replaced with repentance and forgiveness. And because of faith, I have personally witnessed a mountain of pain replaced with peace, hope, and gratitude. Yes, I have seen mountains removed” (“Faith—the Choice Is Yours,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 33). What are some mountains in our lives that need to be moved? How can we show faith in God’s power to help us remove these mountains?

LUKE 9:61–62

What does it mean to look back after putting our hand to the plow? Why would this attitude make us not fit for the kingdom of God?

Improving Our Teaching

Gather together often. President Henry B. Eyring taught: “Never miss a chance to gather children together to learn of the doctrine of Jesus Christ. Such moments are so rare in comparison with the efforts of the enemy” (“The Power of Teaching Doctrine,” *Ensign*, May 1999, 74).



Master, I Have Brought unto Thee My Son, by Walter Rane



APRIL 15–21

Easter

“O Grave, Where Is Thy Victory?”

As you read the testimonies of the Savior’s Resurrection in this outline, make note of the feelings and impressions that come to you from the Holy Ghost.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

During the last week of the Savior’s life, many Jews around Him were participating in the traditions of Passover. They prepared meals, sang songs, and gathered together to remember the deliverance of the house of Israel from slavery to the Egyptians. Families listened to the story of the destroying angel passing over the homes of their ancestors who had marked their doors with lamb’s blood. Amid all these celebrations so rich with the symbolism of deliverance,

relatively few were aware that Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, was about to deliver them from the slavery of sin and death—through His suffering, His death, and His Resurrection. Even so, there were those who recognized Jesus as their promised Messiah, their eternal Deliverer. From that day onward, disciples of Jesus Christ have borne witness to all the world “that Christ died for our sins . . . ; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day” (1 Corinthians 15:3–4).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

MATTHEW 21–28

Jesus Christ has power to help me overcome sin, death, trials, and weaknesses.

One way to focus on the blessings of the Savior's Atonement this week is to spend time each day reading about the last week of Jesus's life (a possible reading schedule follows). What do you find in these chapters that helps you feel the Savior's love? What do you learn about His power to deliver you from sin and death? What do you learn about enduring trials and overcoming weaknesses? How are you exercising faith in His power of deliverance?

- Sunday: Triumphal entry into Jerusalem (Matthew 21:6–11)
- Monday: Cleansing the temple (Matthew 21:12–16)
- Tuesday: Teaching in Jerusalem (Matthew 21–23)
- Wednesday: Continued teaching (Matthew 24–25)
- Thursday: The Passover and Christ's suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26)
- Friday: Trial, Crucifixion, and burial (Matthew 27:1–61)
- Saturday: Christ's body lies in the tomb (Matthew 27:62–66) while His spirit ministers in the spirit world (D&C 138)
- Sunday: The appearance of the resurrected Christ (Matthew 28:1–10)



The Last Supper, by Carl Heinrich Bloch

MATTHEW 28:1–10; LUKE 24:13–35; JOHN 20:19–29; 1 CORINTHIANS 15:1–8, 55

Many witnesses testify of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Imagine what it would have been like for the disciples to watch Jesus being mocked, mistreated, and crucified. They had been witnesses of His power, felt the truth of His teachings, and had faith that He was the Son of God. Witnessing His death may have been a trial of faith for some, but soon they became witnesses of the great miracle of His Resurrection.

What can you learn from the accounts of those who witnessed the Resurrected Savior? Mark or note each person's experience in Matthew 28:1–10; Luke 24:13–35; John 20:19–29; and 1 Corinthians 15:1–8, 55. (Note that other witnesses of the resurrected Christ can be found in 3 Nephi 11; Mormon 1:15; Ether 12:38–39; Doctrine and Covenants 76:19–24; 110:1–10; and Joseph Smith—History 1:15–17.) In these accounts, what strengthens your faith in the literal Resurrection of the Lord? After the Savior's Resurrection, others were resurrected and appeared to many (see Matthew 27:52–53; 3 Nephi 23:9). Why do you feel it is important that this was recorded in both the Bible and the Book of Mormon?

See also “Jesus Is Resurrected,” “The Risen Lord Appears to the Apostles,” “Blessed Are They That Have Not Seen, and Yet Have Believed” (videos, LDS.org).

1 PETER 1:3–11

Jesus Christ gives me hope and joy.

Elder Paul V. Johnson's daughter Alisa, who suffered from terminal cancer and endured many surgeries, exemplified the “lively hope” Peter described in 1 Peter 1:3–11. Elder Johnson shared a letter Alisa wrote at Easter time, shortly before she passed away: “Easter is a reminder of all that I hope for myself. That someday I will be healed and someday I will be whole. Someday I won't have any metal or plastic inside of me.

Someday my heart will be free of fear and my mind free of anxieties. . . . I am so glad I truly believe in a beautiful afterlife" ("And There Shall Be No More Death," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2016, 121).

What words or phrases in 1 Peter 1:3–11 give you hope because of Jesus Christ? When have you felt that

hope? How can you share the hope you have through Jesus Christ with those you love?

See also Alma 27:28; 36:1–24; 3 Nephi 9:11–17; Moroni 7:40–41.



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

Mormon.org

The "Holy Week" section of mormon.org/easter contains a time line and description of what happened on each day of the last week of the Savior's life. Each day of the week your family could review these descriptions to see what the Savior did that day, or you could read about His last week in the scriptures as a family (see a suggested list in the "Ideas for Personal Scripture Study" section).

Hymns and Children's Songbook

Consider singing songs together about the Savior's Atonement and Resurrection during this week, including some that are less familiar to you (see the topics index of *Hymns* or *Children's Songbook*, under topics such as "Atonement," "Easter," or "Resurrection"). To help family members learn the songs, you could show pictures that go with the words.

"The Living Christ: The Testimony of the Apostles"

As a family, read "The Living Christ: The Testimony of the Apostles" (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, Apr. 2000, 2–3; see also LDS.org), and invite each family member to pick an Easter message from this testimony to share with others. For example, you might create posters to display on social media, on your front door, or in your window.

Improving Personal Study

Set manageable goals. Spending even a few minutes a day studying the scriptures can bless your life. Commit to studying each day, find a way to remind yourself of your commitment, and do your best to follow through.



Gethsemane, by Adam Abram



The Good Samaritan, by Dan Burr

APRIL 22-28

Matthew 18; Luke 10

“What Shall I Do to Inherit Eternal Life?”

As you prayerfully read and ponder Matthew 18 and Luke 10, pay attention to the quiet promptings of the Holy Ghost. He will tell you how these teachings and stories apply to you. Record the impressions you receive.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

When you ask the Lord a question, you might receive an answer you did not expect. Who is my neighbor? Anyone who needs your help and love. Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? A child. Is it enough to forgive an offender seven times? No, you should forgive seventy times seven. (See Luke

10:29-37; Matthew 18:4, 21-22.) If you are seeking the Lord's will, not to “justify [yourself]” (Luke 10:29), but because you really want to learn from Him, the Lord will teach you how to live in a way that leads to eternal life with Him.



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

MATTHEW 18:21–35

I must forgive others if I am to receive forgiveness from the Lord.

Peter's suggestion that he could forgive someone seven times might seem very generous, but Jesus taught a higher law. His response, "I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven," was teaching not about numbers but rather about a Christlike attitude of forgiveness. As you read the parable of the unmerciful servant, ponder the times when you have felt God's mercy and compassion. Is there someone who needs to feel mercy and compassion from you?

Elder David E. Sorensen of the Seventy taught: "I would like to make it clear that forgiveness of sins should not be confused with tolerating evil. . . . Although we must forgive a neighbor who injures us, we should still work constructively to prevent that injury from being repeated" ("Forgiveness Will Change Bitterness to Love," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2003, 12).

See also "Forgiveness," Gospel Topics, [topics.lds.org](https://www.lds.org/topics/forgiveness).

LUKE 10:1–20

Who are the Seventy?

Following a pattern established in Old Testament times (see Exodus 24:1; Numbers 11:16), Jesus Christ "appointed other seventy," in addition to His Twelve Apostles, to witness of Him, preach His gospel, and assist Him in His work. This pattern continues in the restored Church. Seventies are called to assist the Twelve in their mission as special witnesses of Jesus Christ to all the world. Seventies are organized into quorums. Members of the first two quorums are set apart as General Authority Seventies, while members of the other quorums are set apart as Area Seventies. (See also D&C 107:25–26, 33–34, 97.)

LUKE 10:25–37

To obtain eternal life, I must love God and love my neighbor as myself.

It is helpful to remember that the parable of the good Samaritan was Jesus's way of answering a question: "Who is my neighbour?" As you read this parable, keep that question in mind. What answers do you find?

By Jesus's day, the animosity between the Jews and Samaritans had lasted for centuries. The Samaritans were descendants of Jews living in Samaria who had intermarried with Gentiles. The Jews felt that the Samaritans had become corrupted by their association with Gentiles and had apostatized. Jews would travel miles out of their way to avoid passing through Samaria. (See also Luke 9:52–54; 17:11–18; John 4:9; 8:48.)

Why do you think the Savior chose a Samaritan, someone who was hated by the Jews, as an example of compassion and loving one's neighbor? What does this parable inspire you to do to show more mercy to others?

See also Mosiah 2:17; "Parable of the Good Samaritan" (video, LDS.org); "Lord, I Would Follow Thee," *Hymns*, no. 220.

LUKE 10:38–42

We choose "that good part" by making choices that lead to eternal life.

Sister Bonnie D. Parkin, former Relief Society General President, taught: "Mary and Martha are you and me. . . . These two loved the Lord and wanted to show that love. On this occasion, it seems to me that Mary expressed her love by hearing His word, while Martha expressed hers by serving Him. . . . Jesus did not dismiss Martha's concern, but instead redirected her focus by saying choose 'that good part.' And what is that? . . . The one thing that is needful is to choose

eternal life [see 2 Nephi 2:28]. We choose daily” (“Choosing Charity: That Good Part,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2003, 104). How would you summarize the Lord’s

counsel to Martha in your own words? Examine your schedule—is there something “needful” that needs more of your attention?



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

MATTHEW 18; LUKE 10

What hymns can your family sing that relate to the truths taught in these chapters? “Lord, I Would Follow Thee” and “Have I Done Any Good?” are two examples (*Hymns*, nos. 220, 223), but there are many others. How do the words in these hymns help your family better understand the Savior’s teachings?

MATTHEW 18:1–11

Why would Jesus want us to become like a little child? What are some characteristics of children that would make us more Christlike if we incorporated them into our lives? (see Mosiah 3:19).



Jesus wants His disciples to become like little children.

LUKE 10:25–37

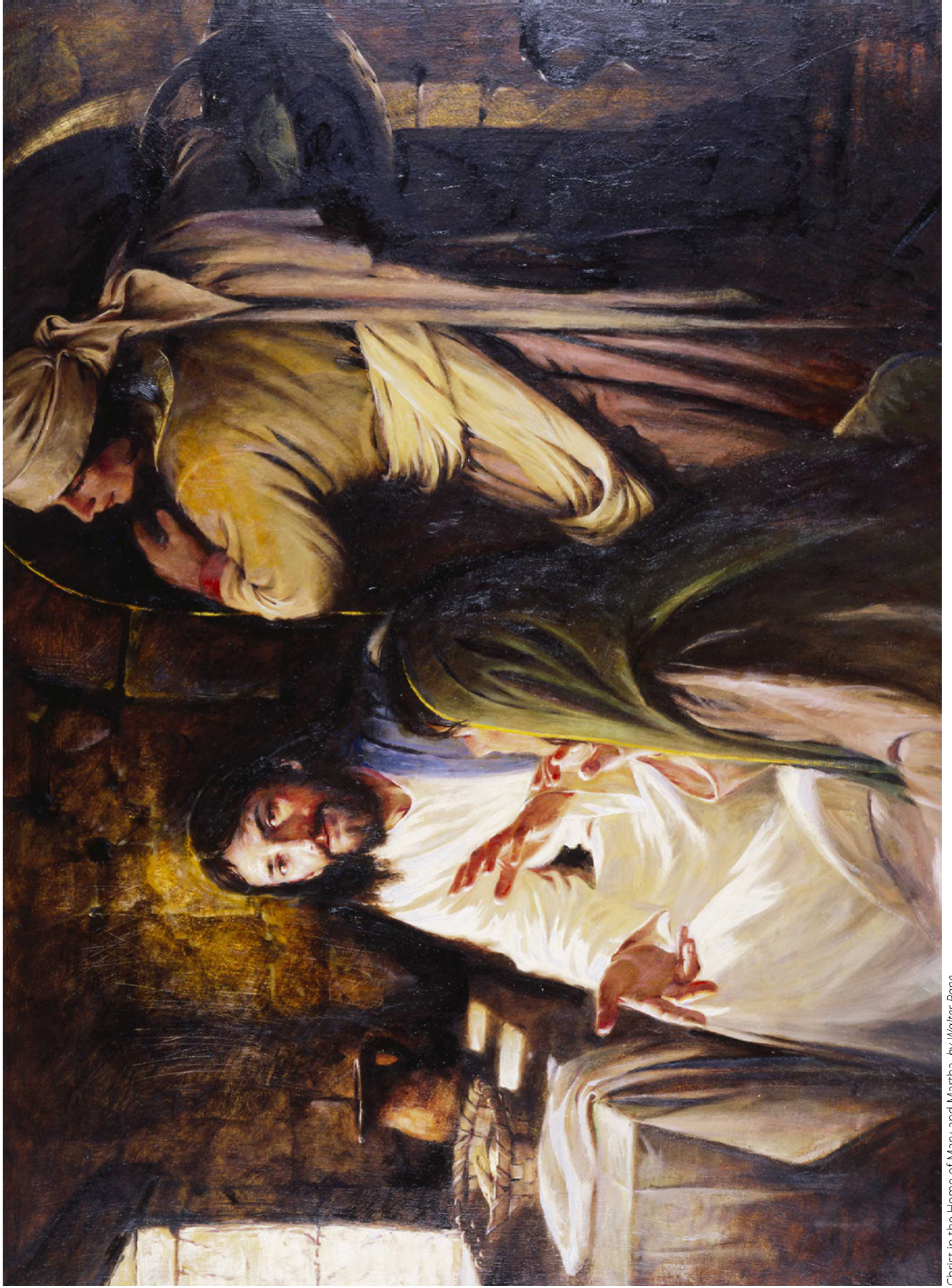
What would make the parable of the good Samaritan come alive for your family? Would they enjoy wearing costumes and acting it out? Be sure to help family members see how they can be like the good Samaritan. Is there someone in need at school or church whom we might be overlooking? What can we do for this person?

LUKE 10:40–42

Is it ever difficult to fit spiritual things into your family schedule? The story of Mary and Martha could inspire a family council or family home evening about how to do this. As a family, you could make a list of ways to choose “that good part” (see Luke 10:42).

Improving Our Teaching

Nurture a loving atmosphere. The way family members feel about and treat each other can profoundly influence the spirit of your home. Help all family members do their part to establish a loving, respectful home so that everyone will feel safe sharing experiences, questions, and testimonies. (See *Teaching in the Savior’s Way*, 15.)



Christ in the Home of Mary and Martha, by Walter Rane



He That Is without Sin, by Liz Lemon Swindle

APRIL 29–MAY 5

John 7–10

“I Am the Good Shepherd”

As you read John 7–10, you may receive impressions from the Holy Ghost about the doctrinal principles in these chapters. Recording your impressions can help you make a plan to act on them.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

Although Jesus Christ came to bring “peace [and] good will toward men” (Luke 2:14), there was “a division among the people because of him” (John 7:43). People who witnessed the same events came to very different conclusions about who Jesus was. Some concluded, “He is a good man,” while others said, “He deceiveth the people” (John 7:12). When He healed a blind man on the Sabbath, some insisted, “This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day,” while

others asked, “How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?” (John 9:16). Yet despite all the confusion, those who searched for truth recognized the power in His words, for “never man spake like this man” (John 7:46). When the Jews asked Jesus to “tell us plainly” whether he was the Christ, He revealed a principle that can help us distinguish truth from error: “My sheep hear my voice,” He said, “and I know them, and they follow me” (John 10:27).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

JOHN 7:14–17

As I live the truths taught by Jesus Christ, I will come to know they are true.

The Jews marveled that Jesus knew so much since He was not learned (see verse 15)—at least, not in ways they were familiar with. In Jesus’s response, He taught a different way of knowing truth that is available to everyone, regardless of education or background. According to John 7:14–17, how can you come to know that the doctrine Jesus taught is true? How has this process helped you develop your testimony of the gospel?

JOHN 8:2–11

The Savior’s mercy is available to all.

When speaking about the Savior’s interaction with the woman taken in adultery, Elder Dale G. Renlund said: “Surely, the Savior did not condone adultery. But He also did not condemn the woman. He encouraged her to reform her life. She was motivated to change because of His compassion and mercy. The Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible attests to her resultant discipleship: ‘And the woman glorified God from that hour, and believed on his name’ [see John 8:11, footnote c]” (“Our Good Shepherd,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2017, 30).

When have you felt like the woman, receiving mercy instead of condemnation from the Savior? When have you been like the scribes and Pharisees, accusing or judging others even when you are not without sin? (see John 8:7). What else can you learn from the way the Savior interacted with the scribes and Pharisees and the woman caught in adultery? What do you learn about the Savior’s forgiveness as you read these verses?

JOHN 8:58–59

Why were the Jews offended when Jesus said, “Before Abraham was, I am”?

“I am” is the term Jehovah used to identify Himself to Moses, as recorded in Exodus 3:14. So when Jesus said, “I am,” He identified Himself as Jehovah, the God of the Old Testament. The Jews considered this blasphemy, and under the law of Moses, the penalty was death by stoning.

JOHN 9

Through our challenges, God can manifest Himself in our lives.

Because negative consequences often follow sin, we may view some of our misfortunes as the results of wrongdoing. However, when the Savior’s disciples assumed that a man was born blind because he or his parents had sinned, Jesus corrected them. How do the Savior’s words in John 9:3 change your perspective about your challenges and the challenges of others? As you read John 9, ponder how the “works of God [were] made manifest” (John 9:3). How have they been made manifest as you have faced challenges?

It is also interesting to note that the disciples’ question in John 9:2 revealed that they believed in the premortal existence, a doctrine that was lost to Christianity during the Great Apostasy but restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith (see D&C 93:29; Moses 4:1–4; Abraham 3:22–26).

JOHN 10:16

Who are the “other sheep” the Savior referred to in John 10:16?

When the Savior visited the Americas after His Resurrection, He explained who His other sheep are (see 3 Nephi 15:21–16:5).



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

JOHN 7:24

How can you help your family understand Jesus's teaching in John 7:24? One way is to go outside and get one family member dirty. What might strangers think of this family member by looking at his or her outward appearance? List some of the good qualities this family member has that can't be seen by just looking at him or her (see also 1 Samuel 16:7).

JOHN 8:31–36

How do we sometimes become a servant to sin? What truths taught by Jesus can make us free?



Jesus Healing the Blind, by Carl Heinrich Bloch

JOHN 9

How could you help your family visualize the account of Jesus healing the blind man in John 9? You could act out the story together or show the video "Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind" (LDS.org). Pause the story occasionally so that family members can read the corresponding verses from John 9. Invite them to note any lessons they learn from the account, such as what it means to become converted to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

JOHN 10:1–18, 27–29

To involve family members in learning from the parable of the Good Shepherd, ask each of them to draw a picture of one of the following: a thief, a door, a shepherd, a hireling (a hired worker), a wolf, and a sheep. Invite them to read John 10:1–18, 27–29, and then discuss as a family what the Savior taught about the things they drew.

Improving Personal Study

Look for inspiring words and phrases. As you read, the Spirit may bring certain words or phrases to your attention that inspire and motivate you or seem to be written just for you. Consider making note of any words or phrases that inspire you in John 7–10.



Lost No More, by Greg K. Olsen



The Prodigal Son, by Liz Lemon Swindle

MAY 6–12

Luke 12–17; John 11

“Rejoice with Me; for I Have Found My Sheep Which Was Lost”

As you read Luke 12–17 and John 11, prayerfully seek what Heavenly Father wants you to know and do. Your study of these chapters can open your heart to messages meant just for you.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

In most situations, 99 out of 100 would be considered excellent—but not when such numbers stand for beloved children of God (see D&C 18:10). In that case, even one soul merits a thorough, desperate search “until [we] find it” (Luke 15:4), as the Savior taught in the parable of the lost sheep. Then the rejoicing can begin, for “joy shall be in heaven over one sinner

that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance” (Luke 15:7). If that seems unfair, it’s helpful to remember that, in truth, there are none who “need no repentance.” We all need rescuing. And we all can participate in the rescue, rejoicing together over every soul who is saved (see D&C 18:15–16).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

LUKE 12; 14–16

I should set my heart on eternally important things rather than on the things of this world.

Why would God say “Thou fool” to a hardworking, successful man who had built great barns and filled them with the fruits of his labors? (see Luke 12:16–21). In these chapters in Luke, the Savior teaches several parables that can help us lift our sights beyond the worldly to the eternal. Some of these parables are listed here. How would you summarize the message of each? What do you think the Lord is telling you?

The foolish rich man (Luke 12:13–21)

The great supper (Luke 14:12–24)

The prodigal son (Luke 15:11–32)

The unjust steward (Luke 16:1–12)

The rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19–31)

See also Matthew 6:19–34; 2 Nephi 9:30; Doctrine and Covenants 25:10.

LUKE 15

Heavenly Father rejoices when those who are lost are found.

Have you ever wondered how Heavenly Father feels about those who have sinned or are otherwise “lost”? The Pharisees and scribes criticized Jesus for even associating with such people. In response, Jesus told three parables, found in Luke 15—the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son.

As you read these parables, consider making a list of similarities and differences between them. For example, you could look for what was lost and why, how it was found, and how people reacted when it was found. What messages did Jesus have for those who are “lost”—including those who don’t think they are

lost? What messages did He have for people who seek those who are lost?

Of course, it is always better not to become lost.

Regarding Luke 15:7, Elder James E. Talmage wrote,

“There is no justification for the inference that a repentant sinner is to be given precedence over a righteous soul who had resisted sin” (*Jesus the Christ* [1916], 461). However, all of us sin and need rescuing, and the comforting message of the Savior’s parables is that each of us can repent and return to righteousness, for God desires that not one soul should perish.

See also Doctrine and Covenants 18:10–16; Jeffrey R. Holland, “The Other Prodigal,” *Ensign*, May 2002, 62–64.



The Lost Piece of Silver, by James Tissot

LUKE 16:1–12

What was Christ teaching in the parable of the unjust steward?

Elder James E. Talmage explained one lesson we can learn from the parable: “Be diligent; for the day in which you can use your earthly riches will soon pass. Take a lesson from even the dishonest and the evil; if they are so prudent as to provide for the only future they think of, how much more should you, who believe in an eternal future, provide therefor! If you have not learned wisdom and prudence in the use of ‘unrighteous mammon,’ how can you be trusted with the more enduring riches?” (*Jesus the Christ*, 464).

LUKE 17:11–19**Gratitude for my blessings will bring me closer to God.**

If you had been one of the ten lepers, do you think you would have returned to thank the Savior? What additional blessings did the thankful leper receive because he gave thanks? How does expressing gratitude affect you spiritually? It might benefit you to start writing what you are grateful for in a journal, as President Henry B. Eyring described in his message “O Remember, Remember” (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2007, 66–69).

JOHN 11:1–46**Jesus Christ is the Resurrection and the Life.**

The miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead was a powerful and irrefutable testimony that Jesus was truly the Son of God and the promised Messiah. What words, phrases, or details in John 11:1–46 strengthen your faith that Jesus Christ is “the resurrection, and the life”? How does this knowledge influence your life and your choices?



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

LUKE 15:1–10

Do your family members understand what it feels like to lose something—or to be lost? Talking about their experiences could start a discussion about the parables of the lost sheep and lost coin. Or you could play a game in which someone hides and other family members try to find him or her. How does this activity help us understand these parables?

LUKE 15:11–32

How can we be like the father in this story when we have loved ones who are lost? What can we learn from

the older son's experience that can help us be more Christlike? In what ways is the father in this parable like our Heavenly Father?

LUKE 17:11–19

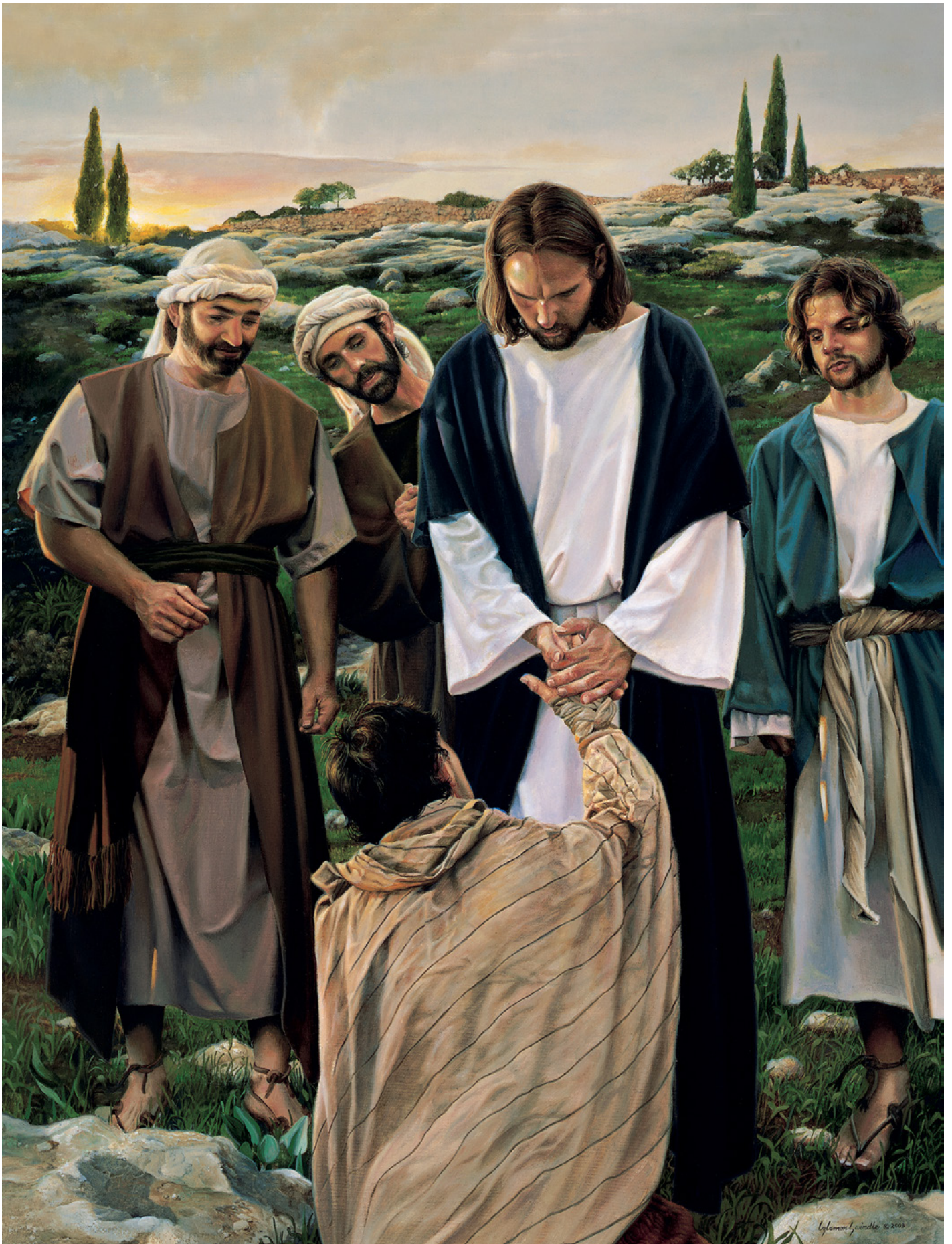
To help family members apply the account of the ten lepers, you could invite them to write secret notes of gratitude and put them throughout the house. You could also sing together “Count Your Blessings,” *Hymns*, no. 241, and discuss the blessings your family has received.

JOHN 11:1–46

Family members could watch the video “Lazarus Is Raised from the Dead” (LDS.org) and share their testimonies of Jesus Christ.

Improving Our Teaching

Use stories and examples to teach gospel principles. The Savior often taught about gospel principles by using stories and parables. Think of examples and stories from your own life that can make a gospel principle come alive for your family (see *Teaching in the Savior's Way*, 22).



Where Are the Nine, by Liz Lemon Swindle



MAY 13–19

Matthew 19–20; Mark 10; Luke 18

“What Lack I Yet?”

Read and ponder Matthew 19–20; Mark 10; and Luke 18, paying attention to the promptings you receive. Make note of those promptings, and determine how you will act on them.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

If you had the opportunity to ask the Savior a question, what would it be? When a certain rich young man met the Savior for the first time, he asked, “What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?” (Matthew 19:16). The Savior’s response showed both appreciation for the good things the young man had already done and loving encouragement to do more. When we ponder the possibility of eternal life, we may similarly wonder if

there’s more we should be doing. When we ask, in our own way, “What lack I yet?” (Matthew 19:20), the Lord can give us answers that are just as personal as His response to the rich young man. Whatever the Lord asks us to do, acting on His answer will always require that we trust Him more than our own righteousness (see Luke 18:9–14) and that we “receive the kingdom of God as a little child” (Luke 18:17; see also 3 Nephi 9:22).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

MATTHEW 19:1–9; MARK 10:1–12

Marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God.

This interchange between the Savior and the Pharisees is one of the few recorded instances in which the Savior taught specifically about marriage. After reading Matthew 19:1–9 and Mark 10:1–12, make a list of several statements that you feel summarize the Lord's views on marriage. Then study "Marriage" in Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org, and add more statements to your list as you discover them. How does your knowledge of the Father's plan of salvation help you understand why marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God?



Eternal marriage is part of God's plan.

You may know people who disagree with or oppose the Lord's standards regarding marriage. For a helpful depiction of how to have a respectful conversation with them, see the video "Everyday Example: When Beliefs Are Questioned" (LDS.org).

MATTHEW 19:3–9; MARK 10:2–12

Did Jesus teach that divorce is never acceptable or that divorced people should not remarry?

In an address on divorce, Elder Dallin H. Oaks taught that Heavenly Father intends for the marriage

relationship to be eternal. However, God also understands that "because of the hardness of [our] hearts" (Matthew 19:8), including the poor choices and selfishness of one or both spouses, divorce is sometimes necessary.

Elder Oaks explained that the Lord "permits divorced persons to marry again without the stain of immorality specified in the higher law. Unless a divorced member has committed serious transgressions, he or she can become eligible for a temple recommend under the same worthiness standards that apply to other members" ("Divorce," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2007, 70).

See also "Divorce," Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org.

MATTHEW 19:16–22; MARK 10:17–22; LUKE 18:18–23

If I ask the Lord, He will teach me what I need to do to inherit eternal life.

The account of the rich young man can give pause even to the faithful, lifelong disciple. As you read Mark 10:17–22, what evidence do you find of the young man's faithfulness and sincerity?

Like the rich young man, we are all imperfect and incomplete, so as disciples we must ask, "What lack I yet?"—and we should ask it throughout our lives. Notice that the answer is given out of love from the One who beholds us for who we truly are (see Mark 10:21). What can you do to prepare to ask the Lord what you lack—and to accept His answer?

See also Larry R. Lawrence, "What Lack I Yet?" *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2015, 33–35; S. Mark Palmer, "Then Jesus Beholding Him Loved Him," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2017, 114–16.

MATTHEW 20:1–16**Everyone can receive the blessing of eternal life, no matter when they accept the gospel.**

Can you relate to the experience of any of the laborers in the vineyard? What lessons do you find for yourself

in this passage? Elder Jeffrey R. Holland's message "The Laborers in the Vineyard" (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2012, 31–33) might help you see new ways to apply this parable. What additional promptings does the Spirit give to you?



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

MATTHEW 19:1–9; MARK 10:1–12

Would your family benefit from discussing God's teachings about marriage and family? If so, you could read "The Family: A Proclamation to the World" (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 129). How do the teachings in the proclamation help clear up confusion and falsehoods in the world's messages regarding marriage and families?

MARK 10:23–27

What is the difference between *having* riches and *trusting in* riches? (see Mark 10:23–24). As you read verse 27, you may want to point out the Joseph Smith Translation: "With men *that trust in riches*, it is impossible; but not *impossible with men who trust in God and leave all for my sake*, for with *such* all these things are possible" (in Mark 10:27, footnote *a*).

MATTHEW 20:1–16

To illustrate the principles in Matthew 20:1–16, you might set up a simple competition, such as a short race, and promise that the winner will get a prize. After everyone has completed the competition, award everyone the same prize, starting with the person who finished last and ending with the person who finished first. What does this teach us about who receives the blessings of eternal life in Heavenly Father's plan?

MATTHEW 20:25–27; MARK 10:42–45

What is the meaning of the phrase "whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant"? (Matthew 20:27). How did Jesus Christ exemplify this principle? How can we follow His example in our family, our ward or branch, and our neighborhood?

LUKE 18:1–14

What do we learn about prayer from the two parables in these verses?

Improving Personal Study

Find a time that works for you. It is often easiest to learn when you can study the scriptures without being interrupted. Find a time that works for you, and do your best to consistently study at that time each day.



Christ and the Rich Young Ruler, by Heinrich Hofmann



Zacchaeus in the Sycamore Tree, by James Tissot

MAY 20–26

Matthew 21–23; Mark 11; Luke 19–20; John 12

“Behold, Thy King Cometh”

Before reading the ideas in this outline, read Matthew 21–23; Mark 11; Luke 19–20; and John 12. Record impressions that you could share with your family or in your Church classes.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

The Savior was hungry after traveling from Bethany to Jerusalem, and a fig tree in the distance looked like a source of food. But as Jesus approached the tree, he found that it bore no fruit (see Matthew 21:17–20; Mark 11:12–14, 20). In a way, the fig tree was like the hypocritical religious leaders in Jerusalem: their empty teachings and outward demonstrations of holiness gave no spiritual nourishment. The Pharisees and scribes appeared to keep many commandments yet missed the two greatest commandments: to love

God and to love thy neighbor as thyself (see Matthew 22:34–40; 23:23).

In contrast, many people had begun to recognize good fruit in Jesus’s teachings. When He arrived at Jerusalem, they welcomed Him with branches cut from trees to pave His path, rejoicing that at long last, as ancient prophecy said, “Thy King cometh” (Zechariah 9:9). As you read this week, think about the fruits of the Savior’s teachings and atoning sacrifice in your life and how you can bring “forth much fruit” (John 12:24).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

MATTHEW 23; LUKE 19:1–10; 20:45–47

The Lord judges not by the outward appearance but by the desires of the heart.

In Jesus's day, many people assumed that the publicans, or tax collectors, were dishonest and stole from the people. So because Zacchaeus, the chief publican, was wealthy, he may have been even more suspect. But Jesus looked on Zacchaeus's heart. What does Luke 19:1–10 reveal about Zacchaeus's heart? You might make note of the words in these verses that describe what Zacchaeus did to show his devotion to the Savior. What are the desires of your heart? What are you doing to seek the Savior, as Zacchaeus did?

The Savior's interaction with the scribes and Pharisees forms an interesting contrast to his interaction with Zacchaeus. As President Dieter F. Uchtdorf explained, "[Jesus] rose up in righteous anger against hypocrites like the scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees—those who tried to appear righteous in order to win the praise, influence, and wealth of the world, all the while oppressing the people they should have been blessing" ("On Being Genuine," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2015, 81).

In Matthew 23, the Savior used several metaphors to describe hypocrisy. Consider marking or listing these metaphors and noting what they teach about hypocrisy. What are you inspired to do differently because of the Savior's teachings?

See also Doctrine and Covenants 88:62–63; 137:9; Bible Dictionary, "Hypocrite."

**MATTHEW 21:1–11; MARK 11:1–11;
LUKE 19:29–44; JOHN 12:12–16**

Jesus Christ is my King.

The accounts in Matthew 21:1–11; Mark 11:1–11; Luke 19:29–44; and John 12:12–16 describe the beginning of the last week of the Savior's life, including

His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Those who recognized Him as their King showed their devotion by anointing Him (see John 12:1–8), putting clothes and palm branches along His path into Jerusalem, and shouting praises. Consider how the following resources can deepen your understanding of the events that began the last week of the Savior's life.

- An ancient example of anointing a king: 2 Kings 9:1–13
- An ancient prophecy of the triumphal entry: Zechariah 9:9
- The meaning of the word *hosanna*: Bible Dictionary, "Hosanna"
- Prophecies about how the Savior will come again: Revelation 7:9–10; 19:11–16

How can you receive the Savior as your Lord and King?

See also "The Lord's Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem" (video, LDS.org).

MATTHEW 22:34–40

The two great commandments are to love God and love others as myself.

If you ever feel overwhelmed as you strive to follow Jesus Christ, the Savior's words to the lawyer in Matthew 22 can help you simplify and focus your discipleship. Here's one way to do this: Make a list of several of the Lord's commandments. How does each item on your list connect to the two great commandments? How would focusing on the two great commandments help you keep the others?

MATTHEW 23:5

What are phylacteries?

Phylacteries were leather boxes containing strips of parchment with scripture passages written on them. Jews attached these small boxes to leather bands and

wore them around their foreheads or arms as a way to remember the commandments (see Deuteronomy 6:6–8). Out of pride, the Pharisees wore unusually

large phylacteries so that everyone would see how much they loved the word of God.



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

JOHN 12:1–8

How did Mary show her love for the Savior? How do we show our love for Him?



Washing Jesus's Feet, by Brian Call

JOHN 12:42–43

How can we show respect to others as they express or defend their religious beliefs? What social consequences sometimes discourage us from expressing or

defending our belief in Christ? For examples of people who would not give in to social pressure, see Daniel 1:3–20; 3; 6; John 7:45–53; 9:1–38; and Mosiah 17:1–4.

MATTHEW 21:12–17

How do we show our reverence and respect for the temple? What can we “cast out” of our lives that keeps us from experiencing the temple as a “house of prayer” (Matthew 21:12–13) and a place of spiritual healing? Consider singing “I Love to See the Temple,” *Children’s Songbook*, 95.

MATTHEW 21:28–32

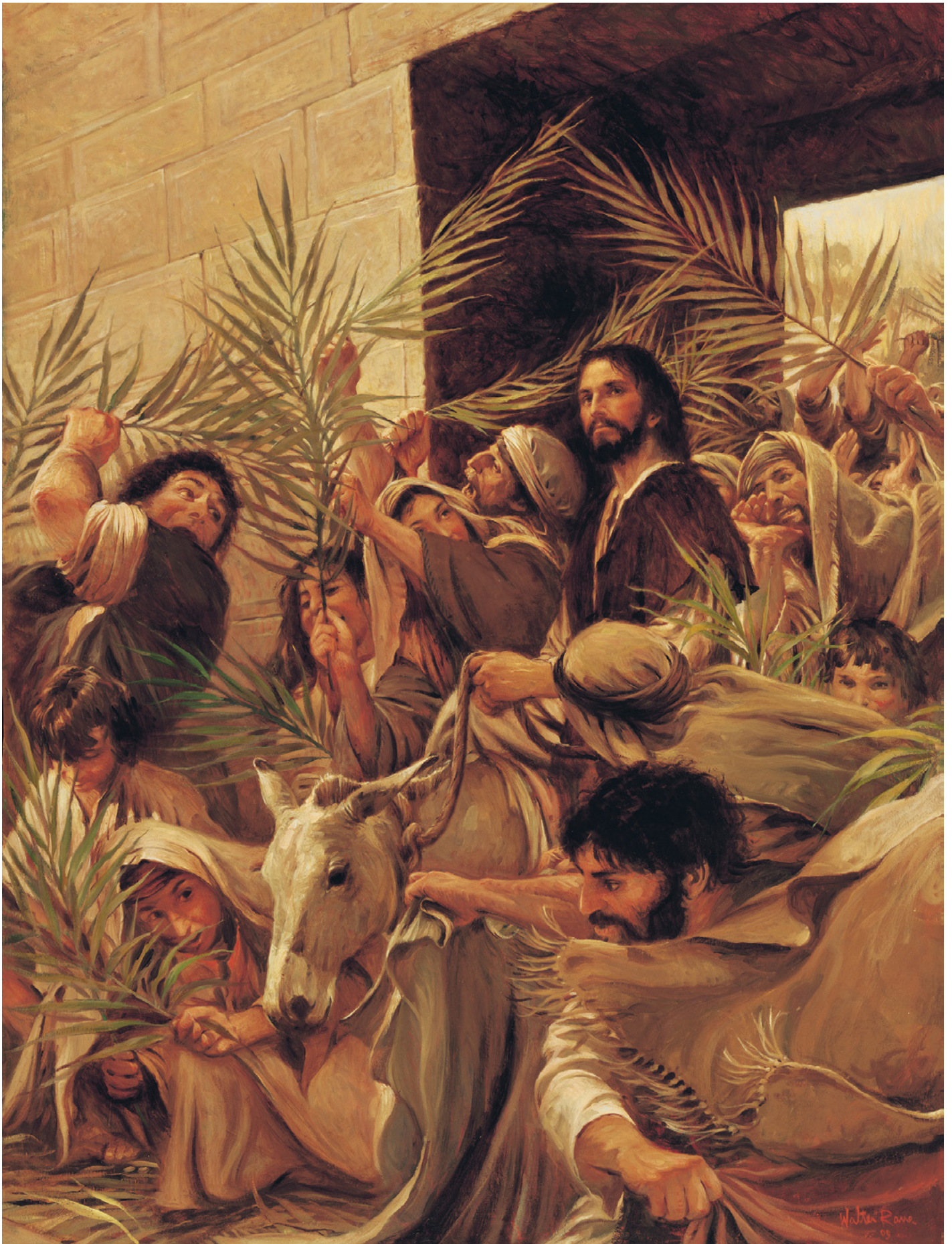
What lessons from the parable of the man with two sons might help your family? For instance, you could use the story to discuss the importance of sincere obedience and repentance. Perhaps your family could write a script to dramatize the parable and take turns acting out different roles.

MATTHEW 22:15–22

What are some of the “things that are God’s” (verse 21) that we should give Him?

Improving Our Teaching

Use art to engage family members. “The *Gospel Art Book* and the LDS Media Library on LDS.org contain many images and videos that can help [your family] visualize concepts or events” (*Teaching in the Savior’s Way*, 22). For example, the painting that accompanies this outline could help bring to life the story of Christ’s entry into Jerusalem.



Triumphal Entry, by Walter Rane



The Second Coming, by Harry Anderson

MAY 27–JUNE 2

Joseph Smith—Matthew 1; Matthew 25; Mark 12–13; Luke 21

“The Son of Man Shall Come”

As you read Joseph Smith—Matthew 1; Matthew 25; Mark 12–13; and Luke 21, you might ask, “What messages do these chapters have for me? for my family? for my calling?”

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

Jesus’s disciples must have found His prophecy startling: the mighty temple of Jerusalem, the spiritual and cultural center of the Jewish people, would be destroyed so utterly that “there [would] not be left . . . one stone upon another.” Naturally the disciples wanted to know more. “When shall these things be?” they asked. “And what is the sign of thy coming?” (Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:2–4). The Savior’s answers revealed that the great destruction coming to Jerusalem—a prophecy fulfilled in AD 70—would be relatively small compared to the signs of His coming in

the last days. Things that seem even more stable than the temple in Jerusalem will prove to be temporary—the sun, the moon, the stars, the nations, and the sea. Even “the powers of heaven shall be shaken” (Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:33). If we are spiritually aware, this commotion can teach us to put our trust in something truly permanent. As Jesus promised, “Heaven and earth shall pass away; yet my words shall not pass away. . . . And whoso treasureth up my word, shall not be deceived” (Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:35, 37).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

JOSEPH SMITH—MATTHEW

What is Joseph Smith—Matthew?

Joseph Smith—Matthew, located in the Pearl of Great Price, is an excerpt from the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible. It contains revisions to the last verse of Matthew 23 and all of Matthew 24 (see Bible Dictionary, “Joseph Smith Translation”). Joseph Smith’s inspired revisions restore precious truths that had been lost. Verses 12–21 of Joseph Smith—Matthew refer to the destruction of Jerusalem anciently; verses 21–55 contain prophecies about the last days.

JOSEPH SMITH—MATTHEW 1:21–37; MARK 13:21–37; LUKE 21:25–38

Prophecies about the Savior’s Second Coming can help me face the future with faith.

It can be unsettling to read about the events leading up to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. But when Jesus prophesied of these events, He told His disciples to “be not troubled” (Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:23). How can you “be not troubled” as you hear about earthquakes, wars, deceptions, and famines? Think about this question as you read these verses. Mark or note any reassuring counsel you find.

See also Doctrine and Covenants 29:14–21; 38:30; 45:16–52; 88:86–94; “Second Coming of Jesus Christ,” Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org.

JOSEPH SMITH—MATTHEW 1:26–27, 38–55; MATTHEW 25:1–13; LUKE 21:29–36

I must always be ready for the Savior’s Second Coming.

God has not revealed “the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh” (Matthew 25:13). But He does not want that day to come upon us “unawares” (Luke 21:34), so He has given us counsel about how to prepare.

As you read these verses, identify the parables and other comparisons the Savior used to teach us to always be prepared for His Second Coming. What do you learn from them? What are you inspired to do?

MATTHEW 25:14–30

Heavenly Father expects me to use His gifts wisely.

In the Savior’s time, a “talent” referred to money. But the Lord’s parable of the talents can teach us about how He wants us to use any of the blessings He has given us. The Lord expects us to improve on what He has given us. As you read this parable, make a list of some of the blessings and opportunities that Heavenly Father has given to you. What does He expect you to do with these blessings? How can you use these gifts more wisely? How have your talents been magnified as you have served the Lord?

MATTHEW 25:31–46

When I serve others, I am serving God.

If you have ever wondered how the Lord will judge your life, read the parable of the sheep and the goats. What will matter most when you stand before Christ?

See also Mosiah 2:17.

MARK 12:18–27

Will marriages continue after the Resurrection?

We learn from modern revelation that Jesus’s statement “When they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage” refers to those who have not entered into the covenant of celestial marriage (see D&C 132:15–16). A celestial marriage, in which “a man [marries] a wife . . . by the new and everlasting covenant,” will last “through all eternity” if the husband and wife are true to their covenants (D&C 132:19).



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

JOSEPH SMITH—MATTHEW

To help your family explore this chapter, invite them to look for the Savior's teachings about how we can prepare for His Second Coming (see, for example, verses 22–23, 29–30, 37, 46–48). What can your family do to follow this counsel?

JOSEPH SMITH—MATTHEW 1:22, 37

What does it mean to treasure up the word of God? How can we do this as a family? How will doing so help us avoid being deceived?

MATTHEW 25:1–13

You could use the picture of the ten virgins that accompanies this outline to discuss Matthew 25:1–13. What details do family members see in the picture that are described in these verses?

Would family members enjoy hunting around the house for paper drops of oil that you have hidden?

You could attach drops to objects that represent things family members can do to strengthen their testimonies and be prepared for the Second Coming, such as the scriptures, church clothes, or a picture of the temple.

MARK 12:38–44; LUKE 21:1–4

What can your family members learn from the widow's example? What did the Savior teach His disciples about offerings? Show a tithing donation slip, and discuss your family's offerings to the Lord and how these offerings help build God's kingdom. Are there offerings your family is making that can't be recorded on a tithing slip?



Widow's Mite, by Sandra Rast

Improving Personal Study

Prepare your surroundings. “Our surroundings can profoundly affect our ability to learn and feel truth” (*Teaching in the Savior's Way*, 15). Try to find a place to study the scriptures that will invite the influence of the Holy Ghost. Uplifting music and pictures can also invite the Spirit.



Five of Them Were Wise, by Walter Rane



The Last Supper, by Carl Heinrich Bloch

JUNE 3-9

John 13-17

“Continue Ye in My Love”

As you read the Savior’s teachings in John 13-17, the Holy Ghost will help you identify messages for you. Record the impressions you receive.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

Today we call it the “Last Supper,” but we don’t know if Jesus’s disciples fully realized, when they gathered for the annual Passover feast, that this would be their last meal with their Master before His death. Jesus, however, “knew that his hour was come” (John 13:1). He would soon face the suffering of Gethsemane, the betrayal and denial of His closest friends, and the agonizing death on the cross. Yet even with all of this looming before Him, Jesus’s focus was not on Himself

but on ministering to His disciples. He humbly washed their feet. He taught them about love. And He reassured them that, in one sense, He would never leave them and they need never leave Him. Disciples then and now find solace in His promises: “I will not leave you comfortless” (John 14:18). “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love” (John 15:10).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

JOHN 13–15

I show my love for Jesus Christ by keeping His commandment to love.

Jesus had already taught that the two greatest commandments have to do with love (see Matthew 22:34–40). In keeping with this emphasis, love was a major theme of His final instructions to His Apostles. As you read John 13–15, you might note or mark each use of the word *love*.

You may notice the word *commandments* repeated frequently in association with the word *love* in these chapters. What can you learn about the relationship between love and commandments from the Savior's teachings? What other words do you find repeated frequently with the word *love* in these chapters? Based on what you learn, consider writing a brief summary of the Savior's teachings about love.

See also D. Todd Christofferson, "Abide in My Love," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2016, 48–51.

JOHN 14–16

The Holy Ghost helps me fulfill my purpose as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ knew He would soon leave His disciples, and He knew they would need spiritual support once He was gone. To help them understand how they would receive this support, He taught them about the Holy Ghost. What do you learn about the roles of the Holy Ghost from the Savior's words in the following verses?

- John 14:16–17, 26 _____
- John 15:26 _____
- John 16:7–11 _____
- John 16:12–15 _____

Why did the disciples need this kind of help from the Holy Ghost? How has the Holy Ghost fulfilled these roles in your life? As you continue studying the New

Testament, look for ways the Holy Ghost blessed Jesus's disciples. How would your life be different if you invited the Holy Ghost to influence you more deeply?

See also Mosiah 3:19; 5:1–3; 3 Nephi 27:20; Moroni 8:25–26; 10:5; Doctrine and Covenants 11:12–14; Moses 6:61; "Holy Ghost," Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org.

JOHN 15:1–8

As I abide in Christ, I will bring forth good fruit.

What might it mean to "abide in [Christ]"? (John 15:4). What "fruit" shows that you are attached to the vine, which represents Jesus Christ?

JOHN 17

Jesus Christ intercedes for His disciples.

Jesus's words recorded in John 17 are known as the Intercessory Prayer. In this prayer, Jesus prayed for His Apostles and "them also which shall believe on [Him] through their word" (John 17:20). That means He was praying for you. What did Jesus request from His Father in behalf of you and all other believers?

This prayer also teaches profound, eternal truths. What truths do you find as you read it?

JOHN 17:11, 21–23

How are Jesus Christ and Heavenly Father one?

In His prayer in John 17, Jesus emphasized His unity with the Father, but this does not mean that He and His Father are the same being. When the Savior prayed that His disciples may be one "even as"—or in the same way that—He and His Father are one (John 17:22), He was not asking that the disciples become one being. Rather, His desire was for them to enjoy the same unity He has with the Father—perfect unity of purpose, heart, and mind.



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

JOHN 13:1-17

What does our family learn from the example of the Savior in these verses? In what ways can we follow His example?

JOHN 13:34-35; 15:9-14

As you discuss the Savior's teachings about love, consider also these words from President Thomas S. Monson: "In today's world, nowhere is that bedrock foundation of love needed more than in the home. And nowhere should the world find a better example of that foundation than in the homes of Latter-day Saints who have made love the heart of their family life. . . . Love is the very essence of the gospel, the noblest attribute of the human soul" ("As I Have Loved You," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Feb. 2017, 4-5).

Your family members may enjoy drawing pictures or writing on paper hearts something they love about each other. They could place these hearts around the house as a reminder to show love for one another.

JOHN 15:1-8

It might be fun to read these verses outside next to a vine, a tree, or another plant. How does this activity

help your family members better understand the Savior's teachings?



Jesus taught, "I am the vine, ye are the branches" (John 15:5).

JOHN 15:17-27; 16:1-7

Why do you think Jesus Christ warned His disciples of persecution? How are disciples of Christ persecuted today? How can the Savior's counsel in these verses help us when we face persecution?

JOHN 16:33

How has Christ overcome the world? How has His Atonement brought us peace and cheer? (see also D&C 68:6).

JOHN 17:21-23

How can our family be more united as Jesus Christ and Heavenly Father are united? Why does the Lord want us to be united? (see also D&C 38:27).

Improving Our Teaching

Use audio recordings. As you teach your family the scriptures, consider listening to the audio version of the scriptures, found on LDS.org or the Gospel Library app. Listening to John 13-17 can be particularly powerful because these chapters contain so many of the Savior's words.



Master Servant, by Del Parson



And It Was Night, by Benjamin McPherson

JUNE 10-16

Matthew 26; Mark 14; Luke 22; John 18

“Not as I Will, but as Thou Wilt”

As you read about the events described in Matthew 26; Mark 14; Luke 22; and John 18, pay attention to any impressions you receive, especially promptings to make changes in your life.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

There were only three mortal witnesses to Jesus Christ’s suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane—and they slept through much of it. In that garden and later on the cross, Jesus took upon Himself the sins, pains, and sufferings of every person who ever lived, although almost no one alive at that time was aware of what was happening. But then, eternity’s most important events often pass without much worldly attention. God the Father, however, was aware. He heard the pleading of His faithful Son: “Father, if thou be willing,

remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him” (Luke 22:42–43). While we were not physically present to witness this act of selflessness and submission, in a sense, we can all be witnesses of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Every time we repent and receive forgiveness of our sins and every time we feel the Savior’s strengthening power, we can testify of what happened in the Garden of Gethsemane.



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

MATTHEW 26:17–30; MARK 14:12–26; LUKE 22:7–39

The sacrament is an opportunity to remember the Savior.

What do you do to remember people who have been important in your life? When the Savior introduced the sacrament to His disciples, He said, “This do in remembrance of me” (Luke 22:19; see also 3 Nephi 18:7). How do the bread, water, and other elements of this ordinance help you remember Him and His suffering? Ponder this question as you read about the first sacrament. Also, note revisions found in the Joseph Smith Translation (see the footnotes and Bible appendix).

Take some time to ponder the experience you have during the sacrament each week. What can you do to make it more meaningful? Perhaps you could write a few things you feel inspired to remember about the Savior—His teachings, His acts of love, times when you have felt especially close to Him, or the sins and pains He took upon Himself in your behalf.

See also 3 Nephi 18:1–13; Doctrine and Covenants 20:76–79; “Sacrament,” Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org; “Always Remember Him” (video, LDS.org).

MATTHEW 26:36–46; MARK 14:32–42; LUKE 22:40–46

The Savior suffered for me in Gethsemane.

President Russell M. Nelson invited us to “invest time in learning about the Savior and His atoning sacrifice” (“Drawing the Power of Jesus Christ into Our Lives,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2017, 40).

Consider what you will do to accept President Nelson’s invitation. You might start by prayerfully pondering the Savior’s suffering in Gethsemane, as described in these verses, and writing impressions and questions that come to mind.

For an even deeper study of the Savior and His Atonement, try searching other scriptures for answers to questions like these:

- Why was the Savior’s Atonement necessary? (See 2 Nephi 2:5–10, 17–26; 9:5–26; Alma 34:8–16; 42:9–26.)
- What did the Savior experience as He suffered? (See Isaiah 53:3–5; Mosiah 3:7; Alma 7:11–13; D&C 19:16–19.)
- How does Christ’s suffering affect my life? (See John 10:10–11; Hebrews 4:14–16; 1 John 1:7; Alma 34:31; Moroni 10:32–33; Dallin H. Oaks, “Strengthened by the Atonement of Jesus Christ,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2015, 61–64.)
- Other questions I have:

As you learn about what happened in Gethsemane, it might be interesting to know that Gethsemane was a garden of olive trees and included an olive press, used to crush olives and extract oil used for lighting and food as well as healing (see Luke 10:34). The process of using a heavy weight to extract olive oil can symbolize the weight of sin and pain that the Savior bore for us (see D. Todd Christofferson, “Abide in My Love,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2016, 50–51).

MARK 14:27–31, 66–72; LUKE 22:31–32

Conversion is an ongoing process.

Think about the experiences Peter had with the Savior—the miracles he witnessed and the doctrine he learned. Why then would the Savior say to Peter, “*When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren?*” (Luke 22:32; italics added). What did Elder David A. Bednar teach is the difference between having a testimony and being truly converted? (see “Converted unto the Lord,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 106–9).

As you read about Peter's experiences in Mark 14:27–31, 66–72, think about your own conversion. What lessons can you learn from Peter? As you continue reading the New Testament, what evidence do

you find of Peter's conversion and of his efforts to strengthen others? What effect did receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost have on his conversion? (see John 15:26–27; Acts 1:8; 2:1–4).



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you continue to read about the last week of the Savior's life with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

MATTHEW 26:17–30; MARK 14:12–26; LUKE 22:7–39

What is your family's experience like during the sacrament each week? Reading about the first sacrament could inspire a discussion about the importance of the sacrament and ways family members could make their worship more meaningful. Consider displaying the picture *Passing the Sacrament* (*Gospel Art Book*, no. 108) and sharing ideas with each other about what you can do before, during, and after the sacrament.

LUKE 22:40–46

When your family reads these verses, they could share what they learned as they studied the scriptures

suggested in the personal scripture study section "The Savior suffered for me in Gethsemane."

LUKE 22:50–51

What do we learn about Jesus from this experience?



Suffer Ye Thus Far, by Walter Rane

MATTHEW 26:36–46; MARK 14:32–42; LUKE 22:40–46

What do we learn from the Savior's words in these verses?

Improving Personal Study

Study the words of latter-day prophets and apostles. Read what latter-day prophets and apostles have taught about the truths you find in the scriptures. For instance, in the most recent general conference issue of the *Ensign* or *Liahona*, you could search the topic index for "Atonement" (see *Teaching in the Savior's Way*, 21).



Not My Will, but Thine, by Walter Rane



Ecce Homo, by Antonio Ciseri

JUNE 17–23

Matthew 27; Mark 15; Luke 23; John 19

“It Is Finished”

Matthew 27; Mark 15; Luke 23; and John 19 include descriptions of the final hours of the Savior’s mortal life. Seek to feel His love for you as you study about His sacrifice and death.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

In every word and deed, Jesus Christ exemplified pure love—what the Apostle Paul called charity (see 1 Corinthians 13). At no time was this more evident than during the final hours of the Savior’s mortal life. His dignified silence in the face of false accusations demonstrated that He “is not easily provoked” (1 Corinthians 13:5). His willingness to submit to scourging, mocking, and crucifixion—while restraining His power to end His torments—showed

that He “suffereth long” and “beareth all things” (1 Corinthians 13:4, 7). His compassion toward His mother and His mercy toward His crucifiers—even during His own incomparable suffering—revealed that He “seeketh not [His] own” (1 Corinthians 13:5). In His final moments on earth, Jesus was doing what He had done throughout His mortal ministry—teaching us by showing us. Indeed, charity is “the pure love of Christ” (Moroni 7:47).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

MATTHEW 27; MARK 15; LUKE 23; JOHN 19

Jesus Christ's willingness to suffer shows His love for the Father and for all of us.

Although the Savior had power to call down "legions of angels" (Matthew 26:53), He voluntarily chose to endure unjust trials, cruel mocking, and unimaginable physical pain. Why did He do it? "Because of his loving kindness," Nephi testified, "and his long-suffering towards the children of men" (1 Nephi 19:9).

You might begin your study of the Savior's final hours by reading 1 Nephi 19:9. Where in Matthew 27; Mark 15; Luke 23; and John 19 do you find examples of each thing that Nephi said Jesus would suffer?

"[They] judge him to be a thing of naught" _____

"They scourge him" _____

"They smite him" _____

"They spit upon him" _____

Which passages help you feel the "loving kindness" of Heavenly Father and Jesus toward you? Which of the attributes demonstrated by the Savior are you inspired to develop more fully?

See also "Jesus Is Condemned before Pilate" and "Jesus Is Scourged and Crucified" (videos, LDS.org).

**MATTHEW 27:27-49, 54; MARK 15:16-32;
LUKE 23:11, 35-39; JOHN 19:1-5**

Mocking of God's truth should not weaken my faith.

While Jesus had endured mocking throughout His ministry, it grew more intense during His scourging and Crucifixion. But this mocking could not change the truth: Jesus is the Son of God. As you read about the humiliation Jesus endured, think about the opposition and mocking His work faces today. What insights do

you gain about enduring opposition? What impresses you about the centurion's words in Matthew 27:54?

MATTHEW 27:46; MARK 15:34

Did Heavenly Father forsake Jesus on the cross?

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland offered the following insight: "I testify . . . that a perfect Father did *not* forsake His Son in that hour. . . . Nevertheless, that the supreme sacrifice of His Son might be as complete as it was voluntary and solitary, the Father briefly withdrew from Jesus the comfort of His Spirit, the support of His personal presence. . . . For [the Savior's] Atonement to be infinite and eternal, He had to feel what it was like to die not only physically but spiritually, to sense what it was like to have the divine Spirit withdraw, leaving one feeling totally, abjectly, hopelessly alone" ("None Were with Him," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2009, 87-88).

LUKE 23:34

The Savior is our example of forgiveness.

How do you feel when you read the Savior's words in Luke 23:34? (see the insight provided by the Joseph Smith Translation in footnote c). Referring to the Savior's words, President Henry B. Eyring taught: "We must forgive and bear no malice toward those who offend us. The Savior set the example from the cross. . . . We do not know the hearts of those who offend us" ("That We May Be One," *Ensign*, May 1998, 68). How can this verse help you if you have trouble forgiving someone?

LUKE 23:39-43

What is the meaning of "paradise" in the Savior's statement to the thief?

In the scriptures, the word *paradise* usually means "a place of peace and happiness in the postmortal spirit world"—a place reserved for the righteous. The

Prophet Joseph Smith taught that the word *paradise* in Luke 23:43 “is a mistranslation; the Lord actually said that the thief would be with Him in the world of spirits”

(*True to the Faith*, 111; see also Joseph Smith, Journal, June 11, 1843, josephsmithpapers.org). In the spirit world, the thief would hear the gospel preached.



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

MATTHEW 27:3-10

Even though Judas knew Jesus personally, he “turned away from [Jesus], and was offended because of his words” (Joseph Smith Translation, Mark 14:31 [in Mark 14:10, footnote *a*]). What might cause people who seem to have strong testimonies to turn away from the Savior? How can we stay true to Jesus Christ?

MATTHEW 27:11-26; MARK 15:1-15; LUKE 23:12-24; JOHN 19:1-16

Why did Pilate deliver Jesus to be crucified, even though he knew Jesus was innocent? What lessons do we learn from Pilate’s experience about standing up for what we know is right? It might be helpful for your family to role-play scenarios that allow them to practice standing up for what is right.



“And he bearing his cross went forth into . . . Golgotha” (John 19:17).

MATTHEW 27:46; LUKE 23:34, 43, 46; JOHN 19:26-28, 30

Perhaps you could assign one or more of the statements the Savior made on the cross, found in these verses, to each family member and ask them to share what they learn about the Savior and His mission.

MARK 15:39

How has reading about the Crucifixion strengthened our testimonies that Jesus is the “Son of God”?

JOHN 19:25-27

What do we learn from these verses about how we should love and support family members?

Improving Our Teaching

Emulate the Savior’s life. “It is helpful to study the ways the Savior taught—the methods He used and the things He said. But the Savior’s power to teach and lift others came from . . . the kind of person He was. The more diligently you strive to *live* like Jesus Christ, the more you will be able to *teach* like Him” (*Teaching in the Savior’s Way*, 13).



Christ on the Cross, by Carl Heinrich Bloch



Feed My Sheep, by Kamille Corry

JUNE 24–30

Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; John 20–21

“He Is Risen”

Prayerfully read Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; and John 20–21, reflecting on the joy you have because of the Resurrection of Christ. Ponder how you might share your testimony of this event with others.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

To many observers, the death of Jesus of Nazareth may have seemed like an ironic end to a remarkable life. Wasn't this the man who raised Lazarus from the dead? Hadn't He withstood the murderous threats from the Pharisees time after time? He had demonstrated power to heal blindness, leprosy, and palsy. The very winds and the seas obeyed Him. And yet here He was, hanging from a cross, declaring, “It is finished” (John 19:30). There may have been some sincere surprise in the mocking words “He saved

others; himself he cannot save” (Matthew 27:42). But we know that Jesus's death was not the end of the story. We know that the silence of the tomb was temporary and that Christ's saving work was just beginning. He is found today not “among the dead” but among the living (Luke 24:5). His teachings would not be silenced, for His loyal disciples would preach the gospel in “all nations,” trusting His promise that He would be “with [them] always, even unto the end of the world” (Matthew 28:19–20).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

MATTHEW 28; MARK 16; LUKE 24; JOHN 20

Because Jesus was resurrected, I too will be resurrected.

In these passages, you will read about one of the most important events in the history of humankind: the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. As you read, put yourself in the place of the people who witnessed the events surrounding the Resurrection. How might these witnesses have felt? How do *you* feel as you read about the Savior's Resurrection? Consider how it has affected you—your outlook on life, your relationships with others, your faith in Christ, and your faith in other gospel truths.

See also Bible Dictionary, "Resurrection"; "Resurrection," Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org.

LUKE 24:13–35

We can invite the Savior to "abide with us."

The experience of the two traveling disciples who met the resurrected Savior can have parallels to your path of discipleship. What connections do you see between this account and your experiences as a follower of Christ? How can you walk with Him today and invite Him to "tarry" a little longer? (Luke 24:29). How do you recognize His presence in your life? In what ways has the Holy Ghost testified of the divinity of Jesus Christ to you?

LUKE 24:36–43; JOHN 20

Does Jesus Christ have a body?

Through the accounts of the risen Lord appearing to Mary Magdalene and His later interactions with His disciples, we learn that Jesus's Resurrection was literal and physical. With His resurrected, glorified body, He walked, talked, and ate with His followers. Other scriptures also testify that Jesus Christ has a

body of flesh and bones: Philippians 3:20–21; 3 Nephi 11:13–15; Doctrine and Covenants 110:2–3; 130:1, 22.

JOHN 20:19–29

"Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

It can be difficult to believe that something is true without seeing physical proof. You may at times feel like Thomas, who said, "Except I shall see . . . I will not believe" (John 20:25). In response, the Savior said to Thomas, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (John 20:29). How have you been blessed for believing in spiritual things you could not see? What helps you have faith in the Savior even when you cannot see Him? What other truths do you believe even without physical evidence? How can you continue to strengthen your faith in "things which are not seen, which are true"? (Alma 32:21; see also Ether 12:6). Consider recording in a journal experiences that have helped you believe in Jesus Christ, or share them with someone you know.

JOHN 21:1–17

The Savior invites me to feed His sheep.

It might be interesting to compare the Savior's interaction with His Apostles in John 21 to the first time He commanded them to let down their fishing nets, recorded in Luke 5:1–11. What similarities and differences do you find? What insights about discipleship do you find?

Consider how the Savior's words to Peter in John 21:15–17 might apply to you. Is there anything holding you back from ministering to the Lord's sheep? What would your response be if the Lord asked you, "Lovest thou me?" Ponder how you can show your love for the Lord.

See also Jeffrey R. Holland, "The First Great Commandment," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 83–85.



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you finish reading the Gospels with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

MATTHEW 28:6

Why are the words “He is not here: for he is risen” some of the most hopeful and important words ever spoken?

MATTHEW 28; MARK 16; LUKE 24; JOHN 20–21

As your family reads these chapters, pay attention to the people who interacted with Jesus in each account. For example, at one point you might focus on the people who visited the Savior’s tomb. At another point, you might carefully study the actions of the Apostles or the disciples on the road to Emmaus.

MATTHEW 28:16–20; MARK 16:14–20; LUKE 24:44–53

As a family, discuss the work Christ was asking His Apostles to do. How can we help accomplish this work? Can you share a time when you felt “the Lord working with [you]” to help you accomplish His purposes? (Mark 16:20).

JOHN 21:15–17

Consider reading these verses while eating together. This could add some meaning to the Savior’s words “feed my sheep.” Based on what Jesus taught about sheep in the New Testament (see, for example, Matthew 9:35–36; 10:5–6; 25:31–46; Luke 15:4–7; John 10:1–16), why is feeding sheep a good metaphor for nourishing and caring for God’s children? What does the metaphor teach about how Heavenly Father and Jesus feel about us?



Road to Emmaus, by Jon McNaughton

Improving Personal Study

Use music to invite the Spirit and learn doctrine. Listening to or singing hymns such as “He Is Risen!” or “Christ the Lord Is Risen Today” (*Hymns*, nos. 199, 200) can invite the Spirit and help you learn about the Savior’s Resurrection.



Christ and Mary at the Tomb, by Joseph Brickey



Day of Pentecost, by Sidney King

JULY 1-7

Acts 1-5

“Ye Shall Be Witnesses unto Me”

As you study Acts 1-5, the Holy Ghost can inspire you to find truths that are relevant for your life. Take note of verses that impress you, and look for opportunities to share what you are learning.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

Have you ever wondered what Peter might have been thinking and feeling when he, with the other Apostles, “looked steadfastly toward heaven” as Jesus ascended to His Father? (Acts 1:10). The Church that was founded by the Son of God was now being led by Jesus through Peter, God’s prophet. The task of leading the effort to “teach all nations” now rested on Peter (Matthew 28:19). But if he felt inadequate or afraid, we don’t find any evidence of that in the book of Acts. What we do find are examples of fearless testimony and conversion, miraculous healings, spiritual manifestations, and

significant growth for the Church. Now, with the gift of the Holy Ghost, Peter was no longer the unlearned fisherman Jesus found on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. Nor was he the distraught man who only weeks earlier was weeping bitterly because he had denied that he even knew Jesus of Nazareth.

In the book of Acts, you will read powerful declarations about Jesus Christ and His gospel. You will also see how that gospel can change people—including you—into the valiant disciples God knows they can be.



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

ACTS 1:1–8, 15–26; 2:1–42; 4:1–13, 31–33

Jesus Christ directs His Church through the Holy Ghost.

The book of Acts records the Apostles' efforts to establish the Church of Jesus Christ after the Savior's Ascension. Although Jesus Christ was no longer on the earth, He directed the Church by revelation through the Holy Ghost. Consider how the Holy Ghost guided the new leaders of Christ's Church as you review the following passages: Acts 1:1–8, 15–26; 2:1–42; 4:1–13, 31–33.

What are some of the assignments, callings, or responsibilities the Lord has given you? What do you learn from the experiences of these early Apostles about how you can rely on the Holy Ghost to guide you?

See also Bible Dictionary, "Holy Ghost."

ACTS 2:1–18

What is the purpose of the gift of tongues?

The gift of tongues is sometimes characterized as speaking in a language no one understands. However, the Prophet Joseph Smith referred to the events in Acts 2 to clarify that this gift of the Spirit is "given for the purpose of preaching [the gospel] among those whose language is not understood; as on the day of Pentecost. . . . The ultimate design of [the gift of] tongues is to speak to foreigners" (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2008], 383–84). The Feast of Pentecost, a major Jewish holiday, brought Jews from many nations to Jerusalem. The gift of tongues allowed these visitors to understand the Apostles' words in their native languages.

ACTS 2:36–47; 3:13–21

The first principles and ordinances of the gospel help me come unto Christ.

Have you ever felt "pricked in [your] heart," like the Jews on the day of Pentecost? (Acts 2:37). Maybe you did something you regret, or maybe you simply want

to change your life. What should you do when you have these feelings? Peter's counsel to the Jews is found in Acts 2:38. Note how the first principles and ordinances of the gospel (including faith, repentance, baptism, and the gift of the Holy Ghost—or what is sometimes referred to as the doctrine of Christ) affected these converts, as recorded in Acts 2:37–47.

You may already have been baptized and received the gift of the Holy Ghost, so how do you continue to apply the doctrine of Christ? Consider these words from Elder Dale G. Renlund: "We may be perfected by repeatedly . . . exercising faith in [Christ], repenting, partaking of the sacrament to renew the covenants and blessings of baptism, and receiving the Holy Ghost as a constant companion to a greater degree. As we do so, we become more like Christ and are able to endure to the end, with all that that entails" ("Latter-day Saints Keep on Trying," *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2015, 56).

See also 2 Nephi 31; 3 Nephi 11:31–41; 27; Brian K. Ashton, "The Doctrine of Christ," *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2016, 106–9.

ACTS 3:19–21

What are "the times of refreshing" and "the times of restitution of all things"?

"The times of refreshing" refers to the Millennium, when Jesus Christ will return to the earth. "The times of restitution of all things" refers to the Restoration of the gospel.

ACTS 3; 4:1–31; 5:12–42

Disciples of Jesus Christ are given power to perform miracles in His name.

The lame man was hoping to receive money from those who came to the temple. But the Lord's servants offered him much more. As you read Acts 3; 4:1–31; 5:12–42, consider how the miracle that followed affected:

The lame man _____

Peter and John _____

The witnesses at the temple _____

The high priests and rulers _____

Other Saints _____

See also the videos “Peter and John Heal a Man Crippled Since Birth,” “Peter Preaches and Is Arrested” (LDS.org).



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

ACTS 2:37

When have we felt “pricked in [our] heart” when someone was teaching the gospel? What does this feeling mean? Why is it important to ask, “What shall we do?” when we have such feelings?

ACTS 3:1–8

How was the man at the temple blessed differently than he was expecting? How have we seen Heavenly Father’s blessings come to us in unexpected ways?



Such as I Have I Give Thee, by Walter Rane

ACTS 3:12–26; 4:1–21; 5:12–42

What impresses you about the faithfulness of Peter and John? How can we be bold in our testimony of Jesus Christ?

ACTS 4:32–5:11

Your family might enjoy acting out the account of Ananias and Sapphira with simple costumes and some coins. What lessons do we learn from this story? Depending on the needs of your family, you might discuss honesty, sustaining Church leaders, or consecration.

Improving Our Teaching

Pick a topic. Let family members take turns choosing a topic from Acts 1–5 to study together.



The Lord's Ascension, by William Henry Margetson



May We So Live by Sam Lawlor

JULY 8-14

Acts 6–9

“What Wilt Thou Have Me to Do?”

Begin by reading Acts 6–9. The suggestions in this outline can help you identify some of the important principles in these chapters, though you may find others in your own study.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

If anyone seemed like an unlikely candidate for conversion, it was probably Saul—a Pharisee who had a reputation for persecuting Christians. So when the Lord told a disciple named Ananias to seek out Saul and offer him a blessing, Ananias was understandably hesitant. “Lord,” he said, “I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints” (Acts 9:13). But the Lord knew Saul’s heart and his potential, and He had a mission in mind for Saul: “He is a chosen

vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel” (Acts 9:15). So Ananias obeyed, and when he found this former persecutor, he called him “Brother Saul” (Acts 9:17). If Saul could change so completely and Ananias could welcome him so freely, then should we ever consider anyone an unlikely candidate for change—including ourselves?



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

ACTS 6–8

My heart needs to be “right in the sight of God.”

A growing church meant a growing need for disciples to serve in the kingdom. According to Acts 6:1–15, what qualities were the Twelve Apostles looking for in those who would serve with them? As you read Acts 6–8, note how these qualities, and others, were demonstrated in people like Stephen and Philip. What was lacking in Simon, and what can we learn from him about being willing to change?

Is there anything you feel inspired to change to ensure that your heart is “right in the sight of God”? (Acts 8:21–22). How might making this change bless you as you serve God?

ACTS 6–7

Resisting the Holy Ghost can lead to rejecting the Savior and His prophets.

The Jewish leaders, though charged with preparing the people for the coming of the Messiah, rejected Jesus Christ and demanded His Crucifixion because of their pride and quest for power. How did this happen? Stephen declared to them, “Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost” (Acts 7:51). What do you think it means to resist the Holy Ghost? Why does resisting the Holy Ghost lead to rejecting the Savior and His prophets?

As you read Acts 6–7, look for other messages that Stephen taught the Jews. What attitudes was he warning against? Do you detect any similar attitudes in yourself? What do Stephen’s words teach you about the consequences of resisting the Holy Ghost? How can you be more sensitive and responsive to the promptings of the Holy Ghost in your life?

See also the video “The Martyrdom of Stephen” (LDS.org).

ACTS 7:54–60

Besides Stephen, who else was martyred for their testimony of Jesus Christ?

Stephen is the first known Christian martyr (someone who is killed because of his or her beliefs) after Jesus’s Resurrection. Many other Saints throughout history were also killed because they would not deny their faith in Jesus Christ. Some of these are mentioned in 2 Chronicles 24:20–21; Mark 6:17–29; Acts 12:1–2; Revelation 6:9–11; Mosiah 17:20; Alma 14:8–11; Helaman 13:24–26; Doctrine and Covenants 109:47–49; 135:1–7; and Abraham 1:11. It is likely that after the Savior’s Resurrection, all of the Apostles except John died as martyrs.

ACTS 8:26–39

The Holy Ghost will help me guide others to Jesus Christ.

What do you learn about sharing the gospel from the account in Acts 8:26–39? How did the Holy Ghost help Philip? How is sharing the gospel with others like being a guide? (see Acts 8:31).

ACTS 9:1–31

When I submit to the Lord’s will, I can become an instrument in His hands.

Saul’s conversion seems very sudden; he went “straightway” from imprisoning Christians to preaching Christ in the synagogues (Acts 9:20). As you read his story, ponder why he was so willing to change. (To read Saul’s own description of his conversion, see Acts 22:1–16 and 26:9–18. Note that by the time of these accounts, Saul’s name had been changed to Paul.)

While it’s true that Saul’s experience is unusual—for most people, conversion is a much longer process—is there anything you can learn from Saul about

conversion? What do you learn from the way Ananias and the other disciples reacted to Saul's conversion? What will you do to apply these lessons in your life? You might begin by asking in prayer, as Saul did, "What wilt thou have me to do?" Or you could write this

question as a title in your journal and record impressions that come to you over time.

See also Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Waiting on the Road to Damascus," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2011, 70–77; "The Road to Damascus" (video, LDS.org).



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

ACTS 6:8–7:60

Compare the accounts of Stephen in Acts 6:8 and Acts 7:51–60 to the accounts of the Savior in Luke 23:1–46. How did Stephen follow the Savior's example?

ACTS 7:51–60

How did the Holy Ghost bless Stephen when he was being persecuted? When have we received strength from the Holy Ghost during difficult times?

ACTS 9:5

Does your family know what "kick against the pricks" means? A *prick* was a sharp spear used to drive animals. Often the animals would kick back when pricked, which would cause the spear to sink even further into the animal's flesh. In what ways can this analogy apply to us?



Tabitha Arise, by Sandy Freckleton Gagon

ACTS 9:32–43

Consider inviting your family members to draw pictures of the stories in Acts 9:32–43. What do they learn about true discipleship from Aeneas, Tabitha, and the widows of Joppa? How could someone who is "full of good works" help others believe in the Lord? (see Acts 9:36, 42; "Chapter 60: Peter Brings Tabitha Back to Life," *New Testament Stories*, 156–57, or the corresponding video on LDS.org).

Improving Personal Study

Liken the scriptures to your life. As you read, consider how the stories and teachings in the scriptures apply in your life. For example, when have you felt "full of the Holy Ghost" in times of trial or persecution? (Acts 7:55).



I See the Son of Man Standing on the Right Hand of God, by Walter Rane



JULY 15–21

Acts 10–15

“The Word of God Grew and Multiplied”

Read Acts 10–15 carefully, allowing time for the Spirit to prompt you with thoughts and feelings. What is there for you to learn in these chapters?

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

During His mortal ministry, Jesus Christ’s teachings often challenged people’s long-held traditions and beliefs. This didn’t stop after He ascended into heaven—after all, He continued to guide His Church by revelation. For example, during Jesus’s life His disciples preached the gospel only to fellow Jews. But soon after the Savior died and Peter became the prophet of the Church, Jesus Christ revealed to Peter that the time was right for the gospel to be preached to non-Jews. The idea of sharing the gospel with Gentiles doesn’t seem surprising today, so what’s the lesson in this account for us? Perhaps one lesson is that

changes in policy and practice—in both the ancient and modern Church—come by revelation from the Lord to His chosen leaders (see Amos 3:7; D&C 1:38). Continuing revelation is an essential characteristic of the true and living Church of Jesus Christ. Like Peter, we must be willing to accept continuing revelation and live “by every word of God” (Luke 4:4), including “all that [He] has revealed, all that He does now reveal” and the “many great and important things” He will yet reveal “pertaining to the Kingdom of God” (Articles of Faith 1:9).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

ACTS 10

“God is no respecter of persons.”

For generations, the Jews had believed that being of “the seed of Abraham,” or a literal descendant of Abraham, meant that a person was accepted (chosen) by God (see Luke 3:8). Anyone else was considered an “unclean” Gentile who was not accepted by God. In Acts 10, what did the Lord teach Peter about who “is accepted with him”? (Acts 10:35). What evidence do you find in this chapter that Cornelius was living a righteous life that was acceptable to the Lord? Why is it important to know that “God is no respecter of persons” (verse 34), meaning that all people can receive the blessings of the gospel if they live by its teachings? (see 1 Nephi 17:35).

Like the Jews who looked down on those who were not of the seed of Abraham, do you ever catch yourself making unkind or uninformed assumptions about someone who is different from you? How can you overcome this tendency? It might be interesting to try a simple activity for the next few days: whenever you interact with someone, try to think to yourself, “This person is a child of God.” As you do this, what changes do you notice in the way you think about and interact with others?

See also D. Todd Christofferson, “Abide in My Love,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2016, 48–51; 1 Samuel 16:7; “Peter’s Revelation to Take the Gospel to the Gentiles” (video, LDS.org).

ACTS 10; 11:1–18; 15

Heavenly Father teaches me line upon line through revelation.

When Peter saw the vision described in Acts 10, he struggled at first to understand it and “doubted in himself what [it] should mean” (Acts 10:17). Yet the Lord gave Peter greater understanding as Peter sought it. As you read Acts 10, 11, and 15, notice how Peter’s understanding of his vision deepened over time. How have you sought and received greater understanding from God when you had questions?

Acts 10, 11, and 15 recount instances in which the Lord directed His servants through revelation. It might help to record what you find regarding revelation as you read these chapters. How does the Spirit speak to you?

See also “Revelation,” Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org; Ronald A. Rasband, “Let the Holy Spirit Guide,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2017, 93–96; “The Jerusalem Conference” (video, LDS.org).

ACTS 11:26

I am a Christian because I believe in and follow Jesus Christ.

What is significant about a person being called a Christian? (see Acts 11:26). What does it mean to you to be known as a Christian or to take upon yourself the name of Jesus Christ? (see D&C 20:77). Consider the significance of names. For instance, what does your family name mean to you? Why is the name of the Church today important? (see D&C 115:4).

See also Mosiah 5:7–15; Alma 46:13–15; 3 Nephi 27:3–8; M. Russell Ballard, “The Importance of a Name,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 79–82.



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

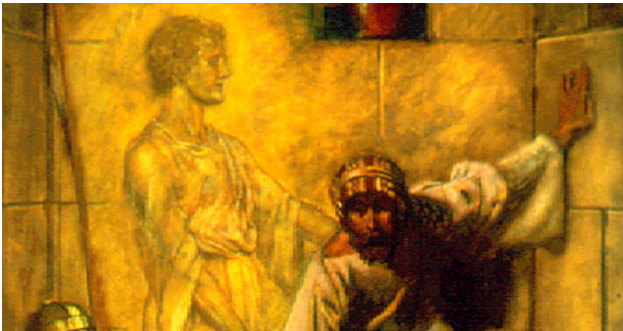
As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

ACTS 10:17, 20

Have we ever had spiritual experiences and later doubted what we felt or learned? What advice can we give each other that might help us overcome our doubts? (See Ronald A. Rasband, “Lest Thou Forget,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2016, 113–15.)

ACTS 12:1–17

When Peter was cast into prison, members of the Church gathered together and prayed for him. Is there someone your family feels inspired to pray for, such as a Church leader or loved one? What does it mean to pray “without ceasing”? (Acts 12:5).



Peter Delivered from Prison, by A. L. Noakes

ACTS 14

As you read this chapter together, some family members could make note of blessings that came to the disciples and the Church, while other family members could note opposition or trials disciples experienced. Why does God allow difficult things to happen to righteous people?

ACTS 15:1–21

These verses describe a disagreement in the Church regarding whether gentile (non-Jewish) converts to Christianity should be required to be circumcised as a sign of their covenant. The disagreement was resolved after the Apostles met together to consider the subject and then received an inspired answer. This may be a good time to teach your family that the same pattern applies today. As a family, pick a question about the gospel that you want to find the answer to together. Look together for insights in the scriptures and in the teachings of modern prophets and apostles. (The Topical Guide and the topic index in conference issues of Church magazines might help.)

Improving Our Teaching

Draw a picture. Pictures can help family members visualize scriptural teachings and stories. You might read a few verses and then allow time for family members to draw something that relates to what you have read. For instance, family members might enjoy drawing pictures of Peter’s vision in Acts 10.



The centurion Cornelius's miraculous vision and journey to meet Peter demonstrates that "God is no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34).



JULY 22–28

Acts 16–21

“The Lord Had Called Us for to Preach the Gospel”

As you read about Paul’s efforts to preach the gospel, the Spirit may prompt you with thoughts or feelings. Write these promptings down, and make plans to act on them.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

Among the Lord’s final words to His Apostles was the commandment, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19–20). While the Apostles didn’t quite make it to *all* nations, Acts 16–21 does show that Paul and his companions made remarkable progress in establishing the Church. They taught, baptized, and conferred the gift of the Holy Ghost. They performed miracles, even raising a man from the dead, and foretold the Great Apostasy (Acts 20:7–12; 20:28–31). And

the work they started continues with living Apostles today, along with devoted disciples like you, who are helping fulfill the Savior’s commission in ways Paul never could have imagined. Perhaps you are aware of people who do not know their Heavenly Father or His gospel. Perhaps you have felt that your “spirit was stirred in [you]” to share with them what you know about Him (Acts 17:16). If you follow Paul’s example of humility and boldness in sharing the gospel, you may find someone “whose heart the Lord [has] opened” (Acts 16:14).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

ACTS 16–21

The Spirit will guide me in my efforts to share the gospel.

Everyone needs the gospel of Jesus Christ, but some people are more prepared than others to receive it. This is one reason we need the Holy Ghost when we share the gospel—to guide us to those who are ready. As you read Acts 16–21, note instances in which the Spirit guided Paul and his companions. What blessings came because they followed the Spirit? When have you felt the Spirit prompt you in your efforts to share the gospel?

See also Alma 7:17–20; Dallin H. Oaks, “Sharing the Restored Gospel,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2016, 57–60; *Preach My Gospel*, 92–93.

ACTS 16–21

I can declare the gospel in all circumstances.

Being thrown in prison for preaching the gospel might seem like an understandable reason to stop preaching. But to Paul and Silas, it became an opportunity to convert a jailor (see Acts 16:16–34). Throughout Acts 16–21, look for other examples of Paul’s willingness to share his witness with everyone. Why do you think he was so bold and fearless? What do you learn from Paul’s example?

There are many more messages about sharing the gospel in chapters 16–21. If you look carefully, you can find some that are especially applicable to you. Try reading these chapters with this goal in mind. What do you find?

ACTS 17:16–34

“We are the offspring of God.”

In Athens, Paul found a people of diverse opinions and religious views. They were always seeking “to hear some new thing,” and what Paul had to offer was definitely new to them (see Acts 17:19–21). They worshipped many gods, including one they called “the unknown God” (Acts 17:23), but they believed that the gods were powers or forces, not living, personable beings, and certainly not our Father. Read what Paul said to help them come to know God, and note the characteristics of God that you find. What does it mean to you to be the “offspring of God”? (Acts 17:29). In your opinion, how is being a child of God different from being just one of His creations? If you had stood beside Paul as he was testifying, what would you have told the ancient Greeks about our Heavenly Father? Do you know someone who could benefit from hearing your testimony?

See also Romans 8:16; 1 John 5:2; “We Are the Offspring of God” (video, LDS.org).



Worth of a Soul, by Liz Lemon Swindle



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

ACTS 16–21

To help your family visualize what is happening in these chapters, it could be fun, as you read together, to mark the cities that Paul visited on a map (see the map at the end of this outline).

ACTS 17:11; 18:24–28

How can we be more like the Saints in these scriptures? How does studying the scriptures daily make us more “noble”? (Acts 17:11). What can we do to be “mighty in the scriptures”? (Acts 18:24).

ACTS 19:1–7

These teachings from the Prophet Joseph Smith might help your family discuss Acts 19:1–7: “Baptism by water is but half a baptism, and is good for nothing without the other half—that is, the baptism of the Holy

Ghost. . . . ‘To be born of water and of the Spirit’ meant to be immersed in water for the remission of sins and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost thereafter. This was given by the laying on of the hands of one having authority given him of God” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith*, 95). What blessings have come to us from receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost?

ACTS 19:13–20

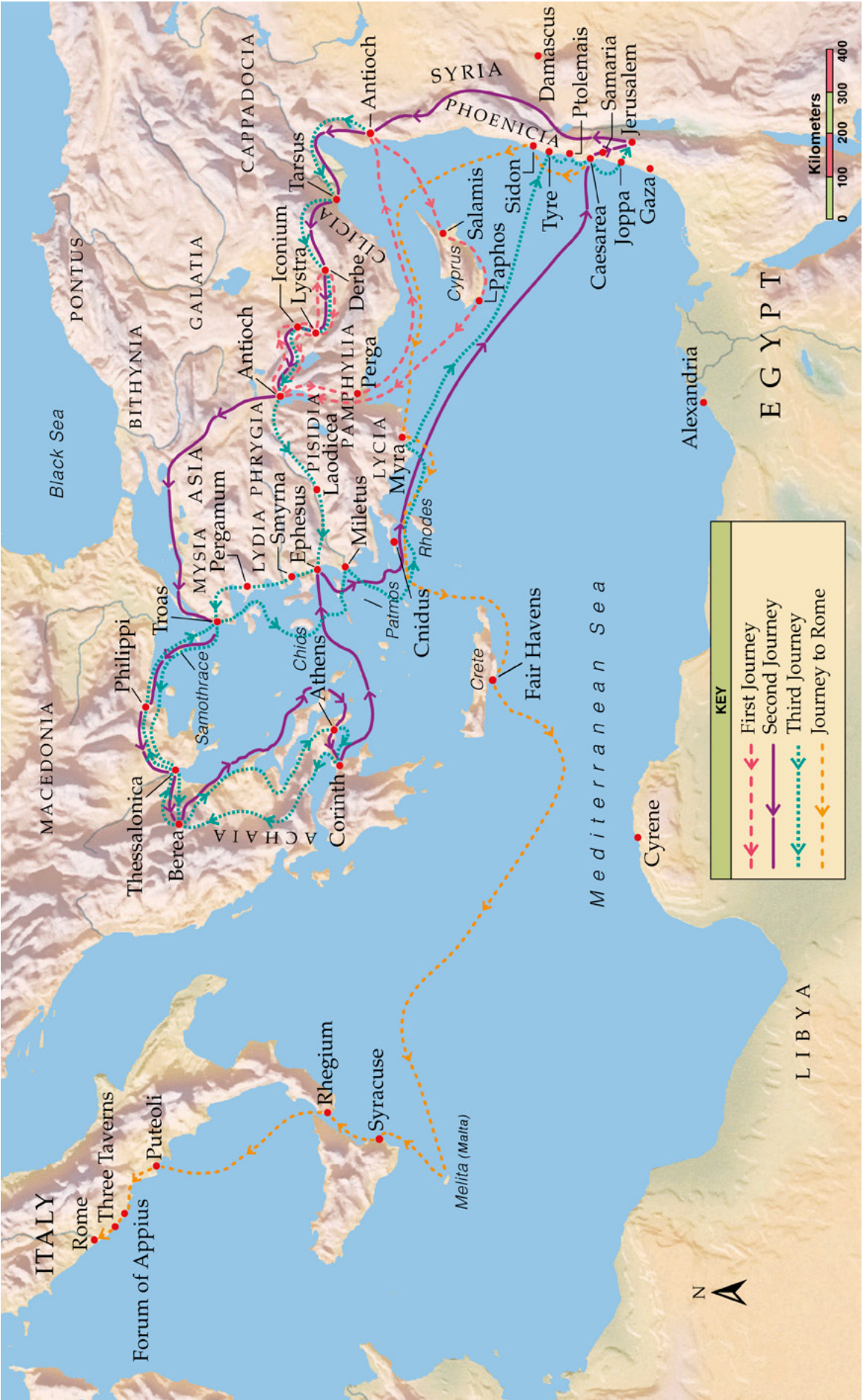
What inspired the people in these verses to burn their books worth “fifty thousand pieces of silver”? (Acts 19:19). Are there worldly possessions or activities we need to give up in order to receive heavenly blessings?

ACTS 20:32–35

When has your family experienced Christ’s teaching that “it is more blessed to give than to receive”? (Acts 20:35). Is there someone who could benefit from service, time, or gifts that your family could give? As a family, discuss some ideas and make a plan to serve someone. How do we feel when we serve others? Why is it more blessed to give than to receive?

Improving Personal Study

Record impressions. When impressions or insights come, record them. For example, you could record your thoughts in the margins of your scriptures, in the Gospel Library app, or in a study journal. “When you record spiritual impressions, you show the Lord that you value His direction, and He will bless you with more frequent revelation” (*Teaching in the Savior’s Way*, 12; see also 30).



The missionary journeys of the Apostle Paul.



JULY 29–AUGUST 4

Acts 22–28

“A Minister and a Witness”

Impressions from the Holy Ghost are often quiet and sometimes fleeting. Recording your impressions allows you to reflect on them more deeply. As you read Acts 22–28, write down the thoughts and feelings that come to you and take time to ponder them.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

“When we are on the Lord’s errand,” President Thomas S. Monson promised, “we are entitled to the Lord’s help” (“To Learn, to Do, to Be,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 62). We are not entitled, however, to a smooth road and an endless stream of successes. For evidence of this, we need look no further than Paul the Apostle. His errand from the Savior was “to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel” (Acts 9:15). In chapters 22–28 of Acts, we see

Paul fulfilling this errand and facing great opposition—chains, imprisonment, physical abuse, a shipwreck, and even a snake attack. But we also see that Jesus “stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul” (Acts 23:11). Paul’s experiences are an inspiring reminder that when the Lord’s servants accept His call to “go . . . and teach all nations,” He will fulfill His promise to them: “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world” (Matthew 28:19–20).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

ACTS 22:1–21; 26:1–29

Disciples of Jesus Christ share their testimonies boldly.

When Paul delivered the powerful testimonies recorded in Acts 22 and 26, he was being held prisoner by Roman soldiers. The people he spoke to had the power to condemn him to death. Yet he chose to boldly bear witness of Jesus Christ and “the heavenly vision” he had received (Acts 26:19). What inspires you about his words? Consider the opportunities you have to share your testimony. For example, when was the last time you told your family or others about how you gained your testimony of the gospel?

ACTS 22:1–21; 26:9–20

Why are there differences between the three accounts of Paul’s vision of Jesus Christ?

The book of Acts contains three accounts of Paul’s miraculous vision on the road to Damascus (see Acts 9:3–20; 22:1–21; 26:9–20). Each of these accounts is slightly different from the others, and some provide more detail than others. Because the accounts were told to different audiences for different purposes, it is reasonable that Paul chose to emphasize different parts of the experience for each audience.

Similarly, Joseph Smith recorded several accounts of his First Vision (see “First Vision Accounts,” Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org). The various accounts were given to different audiences for different purposes and provide insights that would not be available if only one account existed.

ACTS 23:10–11; 27:13–26, 40–44

The Lord stands by those who strive to serve Him.

As Paul’s ministry clearly shows, difficulties in our lives are not a sign that God disapproves of the work we are doing. In fact, sometimes it is during the difficulties that we feel His support most strongly. It might be interesting to review what you’ve read recently about Paul’s ministry and list some of the things he endured (see, for example, Acts 14:19–20; 16:19–27; 21:31–34; 23:10–11; 27:13–26, 40–44). How did the Lord stand by Paul, and what does this teach you about your own efforts in the Lord’s service?

ACTS 24:24–27; 26:1–3, 24–29; 27

I can choose to accept or reject the words of God’s servants.

Throughout his ministry, Paul bore powerful testimony of Jesus Christ and His gospel. Many people accepted his witness, but not everyone did. As you read Acts 24:24–27 and Acts 26:1–3, 24–29, write words and phrases that show how the following Roman rulers in Judea reacted to Paul’s teachings:

Felix _____

Festus _____

King Agrippa _____

While sailing to Rome to be tried by Caesar, Paul prophesied that “hurt and much damage” would come to the ship and its passengers (Acts 27:10). Read chapter 27 to find out how Paul’s shipmates reacted to his warnings. Do you find any lessons for yourself in their experience?

Have you ever reacted like any of these Roman rulers or Paul’s shipmates when you have heard the

teachings of Church leaders? What are some possible consequences of reacting in these ways? What do you learn from these accounts about heeding the counsel of the Lord through His servants?

See also 2 Nephi 33:1–2; Joseph Smith—History 1:24–25; D. Todd Christofferson, “The Voice of Warning,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2017, 108–11.



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

ACTS 24:16

Before his conversion, Paul had a long history of offenses toward God. But because he was willing to repent, he was able to say, “Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men” (see also D&C 135:4). How can we rid our conscience of offenses toward God and others?

ACTS 26:16–18

In these verses, what did the Lord call Paul to do? What opportunities do we have to do similar things?

ACTS 28:1–9

Does anyone in your family like snakes? You may want to ask that person or another family member to tell the stories found in Acts 28:1–9. Your children might enjoy drawing a picture of these stories or acting them out. What lessons can we learn from these accounts? One might be that the Lord fulfills His promises to His

servants. For example, you could compare the promises made in Mark 16:18 with their fulfillments in Paul’s experiences. You could also find in a recent general conference address a promise made by one of the Lord’s servants—perhaps one that is meaningful to your family—and display it in your home. How can we show our faith that this promise will be fulfilled?



God protected Paul when a poisonous snake bit him.

ACTS 28:22–24

Like the Church in Paul’s day (called a “sect” in verse 22), the Church today is often “spoken against.” When people spoke against the Savior and His Church, how did Paul respond? What can we learn from Paul’s experience?

Improving Our Teaching

Focus on principles that will bless your family. As you study the scriptures, ask yourself, “What do I find here that will be especially meaningful to my family?” (See *Teaching in the Savior’s Way*, 17.)



Valiant in the Testimony of Jesus Christ, by Daniel A. Lewis. Paul before King Agrippa.



AUGUST 5-11

Romans 1–6

“The Power of God unto Salvation”

Recording promptings will help you remember what the Spirit is teaching you.
Consider also recording how you feel about these promptings.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

By the time Paul wrote his epistle to Roman Church members, who were a diverse group of former Jews and Gentiles, the Church of Jesus Christ had grown far beyond a small band of believers from Galilee. About 20 years after the Savior’s Resurrection, there were congregations of Christians almost everywhere the Apostles

could reasonably travel—including Rome, the capital of a vast empire. But while Paul’s immediate audience was the Roman Saints, his message is universal, and it includes all of us today: “The gospel of Christ . . . is the power of God unto salvation to *every one* that believeth” (Romans 1:16; italics added).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

ROMANS-PHILEMON

What are the epistles, and how are they organized?

The Bible epistles are letters written by Church leaders to Saints in various parts of the world. The Apostle Paul wrote most of the epistles in the New Testament—starting with Romans and ending with Hebrews. His epistles are organized by length. Although Romans is the first epistle in the New Testament, it was actually written near the end of Paul's missionary journeys. For more information about the epistles, see Bible Dictionary, "Pauline Epistles."

ROMANS 1–6

When I show faith in the Savior by keeping His commandments, I am justified through His grace.

The following definitions may help you better understand the Epistle to the Romans:

The law: When Paul wrote of "the law," he was referring to the law of Moses. Similarly, the word "works" in Paul's writings often referred to the ceremonies and rituals of the law of Moses. Paul contrasted this law with "the law of faith" (see Romans 3:27–31), or the doctrine of Jesus Christ, who is the real source of our salvation.

Circumcision, uncircumcision: Anciently, circumcision was a token or symbol of the covenant God made with Abraham. Paul used the terms "circumcision" to refer to Jews (the covenant people) and "uncircumcision" to refer to Gentiles (those who are not of the Abrahamic covenant). Circumcision is no longer necessary as a token of God's covenant with His people (see Acts 15:23–29).

Justification, justify, justified: These terms refer to the remission, or pardoning, of sin. When we are justified, we are forgiven, declared guiltless, and freed from

eternal punishment for our sins. As Paul explained, this is made possible through Jesus Christ (see Guide to the Scriptures, "Justification, Justify," scriptures.lds.org; see also D. Todd Christofferson, "Justification and Sanctification," *Ensign*, June 2001, 18–25). In Romans, words like *righteous* and *righteousness* could be seen as synonyms of words like *just* and *justification*.

Grace: Grace is "divine . . . help or strength, given through the bounteous mercy and love of Jesus Christ." Through grace, all people will be resurrected and receive immortality. In addition, "grace is an enabling power that allows men and women to lay hold on eternal life and exaltation after they have expended their own best efforts." We do not earn grace through our efforts; rather, it is grace that gives us "strength and assistance to do good works that [we] otherwise would not be able to maintain" (Bible Dictionary, "Grace"; see also Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "The Gift of Grace," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2015, 107; 2 Nephi 25:23).

ROMANS 2:17–29

My outward actions must reflect and increase my inner conversion.

Paul's teachings show that some of the Jewish Christians in Rome still believed that obedience to the rites and rituals of the law of Moses alone brought salvation. This may seem like a problem that doesn't apply anymore since we don't live by the law of Moses. But as you read Paul's writings, especially Romans 2:17–29, think about your own efforts to live the gospel. Are your outward performances, such as taking the sacrament or attending the temple, leading you to conversion and strengthening your faith in Christ? (see Alma 25:15–16). How can you ensure that your outward actions are leading to a change of heart?

See also Dallin H. Oaks, "The Challenge to Become," *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 32–34.

ROMANS 3:10–31; 5**Through Jesus Christ, I can be forgiven of my sins.**

Some people may feel discouraged at Paul's bold declaration that "there is none righteous, no, not one" (Romans 3:10). But there are also hopeful messages in Romans. Look for them in chapters 3 and 5, and consider why remembering that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23) is an important step toward learning to "rejoice in hope" through Jesus Christ (Romans 5:2).

ROMANS 6**The gospel of Jesus Christ invites me to "walk in newness of life."**

Paul taught that the gospel should change the way we live. What statements in Romans 6 would you use to help someone understand how the gospel has helped you "walk in newness of life"? (verse 4). What personal experiences would you share?

**Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening**

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

ROMANS 1:16–17

How can we show that we are "not ashamed of the gospel of Christ"?

ROMANS 3:23–28

Some people might say that because we are "justified only by [God's] grace" (Joseph Smith Translation, Romans 3:24 [in Romans 3:24, footnote a]), there are no requirements for us to receive grace. Even though we can never do enough to "earn" God's grace, God

does ask us to do certain things to receive it. What can we do to receive grace?

ROMANS 5:3–5

What tribulations have we experienced? How have these tribulations helped us to develop patience, experience, and hope?

ROMANS 6:3–6

What did Paul say in these verses about the symbolism of baptism? Perhaps your family could plan to attend an upcoming baptism. Or someone in your family could share pictures or memories from his or her baptism. How does making and keeping our baptismal covenants help us "walk in newness of life"?

Improving Personal Study

Ask questions as you study. As you study the scriptures, questions may come to mind. Ponder these questions and look for answers. For example, in Romans 1–6 you could look for answers to the question "What is grace?"



Be Not Afraid, by Greg K. Olsen



AUGUST 12-18

Romans 7–16

“Overcome Evil with Good”

Only a few of the gospel principles in Romans 7–16 are included in this outline, so don’t limit yourself to what is addressed here. Pay attention to the inspiration you receive as you study.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

As he opened his epistle to the Romans, Paul greeted Church members in Rome by calling them “beloved of God” who were “called to be saints.” He remarked that their “faith [was] spoken of throughout the whole world” (Romans 1:7–8). Even though Paul spent much of his epistle correcting false ideas and flawed behaviors, it seems he also wanted to assure these new Christian converts that they truly were Saints who were beloved of God. In a humble show of empathy, Paul

acknowledged that he had felt like a “wretched man” at times (Romans 7:24), but the gospel of Jesus Christ had given him power to overcome sin (see Joseph Smith Translation, Romans 7:22–27 [in the Bible appendix]). He went on to share tender counsel for all of us who struggle to feel beloved and for whom saintliness may seem out of reach. “Be not overcome of evil,” he said—both evil in the world and evil in ourselves—“but overcome evil with good” (Romans 12:21).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

ROMANS 7–8

If I follow the Spirit, I can overcome sin and prepare for an inheritance with God.

Even after entering into “newness of life” through the ordinance of baptism (Romans 6:4), perhaps you have felt some of the inner conflict Paul described in Romans 7—the “warring” between the natural man and our righteous desires (Romans 7:23). But Paul also spoke of hope in Romans 8:23–25. What reasons for this hope do you find in Romans 8? You might also look for blessings that come from having “the Spirit of God dwell in you” (Romans 8:9). How can you seek the companionship of the Holy Ghost more fully in your life?

ROMANS 8:17–39

The eternal glory that awaits the faithful far outweighs the trials of mortality.

Just a few years after Paul wrote this epistle, the Saints in Rome suffered horrific persecutions. What do you find in Romans 8:17–39 that might have helped these Saints when persecution came? How might these words apply to you and the trials you currently face?

Look for connections between these verses and this counsel from Sister Linda S. Reeves: “I do not know why we have the many trials that we have, but it is my personal feeling that the reward is so great, so eternal and everlasting, so joyful and beyond our understanding that in that day of reward, we may feel to say to our merciful, loving Father, ‘Was that *all* that was required?’ I believe that if we could daily remember and recognize the depth of that love our Heavenly Father and our Savior have for us, we would be willing to do anything to be back in Their presence again, surrounded by Their love eternally. What will it matter . . . what we suffered here if, in the end, those trials are the very things which qualify us for eternal life and exaltation

in the kingdom of God with our Father and Savior?” (“Worthy of Our Promised Blessings,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2015, 11).

Decide what you will do to “daily remember and recognize” God’s love for you.

ROMANS 8:29–30; 9–11

What did Paul mean by “predestinate,” “election,” and “foreknow”?

Paul used these terms to teach that some of God’s children were predestined, or appointed beforehand, to receive special blessings and duties so that they could bless all the nations of the world (see Guide to the Scriptures, “Election,” scriptures.lds.org). This was based on God’s foreknowledge of His children’s willingness to follow Jesus Christ and become like Him (see Ephesians 1:3–4; 1 Peter 1:2). However, Paul emphasized in Romans 9–11 that no matter how we come into the house of Israel—or become a member of the Church—*all* people must receive salvation individually through faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to His commandments.

For more information, see Alma 13:1–5; “Foreordination,” Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org.

ROMANS 12–16

Paul invites me to become a true Saint and follower of Jesus Christ.

The last five chapters of Romans contain dozens of specific instructions regarding how Saints should live. You may not be able to apply all of this counsel at once, but listen to the Spirit, and He can help you find one or two that you could start working on today. Share your desires with your Heavenly Father in prayer, and ask for His help.



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

ROMANS 7:23

To help your family understand more about the “warring” described by Paul in this verse, consider sharing the story about the wolves in Elder Shayne M. Bowen’s article “Agency and Accountability” (*New Era*, Sept. 2012, 8–9).

ROMANS 9:31–32

Elder Wilford W. Andersen’s message “The Music of the Gospel” (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2015, 54–56) can help illustrate what Paul teaches about the law, works, and faith. Your family might enjoy discussing his talk and trying to dance with and without music. How is dancing without music like obeying the gospel without faith?



Elder Wilford W. Andersen taught, “The music of the gospel is [a] joyful spiritual feeling.”

ROMANS 10:17; 15:4

How has studying the word of God brought us the blessings described in these verses? Perhaps family members could share some of their favorite scripture passages (see also 2 Nephi 25:26).

ROMANS 12

What does it mean to make ourselves “a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God”? (Romans 12:1).

ROMANS 14:13–21

Your family might benefit from studying Paul’s counsel about judging and arguing about the personal preferences of others. Perhaps you could discuss appropriate ways to respond when others’ choices differ from yours. How can we be more mindful of how our own choices affect others? The videos “Judging Others? Stop It!” and “Looking through Windows” (LDS.org) could provide additional insights on this topic.

Improving Our Teaching

Let children express their creativity. “When you invite children to create something related to a gospel principle, you help them better understand the principle. . . . Allow them to build, draw, color, write, and create” (*Teaching in the Savior’s Way*, 25).



Abide with Me, by Del Parson



Corinth, Southern Greece, the Forum and Civic Center, painting by Balage Balogh

AUGUST 19-25

1 Corinthians 1–7

“Be Perfectly Joined Together”

Record your impressions while you read 1 Corinthians 1–7. These impressions may include promptings to study an idea further, to share with others something you learn, or to make changes in your life.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

During the months that Paul spent in Corinth, “many of the Corinthians hearing [him] believed, and were baptized” (Acts 18:8). So it must have been heartbreaking for Paul to hear, just a few years later, that there were “divisions” and “contentions” among the Corinthian Saints and that in his absence they had begun to heed the “wisdom of this world” (1 Corinthians 1:10–11, 20). In response, Paul wrote the letter we now call 1 Corinthians. It is full of profound doctrine, and

yet at the same time, Paul seemed disappointed that the Saints were not ready to receive all the doctrine he wanted to give them. “I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual,” he lamented, “for ye are yet carnal” (1 Corinthians 3:1–3). As we prepare to read Paul’s words, it might be helpful to examine our own readiness to receive truth—including our willingness to heed the Spirit and strive for unity within our families, with our fellow Saints, and with God.



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

1 CORINTHIANS 1:10–17; 3:1–11

The members of Christ's Church are united.

We don't know all the details about the lack of unity among the Corinthian Saints, but we do know about lack of unity in our *own* relationships. Think of a relationship in your life that could benefit from more unity; then look for what Paul taught in 1 Corinthians 1:10–17; 3:1–11 about lack of unity among the Corinthian Saints. What insights can you gain about how to develop greater unity with others?

See also Mosiah 18:21; 4 Nephi 1:15–17; Doctrine and Covenants 38:23–27; 105:1–5; “Unity,” Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org.

1 CORINTHIANS 1:17–31; 2

To accomplish God's work, I need the wisdom of God.

While it's good—even encouraged—to seek wisdom wherever we can find it (see 2 Nephi 9:29; D&C 88:118), Paul gave some strongly worded warnings about flawed human wisdom, which he called “the wisdom of this world.” As you read 1 Corinthians 1:17–25, ponder what this phrase might mean. What do you think Paul meant by the “wisdom of God”? Why do we need God's wisdom to accomplish God's work?

In your efforts to fulfill your responsibilities in accomplishing God's work, have you ever experienced the “fear, and . . . much trembling” that Paul felt when he taught the Corinthian Saints? (1 Corinthians 2:3). What do you find in 1 Corinthians 2:1–5 that gives you courage? Consider how you can show that you trust the “power of God” more than “the wisdom of men.”

See also Doctrine and Covenants 1:17–28.

1 CORINTHIANS 2:9–16

I need the Holy Ghost in order to understand the things of God.

If you wanted to learn more about something like automotive mechanics or medieval architecture, how would you do it? According to 1 Corinthians 2:9–16, how is learning “the things of God” different from learning the “things of a man”? Why must we have the Holy Ghost in order to understand the things of God? After reading these verses, what do you feel you should do to understand spiritual things more fully? How could Paul's words help someone who is struggling with his or her testimony?

1 CORINTHIANS 6:13–20

My body is sacred.

Most people in Corinth felt that sexual immorality was acceptable and that their bodies were made primarily for pleasure. In other words, Corinth was not that different from the world today. What did Paul teach in 1 Corinthians 6:13–20 that could help you explain to others why you want to live a chaste life?

It might also be interesting to see how Sister Wendy W. Nelson, like Paul, encouraged Saints to be chaste in her talk “Love and Marriage” (worldwide devotional for young adults, Jan. 8, 2017, broadcasts.lds.org). How do the truths about love and intimacy described by Sister Nelson differ from the world's messages?

See also Romans 1:24–27; “Chastity,” Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org.

1 CORINTHIANS 7:29–33

Did Paul teach that it is better to be unmarried than married?

Several verses in 1 Corinthians 7 seem to suggest that while marriage is acceptable, remaining single

and abstaining completely from sexual relations is preferred. However, Joseph Smith Translation, 1 Corinthians 7:29–33 (see Bible appendix) helps us understand that Paul was referring to those called to be full-time missionaries, observing that they were

able to serve God better if they remained single during their missions. The Lord has taught through His servants, including Paul, that marriage is part of His eternal plan and necessary for exaltation (see 1 Corinthians 11:11; D&C 131:1–4).



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

1 CORINTHIANS 1:10–17; 3:1–11

As your family members read these verses, invite them to find an insight that can help them be more unified.

1 CORINTHIANS 3:1–2

Maybe you could read these verses while eating a snack of milk and meat, and you could compare the way babies grow into adults with the way we grow spiritually.

1 CORINTHIANS 3:4–9

Paul compared his missionary efforts to planting seeds. What does his comparison suggest about how we should approach sharing the gospel with others?

1 CORINTHIANS 6:19–20

Comparing our bodies to temples, as Paul did, can be an effective way to teach about the sacredness of our bodies. Perhaps you could show pictures of temples, such as those that accompany this outline. Why are temples sacred? How are our bodies like temples? What can we do to treat our bodies like temples? (See also “Sexual Purity,” *For the Strength of Youth*, 35–37.) If possible, go to the temple together or visit the temple grounds. This could enrich your discussion about the sacredness of the temple and of our bodies.

Improving Personal Study

Be patient with yourself. Paul taught that milk comes before meat when we are learning the gospel (see 1 Corinthians 3:1–2). If you find that some doctrines are difficult to understand now, be patient. Trust that answers will come as you have faith and diligently study.



Paul compared our bodies to the sacredness of the temple. Clockwise from upper left: Tijuana Mexico Temple, Taipei Taiwan Temple, Tegucigalpa Honduras Temple, Houston Texas Temple.



AUGUST 26–SEPTEMBER 1

1 Corinthians 8–13

“Ye Are the Body of Christ”

As you prayerfully read 1 Corinthians 8–13, the Holy Ghost may speak to you in subtle ways (see 1 Kings 19:11–12). Recording these impressions will help you recall the feelings and thoughts you had during your study.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

In Paul's time, Corinth was a wealthy trade center with residents from all over the Roman Empire. With so many different cultures and religions in the city, Church members in Corinth struggled to maintain unity, so Paul sought to help them find unity in their belief in Christ. This unity was to be more than just peaceful coexistence; Paul wasn't asking them merely to tolerate each other's differences. Rather, he taught that when you join the Church of Jesus Christ, you are “baptized into one body,” and every body part is needed (1 Corinthians 12:13). When one member is

lost, it's like losing a limb, and the body is weaker as a result. When one member suffers, we should all feel it and do our part to relieve it. In this kind of unity, differences are not just acknowledged but cherished, because without members of diverse gifts and abilities, the body would be limited. So whether you feel like you've always been at home in the Church or find yourself wondering if you truly belong, Paul's message is that unity is not sameness. You need your fellow Saints, and your fellow Saints need you.



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

1 CORINTHIANS 10:1–13

God provides a way to escape temptation.

Spiritual experiences, even miraculous ones, do not exempt us from temptations that are “common to man” (1 Corinthians 10:13). That may be one reason Paul wrote about how the Israelites in Moses’s day struggled with temptation, even though they witnessed mighty miracles (see Exodus 13:21; 14:13–31). As you read 1 Corinthians 10:1–13, what warnings in the Israelites’ experiences seem applicable to you? What kinds of “escape” from temptation has Heavenly Father provided for you? (see also Alma 13:27–30; 3 Nephi 18:18–19).

1 CORINTHIANS 10:16–17; 11:16–30

The sacrament unifies us as followers of Christ.

Although the ordinance of the sacrament involves a personal commitment between an individual and the Lord, it is also an experience we share with others—we almost always partake of the sacrament together, as a body of Saints. Read what Paul taught about the sacrament, and think about how this sacred ordinance can help “many” become “one” in Christ (1 Corinthians 10:17). How might you draw strength from partaking of the sacrament with other believers? How does this influence the way you prepare for the sacrament and how you strive to keep your baptismal covenants?

1 CORINTHIANS 11:3–15

Why did Paul write about head coverings and hairstyles?

Paul referred to cultural customs of dress and grooming in order to teach about the relationships between men, women, and the Lord. While we do not follow these customs today, we can still learn from Paul’s declaration in 1 Corinthians 11:11 that men and women are both needed in the Lord’s plan, both in marriage and in the Church. As Elder David A. Bednar taught, “The man and the woman are intended to learn from, strengthen, bless, and complete each other” as they progress together toward exaltation (“We Believe in Being Chaste,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2013, 42; see also Mark 10:6–9).

1 CORINTHIANS 12–13

Spiritual gifts are given to benefit all of Heavenly Father’s children.

The list of spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12–13 is not exhaustive. But it is a good place to start as you identify and ponder the spiritual gifts Heavenly Father has given you. The article “Spiritual Gifts” in Gospel Topics ([topics.lds.org](https://www.lds.org/topics)) may help you better understand these gifts. You might add to Paul’s list gifts you have noticed in others, in yourself, or in people in the scriptures. If you have a patriarchal blessing, it may also mention some of your spiritual gifts. How do these gifts help us build God’s kingdom? Consider what you will do to seek “earnestly the best gifts” (1 Corinthians 12:31).

See also Moroni 10:8–21, 30; Doctrine and Covenants 46:8–26; Articles of Faith 1:7.



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, seek inspiration in order to meet the needs of your family. The following suggestions might help:

1 CORINTHIANS 9:24–27

Since Paul compared living the gospel to running a race, you could have a family race to illustrate his point. Award a crown to everyone who finishes the race, and discuss how all who are diligent in following Jesus Christ in this life will win the “incorruptible” prize (1 Corinthians 9:25; see also 2 Timothy 4:7–8). What might a champion runner do to prepare for a race? Likewise, what can we do to prepare to return to Heavenly Father?



Paul compared living the gospel to running a race.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:1–11

Consider giving everyone a piece of paper with the name of another family member at the top. Ask

everyone to list the spiritual gifts they notice that person has. You could then pass the papers in a circle until everyone has had a chance to write about each family member's gifts.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:3

Why is the Holy Ghost necessary to gain a testimony of Jesus Christ? What can we do to invite the Holy Ghost to strengthen our testimonies of Him?

1 CORINTHIANS 12:12–27

Paul's analogy of a body could be a memorable way to discuss family unity. For example, family members could try drawing a body made only of eyes or ears (see verse 17). What do these verses suggest about how we should treat each other as family members?

1 CORINTHIANS 13:4–8

Paul's definition of charity might make an inspiring motto for your family. You could assign each family member to study a phrase in verses 4–8 and teach the rest of the family what it means using definitions, examples, and personal experiences. How is the Savior an example of these attributes? You could also make posters together for each of these phrases and display them throughout your house. Be creative!

Improving Our Teaching

Display a scripture. Display a verse you find meaningful in a place where family members will see it often. Invite other family members to take turns selecting a scripture to display.



"The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body" (1 Corinthians 10:16-17).



SEPTEMBER 2–8

1 Corinthians 14–16

“God Is Not the Author of Confusion, but of Peace”

Record your impressions while you read 1 Corinthians 14–16. Pray about what the Spirit has taught you, and ask Heavenly Father if there is more He would like you to learn.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

Because the Church and its doctrines were relatively new in Corinth, it's understandable that Corinthian Saints encountered confusion. Paul had previously taught them the fundamental truth of the gospel: “That Christ died for our sins . . . and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day” (1 Corinthians 15:3–4). But some members soon began teaching that “there is no resurrection of the dead” (1 Corinthians 15:12). Paul implored them to “keep in memory” the truths

they had been taught (1 Corinthians 15:2). When we encounter conflicting opinions about gospel truths, it is good to remember that “God is not the author of confusion, but of peace” (1 Corinthians 14:33). Listening to the Lord’s appointed servants and holding to the simple truths they repeatedly teach can help us find peace and “stand fast in the faith” (1 Corinthians 16:13).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

1 CORINTHIANS 14

I can seek the gift of prophecy.

Have you ever wondered what the gift of prophecy is? Is it the ability to predict the future? Can anyone receive this gift? Or is it just for prophets?

The President of the Church is the only person who can prophesy for and receive revelation on behalf of the whole Church; however, the Guide to the Scriptures defines *prophecy* as “divinely inspired words or writings, which a person receives through revelation from the Holy Ghost. . . . When a person prophesies, he speaks or writes that which God wants him to know, for his own good or the good of others” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Prophecy,” scriptures.lds.org; see also D&C 100:5–8). Revelation 19:10 also defines the spirit of prophecy as the “testimony of Jesus.”

What do you learn about this spiritual gift from 1 Corinthians 14:3, 31, 39–40? What might Paul have meant when he invited the Corinthians to “covet to prophesy”? (1 Corinthians 14:39). How can you accept this invitation?

See also Numbers 11:24–29; Jacob 4:6–7; Alma 17:3; Doctrine and Covenants 11:23–28.

1 CORINTHIANS 14:34–35

Why did Paul say women should keep silent in church?

Paul’s teachings in 1 Corinthians 14:34–35 may seem confusing, since earlier in this same epistle he wrote that women prayed and prophesied (see 1 Corinthians 11:5). The Joseph Smith Translation replaces the word *speaking* in verses 34 and 35 with the word *rule*. This

clarification suggests that Paul could have been referring to women who were trying to usurp authority in Church meetings. (See also 1 Timothy 2:11–12.)

See also “Women in the Church,” Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org.

1 CORINTHIANS 15:1–34, 53–58

Jesus Christ gained victory over death.

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is so fundamental to Christianity, one might say that without it there *is* no Christianity—to use Paul’s words, “then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain” (1 Corinthians 15:14). Yet some of the Corinthian Saints were teaching that there would be “no resurrection of the dead” (1 Corinthians 15:12). As you read Paul’s response in 1 Corinthians 15, take a moment to ponder how your life would be different if you did not believe in the Resurrection. How has it blessed you? What blessings will come to you because Jesus Christ was resurrected? (see 2 Nephi 9:6–19; Alma 40:19–23; D&C 93:33–34). What does the phrase “If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain” mean to you? (verse 17).



“There is one glory of the sun” (1 Corinthians 15:41).

1 CORINTHIANS 15:35–54

Resurrected bodies are different from mortal bodies.

Have you ever wondered what a resurrected body is like? According to 1 Corinthians 15:35, some of the Corinthians wondered the same thing. Read Paul's answer in verses 36–54, and note words and phrases

that describe the differences between mortal bodies and resurrected bodies. For instance, verses 40–42 teach that resurrected bodies will shine in glory in varying degrees, just as the sun, moon, and stars differ in brightness (see also Joseph Smith Translation, 1 Corinthians 15:40; D&C 76:50–112).

See also Alma 11:43–45; Luke 24:39.



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

1 CORINTHIANS 15:29

We learn from verse 29 that ancient Saints participated in baptisms for the dead, just as we do in the Church today. How are we doing as a family in preparing the names of our ancestors for temple ordinances? See also “Baptisms for the Dead,” Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org.

1 CORINTHIANS 15:35–54

What objects or pictures could you show to help your family understand some of the terms Paul used to describe how mortal bodies are different from resurrected bodies? For instance, to demonstrate the difference between *corruptible* and *incorruptible* (see verses 52–54) you could show metal that has rusted (such as iron) and metal that doesn't rust (such as

stainless steel). Or you could contrast something weak with something powerful (see verse 43).

1 CORINTHIANS 15:55–57

A discussion about these verses can be especially meaningful if your family knows someone who has passed away. Family members could bear testimony of how Jesus Christ takes away “the sting of death” (verse 56). Elder Paul V. Johnson's message “And There Shall Be No More Death” (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2016, 121–23) could be a good addition to your discussion.

1 CORINTHIANS 16:13

To help your family members relate to this verse, you could draw a circle on the ground and instruct a family member to “stand fast” inside it while blindfolded as others try to remove him or her from the circle. What difference does it make when the family member in the circle is not blindfolded and can “watch”? What can we do to “stand strong” in our lives when we are tempted to make bad choices?

Improving Personal Study

Look for patterns. In the scriptures we find patterns that show how the Lord does His work. What patterns do you find in 1 Corinthians 14 that help us understand how to teach and edify one another? (see also D&C 50:13–23).



Why Weepest Thou? by Simon Dewey



SEPTEMBER 9–15

2 Corinthians 1–7

“Be Ye Reconciled to God”

As you study Paul’s letters to the Corinthians, write down some of the gospel principles you discover and ponder how you can apply them in your life.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

Sometimes, being a Church leader means having to say some difficult things. This was true in Paul’s day just as it is today. Apparently a previous letter from Paul to the Corinthian Saints included chastening and caused hurt feelings. In the letter that became 2 Corinthians, Paul tried to explain what had motivated his harsh words: “Out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you” (2 Corinthians 2:4). When you’re on the receiving end of some

correction from a leader, it definitely helps to know that it is inspired by Christlike love. And even in those cases where it is not, if we’re willing to see others with the kind of love Paul felt, it’s easier to respond appropriately to any offenses. As Elder Jeffrey R. Holland counseled, “Be kind regarding human frailty—your own as well as that of those who serve with you in a Church led by volunteer, mortal men and women. Except in the case of His only perfect Begotten Son, imperfect people are all God has ever had to work with” (“Lord, I Believe,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2013, 94).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

2 CORINTHIANS 1:3–7; 4:6–10, 17–18; 7:4–7

My trials can be a blessing.

Given the tribulation that Paul faced in his ministry, it's not surprising that he wrote a lot about the purposes and blessings of tribulation. Think about ways your trials can be a blessing as you read 2 Corinthians 1:3–7; 4:6–10, 17–18; 7:4–7. For example, you might ponder how God “comforteth [you] in all [your] tribulation” and how you can, in turn, “comfort them which are in any trouble” (2 Corinthians 1:4). Or you might focus on the light of Jesus Christ that “hath shined” in your heart, even when you are “troubled” and “perplexed” (2 Corinthians 4:6–10).

See also Mosiah 24:13–17; Gospel Topics, “Adversity,” [topics.lds.org](https://www.lds.org/topics).

2 CORINTHIANS 2:5–11

I receive blessings and bless others when I forgive.

We don't know much about the man Paul referred to in 2 Corinthians 2:5–11, only that he had transgressed (see verses 5–6) and that Paul wanted the Saints to forgive him (see verses 7–8). Why do we sometimes fail to “confirm [our] love toward” someone who has offended us? (verse 8). How does withholding forgiveness harm others and ourselves? (see verses 7, 10–11). What does it mean to you that withholding forgiveness from others gives “Satan . . . an advantage of us”? (verse 11).

See also Doctrine and Covenants 64:9–11.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:14–21

Through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, I can be reconciled to God.

As much as anyone, Paul knew what it was like to become “a new creature.” He went from being a persecutor of the Christians to a fearless defender of Christ. He knew for himself how Jesus, who “knew no sin,” can take away our sin and give us His “righteousness,” restoring us to unity with God. As you read these verses, think about what it means to be reconciled to another person. How does this help you understand what it means to be reconciled to God? Ponder what might be separating you from God. What do you need to do to be more completely reconciled with Him?

See also 2 Nephi 10:23–25.

2 CORINTHIANS 7:8–11

Godly sorrow leads to repentance.

We don't usually think of sorrow as a good thing, but Paul spoke of “godly sorrow” as a necessary part of repentance. Consider what you can learn about godly sorrow from the following: 2 Corinthians 7:8–11; Alma 36:16–21; Mormon 2:11–15; and “Repentance,” Gospel Topics, [topics.lds.org](https://www.lds.org/topics). When have you felt godly sorrow, and what effect did it have in your life?



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

2 CORINTHIANS 3:1–3

Have members of your family ever asked someone to write a letter of recommendation for them, such as for a job or school application? Ask them to talk about this experience and what the letter said about them.

Paul taught that the lives of the Saints were like letters of recommendation for the gospel from Jesus Christ Himself, “written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God.” As you read 2 Corinthians 3:1–3 together, discuss how our examples are like letters of recommendation for the gospel that can be “known and read of all men.” Perhaps each family member could write a letter or “epistle” explaining how another family member has been a good example of a disciple of Jesus Christ. They could read their letters to the family and give them to the family member they wrote about. Why is it important to understand that our lives are “epistle[s] of Christ”?

2 CORINTHIANS 5:6–7

What does it mean to “walk by faith, not by sight”? What are we doing to show that we believe in things we can’t see?

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

Can your family think of—or find—examples in nature of things that go through remarkable transformations and become new creatures? (see the picture that accompanies this outline). What do these examples teach us about how the gospel of Jesus Christ can change us?

2 CORINTHIANS 6:1–10

According to these verses, what does it mean to be “ministers of God”?

2 CORINTHIANS 6:14–18

How can we follow Paul’s counsel to “come out from among [the unrighteous], and be ye separate” while also being good examples to those around us?

Improving Our Teaching

Share object lessons. Some gospel concepts, such as the Atonement, can be difficult to understand. Consider using pictures or objects that can help your family understand the principles you discover in the scriptures.



When we are converted to the gospel of Christ, our transformation is so profound that Paul described it as becoming a "new creature" (2 Corinthians 5:17).



SEPTEMBER 16–22

2 Corinthians 8–13

“God Loveth a Cheerful Giver”

Recording spiritual impressions will help you remember what you learn during scripture study. You might write in a study journal, make notes in the margins of your scriptures, add notes in your Gospel Library app, or make an audio recording of your thoughts.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

What would you do if you heard that a congregation of Saints in another area was struggling in poverty? This was the situation that Paul described to the Corinthian Saints in 2 Corinthians 8–9. He hoped to persuade the Corinthian Saints to donate some of their abundance to Saints in need. But beyond a request for donations, Paul’s words also contain profound truths about giving: “Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God

loveth a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:7). In our day, there *are* still Saints throughout the world who are in need of help. Sometimes the most we can do for them is to fast and donate fast offerings. In other cases, our giving can be more direct and personal. Whatever forms our sacrifices take, it’s worth examining our motivations for giving. Are our sacrifices expressions of love? After all, it’s love that makes a giver cheerful.



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

2 CORINTHIANS 8:1–15; 9:5–15

I can cheerfully share what I have to bless the poor and needy.

There are so many people in need all over the world. How can we possibly make a difference? Elder Jeffrey R. Holland offered this counsel: “Rich or poor, we are to ‘do what we can’ when others are in need [see Mark 14:6, 8]. . . . [God] will help you and guide you in compassionate acts of discipleship if you are conscientiously wanting and praying and looking for ways to keep a commandment He has given us again and again” (“Are We Not All Beggars?” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 41).

Read 2 Corinthians 8:1–15; 9:5–15, making note of principles Paul taught about caring for the poor and needy. What inspires you about Paul’s counsel? You might pray for guidance about what you can do to bless someone in need. Be sure to record any impressions you receive and act on them.

See also Mosiah 4:16–27; Alma 34:27–29; Henry B. Eyring, “Is Not This the Fast That I Have Chosen?” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2015, 22–25; Linda K. Burton, “I Was a Stranger,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2016, 13–15.

2 CORINTHIANS 11

False prophets seek to deceive.

It might help you understand this chapter to know that “false apostles” had arisen among the Corinthian Saints (2 Corinthians 11:13). What do you learn from verses 13–15 about those who teach false doctrines? What do you learn about true prophets as you read about Paul’s experiences as a minister of Christ? (see verses 23–33).

2 CORINTHIANS 11:3; 13:5–8

I should “examine” my faithfulness to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Because today there are many who seek to lead us away “from the simplicity that is in Christ” (2 Corinthians 11:3), you might accept Paul’s invitation to “examine [yourself], whether ye be in the faith” (2 Corinthians 13:5). For example, you might ponder what you can eliminate from your life that will help you focus on Christ, or you might complete the “Attribute Activity” in *Preach My Gospel*, page 126.

2 CORINTHIANS 12:2–4

What is “the third heaven,” and who was the man who was “caught up to” it?

In these verses, Paul was talking about himself, without mentioning himself directly—perhaps to avoid boasting about his remarkable vision. The phrase “the third heaven” refers to the celestial kingdom (see D&C 76:96–98).

2 CORINTHIANS 12:5–10

The Savior’s grace is sufficient to help me find strength in my weakness.

We don’t know what Paul’s “thorn in the flesh” was, but it’s easy to relate to his desire to have it removed. We all have challenges and problems that the Lord has not seen fit to remove from our lives. Think about your own challenges as you read 2 Corinthians 12:5–10. What did Paul teach about weakness? What does it mean to you that God’s grace is sufficient for you? How have you experienced God’s strengthening power?

See also Mosiah 23:21–24; 24:10–15; Ether 12:27; Moroni 10:32–33.

2 CORINTHIANS 13:1

What did Paul mean when he spoke of “two or three witnesses”?

In Old Testament times, two or three witnesses were required to bring an accusation against someone (see Deuteronomy 19:15). Paul cited this practice

when he referred to his third visit to Corinth. Modern examples of this principle of multiple witnesses include the Three Witnesses of the Book of Mormon, the testimonies of Jesus Christ provided by the Bible and the Book of Mormon, and the practice of missionaries, home teachers, and visiting teachers testifying in companionships.



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

2 CORINTHIANS 8–9

What do you find in these chapters that inspires your family to reach out to the poor and needy? This might be a good time to plan an act of service as a family for someone in need.

2 CORINTHIANS 9:6–7

Does your family know someone who could be described as “a cheerful giver”? How can we make our service to others more cheerful?

2 CORINTHIANS 10:3–7

How could you teach your family about our “warfare” against wickedness? Would your family enjoy building a wall or a fort with chairs and blankets? This could lead to a discussion about how to cast down things that lead us away from God and “[bring] into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” What are the spiritual “weapons” we use to control our thoughts? (see Ephesians 6:11–18).

2 CORINTHIANS 11:3

What can your family do to focus more on “the simplicity that is in Christ”?

Improving Personal Study

Record impressions. Elder Richard G. Scott said: “Knowledge carefully recorded is knowledge available in time of need. . . . [Recording spiritual direction] enhances the likelihood of your receiving further light” (“Acquiring Spiritual Knowledge,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 88; see also *Teaching in the Savior’s Way*, 12, 30).



"So let [every person] give; not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7).



SEPTEMBER 23–29

Galatians

“Walk in the Spirit”

As you read Galatians, record the impressions you receive. Doing so will help you remember and ponder them in the future.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

The gospel of Jesus Christ offers freedom from spiritual bondage. But sometimes people who have experienced the freedom of the gospel turn away from it and “desire again to be in bondage” (Galatians 4:9). This is what some Galatian Saints were doing—they were turning away from the liberty Christ had offered them (see Galatians 1:6). Paul’s epistle to the Galatians, then, was an urgent call to come back to “the liberty

wherewith Christ hath made us free” (Galatians 5:1). This call is one we also need to hear and heed because while circumstances change, the struggle between freedom and bondage is constant. As Paul taught, it’s not enough to be “called unto liberty” (Galatians 5:13); we must also “stand fast” in it (Galatians 5:1) by relying on Christ.



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

GALATIANS 1–5

The law of Christ makes me free.

Paul wrote to the Galatian Saints when he learned they were being led astray by false teachings. One of these teachings was that in order to be saved, Gentiles who had accepted the gospel needed to be circumcised and to keep other traditions of the law of Moses. Paul called these traditions “the yoke of bondage” (Galatians 5:1) because they were preventing the Saints from fully living the law of Christ, which brings true freedom. What do you find in Paul’s counsel to the Galatians that can help you understand what true freedom is? You could also ponder what yokes of bondage might exist in your life. Is there anything that is preventing you from experiencing the freedom that the gospel offers? How have Christ and His gospel “made [you] free”? (Galatians 5:1).

See also 2 Nephi 2:27; 9:10–12.

GALATIANS 3

I am an heir to the blessings promised to Abraham.

Some of the Galatian Saints were concerned that because they were not literal descendants (“seed”) of Abraham, they would not receive the blessings promised to Abraham, including those of exaltation. According to Galatians 3:7–9, 13–14, 27–29, what qualifies a person to be the “seed of Abraham”? To learn about the blessings promised to Abraham and the blessings that we can inherit as his seed, see Bible Dictionary, “Abraham, covenant of,” and “Abrahamic Covenant,” Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org.

GALATIANS 3:6–25

Did Abraham have the gospel of Jesus Christ?

The Prophet Joseph Smith explained: “We cannot believe, that the ancients in all ages were so ignorant of the system of heaven as many suppose, since all that were ever saved, were saved through the power of this great plan of redemption, as much so before the coming of Christ as since. . . . Abraham offered sacrifice, and notwithstanding this, had the Gospel preached to him” (“The Elders of the Church in Kirtland to Their Brethren Abroad,” *The Evening and the Morning Star*, Mar. 1834, 143, josephsmithpapers.org). The following scriptures also indicate that the gospel of Jesus Christ was preached before the Savior’s mortal ministry: Helaman 8:13–20; Moses 6:50–66.

GALATIANS 5:13–26; 6:7–10

If I “walk in the Spirit,” I will receive the “fruit of the Spirit.”

Studying these verses can help you evaluate how fully you are walking in the Spirit. Are you experiencing the fruit of the Spirit mentioned in verses 22–23? What other fruit, or results, of spiritual living have you noticed? Ponder what you need to do to cultivate this fruit more fully. How might cultivating this fruit improve the important relationships in your life?



I must seek the “fruit of the Spirit” in my life.

Perhaps you are trying to walk in the Spirit, but it doesn't seem like your efforts are bearing the promised fruit. Read Galatians 6:7–10 (often referred to as the law of the harvest). What message do you feel the Lord has for you in these verses? How could you use

these verses to encourage someone who is struggling to live the gospel?

See also Alma 32:28, 41–43; Doctrine and Covenants 64:32–34.



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

GALATIANS 3:11

What does it mean to “live by faith”? What is your family doing to show that you live by faith?

GALATIANS 4:1–7

You might introduce Galatians 4 by discussing the differences between a king's servants and his children. What opportunities or potential does a king's child have that a servant does not? Think about this as you read together verses 1–7. What do these verses teach about our relationship with Heavenly Father?

GALATIANS 5:22–23

To add some fun to your discussion of Galatians 5:22–23, your family could label different fruits with words Paul used to describe the “fruit of the Spirit.” Then each family member could select one, define

it, and talk about someone who exemplifies that fruit. This could lead to a discussion about ways your family could invite the Spirit into your home and cultivate this fruit. After the discussion, you could enjoy a fruit salad together.

GALATIANS 6:1

There may be times when someone in your family is “overtaken in a fault.” What counsel do you find in Galatians 6:1 about what to do in such a situation?

GALATIANS 6:7–10

If your family has ever planted something together, you could use that experience to illustrate the principle “whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (verse 7). Or you could ask family members about their favorite fruits or vegetables and talk about what it takes to grow a plant that produces that food. (You can use the picture that accompanies this outline as a visual aid.) You could then have a conversation about blessings your family hopes to receive and how to “reap” those blessings.

Improving Our Teaching

Help your family liken the scriptures to themselves. Nephi said, “I did liken all scriptures unto us, that it might be for our profit and learning” (1 Nephi 19:23). To help your family do this, you could invite them to ponder times when they have experienced the fruit of the Spirit described in Galatians 5:22–23. (See *Teaching in the Savior's Way*, 21.)



Paul taught that when we walk in the Spirit, we will experience the fruit of the Spirit in our lives.



SEPTEMBER 30–OCTOBER 13

Ephesians

“For the Perfecting of the Saints”

Do you see any connections between the messages in general conference and Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians?

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

When the gospel began to spread in Ephesus, it caused “no small stir” (Acts 19:23) among the Ephesians. Local craftsmen who produced shrines to a pagan goddess saw Christianity as a threat to their livelihood, and soon “they were full of wrath, . . . and the whole city was filled with confusion” (see Acts 19:27–29). Imagine being a new convert to the gospel in such a setting. Many Ephesians did accept and live the gospel amid this “uproar” (Acts 19:40), and Paul

assured them that “Christ . . . is our peace” (Ephesians 2:13–14). These words, along with his invitation to “let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away” (Ephesians 4:31) seem as timely and comforting now as they were then. For the Ephesians, as for you, the strength to face adversity comes “in the Lord, and in the power of his might” (Ephesians 6:10–13).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

EPHESIANS 1:4–11, 17–19

Has God “chosen” or “predestinated” some of His children to be saved?

Paul spoke of the Saints being “predestinated” by God and “chosen . . . before the foundation of the world” to be His people. As President Henry B. Eyring has noted, the fact that so many people live and die without the chance to receive the gospel causes some to “conclude that God must have determined in advance which of His children He would save and made the gospel available to them, while those who never heard the gospel simply were not ‘chosen.’ But . . . God’s plan is much more loving and just than that. Our Heavenly Father is anxious to gather and bless all of His family” (“Gathering the Family of God,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2017, 20–21). All of God’s children can accept the gospel and its ordinances because of the work performed for the dead in holy temples.

Although no one is predestined to be saved or not saved, modern revelation teaches that some were chosen or “foreordained” in the premortal world to fulfill certain responsibilities here on earth. This includes the responsibility that all Latter-day Saints have to share the gospel and help all of God’s children on both sides of the veil come to Christ. (See “Foreordination,” Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org.)

EPHESIANS 1:10

God will “gather together in one all things in Christ.”

Have you ever wondered what “the dispensation of the fulness of times” is or what it means to “gather together in one all things in Christ”? As you ponder these phrases, read the following scriptures: Ephesians 4:13; 2 Nephi 30:7–8; Doctrine and Covenants 110:11–16; 112:30–32; 128:18–21. You may feel inspired to write your own explanations of these phrases.

EPHESIANS 2:19–22; 4:11–16

The Church is founded on apostles and prophets, and Jesus Christ is the chief cornerstone.

Reading Paul’s teachings about apostles and prophets can help you prepare to hear the messages of modern apostles and prophets during general conference. According to Ephesians 2:19–22; 4:11–16, why do we have prophets and apostles? How have their teachings helped you not be “carried about with every wind of doctrine”?

See also Acts 4:10–12.



The Lord calls prophets and apostles to lead His Church.

EPHESIANS 5:21–6:4

I can strengthen my family relationships.

As you read Ephesians 5:21–6:4, what thoughts come to you about how to strengthen your family relationships?

It is important to note that Paul’s words in Ephesians 5:22 were written in the context of the social customs of his era. Prophets and apostles today teach that men are not superior to women and that spouses should be “equal partners” (see “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2017, inside back cover). Even so, you can still find relevant counsel in Ephesians 5:23–33, especially if you are married or

preparing for marriage. For example, how does Christ show His love for the Saints? What does this imply about how husbands should treat their wives? What messages do you find for yourself in these verses?

EPHESIANS 6:10–18

Putting on “the whole armour of God” will help protect me from evil.

As you read Ephesians 6:10–18, consider why Paul might have named each piece of armor the way he did.

What will the “whole armour of God” protect us from? What can you do to more fully put on each piece of armor every day?

See also 2 Nephi 1:23; Doctrine and Covenants 27:15–18.



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

EPHESIANS 1:10

Through the latter-day Restoration, God is gathering all things in one, including all the principles and ordinances of the gospel. To demonstrate this idea, you could hide objects or written phrases around your home that represent things that have been restored in our day (like *priesthood keys*, *temple ordinances*, *scriptures*, and *spiritual gifts*). Family members could search for them and “gather” them together. Why are we thankful to live in the “dispensation of the fulness of times”?

EPHESIANS 2:4–10; 3:14–21

Invite family members to share experiences in which they have felt the love and mercy of God and Jesus Christ described in these verses.

EPHESIANS 2:12–19

Your family might enjoy building walls out of pillows or other objects you have at home and then knocking them down. What kinds of walls separate people today? How has Jesus Christ “broken down the . . . wall of partition between us” and God?

EPHESIANS 6:10–18

Your family could make their own “armour of God” using household items. The video “The Armour of God” (LDS.org) can help family members visualize this armor, and they can find simple explanations in “The Whole Armor of God” (*Friend*, June 2016, 24–25). How does each piece of armor protect us spiritually? What can we do to help each other “put on the whole armour of God” (Ephesians 6:11) every day?

Improving Personal Study

Let the Spirit guide your study. Be sensitive to the Spirit as He guides you toward the things you need to learn each day, even if this leads you to study a topic that you hadn’t originally planned.



Putting on the armor of God can protect us spiritually.



OCTOBER 14-20

Philippians; Colossians

“I Can Do All Things through Christ Which Strengtheneth Me”

When was the last time you read the spiritual impressions you have recorded during your study of the New Testament? It might be helpful to review the promptings you’ve been receiving.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

Paul wrote his epistles to the Philippians and Colossians while he was in prison. But these letters don’t have the tone you might expect from someone in prison. Paul spoke more about joy, rejoicing, and thanksgiving than he did about afflictions and trials: “Christ is preached,” he said, “and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice” (Philippians 1:18). “Though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding . . . the steadfastness of your faith in Christ” (Colossians 2:5). Certainly, “the peace

of God” that Paul experienced in his difficult circumstances “passeth all understanding” (Philippians 4:7), but it was nonetheless a reality. In our own trials, we can feel this same peace and “rejoice in the Lord alway” (Philippians 4:4). We can, as Paul did, rely completely upon Jesus Christ, “in whom we have redemption” (Colossians 1:14). We can say, as did Paul, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Philippians 4:13; see also Colossians 1:11).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

PHILIPPIANS 2:12–13

Do we “work out [our] own salvation”?

The phrase “work out your own salvation” is used by some people to support the idea that we are saved only by our own efforts. But that’s a limited view, just as it is limited to understand Paul’s teaching—“by grace are ye saved through faith” (Ephesians 2:8)—to mean that no works are required for salvation. The scriptures, including the writings of Paul, clearly teach the need for both the grace of Jesus Christ and personal effort in order to receive salvation. As Nephi said, “It is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do” (2 Nephi 25:23). Even in our efforts to work out our salvation, “it is God which worketh in you” (Philippians 2:13; see also Philippians 1:6; Bible Dictionary, “Grace”).

PHILIPPIANS 3:5–14

The gospel of Jesus Christ is worth every sacrifice.

Paul gave up much when he converted to the gospel of Jesus Christ, including the influential place he held in Jewish society as a Pharisee. In Philippians 3:5–14, look for what Paul gained because he was willing to make sacrifices for the gospel. How did he feel about his sacrifices?

Then consider your own discipleship. What have you sacrificed for the gospel of Jesus Christ? What have you received? Are there any additional sacrifices you feel you need to make to become a more dedicated disciple of the Savior?

See also 3 Nephi 9:19–20; Doctrine and Covenants 58:2–5; Robert C. Gay, “What Shall a Man Give in Exchange for His Soul?” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 34–36.

PHILIPPIANS 4:1–13

I can find joy in Christ, regardless of my circumstances.

Paul’s life is a vivid illustration of the truth expressed by President Russell M. Nelson: “When the focus of our lives is on . . . Jesus Christ and His gospel, we can feel joy regardless of what is happening—or not happening—in our lives. Joy comes from and because of Him” (“Joy and Spiritual Survival,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2016, 82).

As you read Philippians—particularly chapter 4—search for statements that can help you find joy in any circumstance of your life. When have you experienced “the peace of God” during a challenging time? (verse 7). When have you found strength “through Christ” to do hard things? (verse 13). Why do you think it is important to “be content” in all circumstances? (verse 11). How can practicing the attributes in verse 8 help you find joy in your circumstances?

See Alma 33:23; Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Grateful in Any Circumstances,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2014, 70–77.

COLOSSIANS 1:12–23

My faith is founded on Jesus Christ.

Here’s a study approach you could try with almost any chapter of scripture, though it works especially well with Colossians 1:12–23. Search the verses for anything you learn about Jesus Christ, and make a list of what you find. Why do you feel it is important to know these things about the Savior?

COLOSSIANS 3:1–17

Disciples of Jesus Christ become “new” as they live His gospel.

How do you know if the gospel of Jesus Christ is helping you become a “new man [or woman]”? One

way to find out is to explore Colossians 3:1–17 and make a list of the attitudes, attributes, and actions of the “old man” and another list of the attitudes, attributes, and actions of the “new man.”

Does your study of these verses inspire any thoughts about how the gospel is changing you? Record your thoughts so that you can review them in the future and ponder how you are progressing.



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

PHILIPPIANS

Your family may notice the words *joy* or *rejoice* repeated often in Philippians. Each time you come across one of these words, you could stop and discuss what Paul taught about how to find joy.

PHILIPPIANS 2:14–15

How can we “shine as lights in the world”?

PHILIPPIANS 4:8

Perhaps your family could identify things to “think on” that fit the descriptions in this verse (see also Articles

of Faith 1:13). How would your family be blessed by following Paul’s counsel?

COLOSSIANS 1:9–11; 2:2–3

What can we do to increase “in the knowledge of God”? What “treasures of wisdom and knowledge” do we find in the gospel?

COLOSSIANS 1:23; 2:7

Perhaps your family could read these verses sitting around a tree or while looking at a picture of a tree (such as the one that accompanies this outline). What does it mean to be “grounded” and “rooted” in Christ? How can we help each other strengthen our spiritual roots?

Improving Our Teaching

Live your testimony. “You teach what you are,” Elder Neal A. Maxwell taught. “Your traits will be more remembered . . . than a particular truth in a particular lesson” (in *Teaching in the Savior’s Way*, 13).



Paul taught that our faith should be “rooted” in Jesus Christ (Colossians 2:7).



OCTOBER 21-27

1 and 2 Thessalonians

“Be Not Soon Shaken in Mind, or Be Troubled”

If we do not record the impressions we receive from the Spirit, we might forget them.
What does the Spirit prompt you to record as you read 1 and 2 Thessalonians?

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

In Thessalonica, Paul and Silas were accused of having “turned the world upside down” (Acts 17:6). Their preaching angered certain leaders among the Jews, and these leaders stirred the people into an uproar (see Acts 17:1–10). As a result, Paul and Silas were advised to leave Thessalonica. Paul worried about the new Thessalonian converts and the persecution they were facing, but he was unable to return to visit them. “When I could no longer forbear,” he wrote, “I sent to know your faith.” In response, Paul’s assistant Timothy, who had been serving in Thessalonica, “brought us good tidings of your faith and charity” (1 Thessalonians

3:5–6). In fact, the Thessalonian Saints were known as examples “to all that believe” (1 Thessalonians 1:7), and news of their faith spread to cities abroad. Imagine Paul’s joy and relief to hear that his work among them “was not in vain” (1 Thessalonians 2:1). But Paul knew that faithfulness in the past is not sufficient for spiritual survival in the future, and he was wary of the influence of false teachers among the Saints (see 2 Thessalonians 2:2–3). His message to them, and to us, is to continue to “perfect that which is lacking in [our] faith” and to “increase more and more” in love (see 1 Thessalonians 3:10; 4:10).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

1 THESSALONIANS 1-2

Ministers of the gospel preach with sincerity and love.

In 1 Thessalonians, Paul's words reveal both the concern and the joy of someone who has given himself wholly to serving God's children. Especially in the first two chapters of 1 Thessalonians, you will find words and phrases that describe how a true minister teaches the gospel. What are you inspired to do to improve your teaching of the gospel?

1 THESSALONIANS 3:9-4:12

As I follow Jesus Christ, I can become holy.

We all hope that at "the coming of our Lord," we will be able to stand before Him with "hearts unblameable in holiness before God" (1 Thessalonians 3:13). What did Paul teach about becoming more holy in 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13; 4:1-12?

See also Moroni 10:32-33; Bible Dictionary, "Holiness"; Carol F. McConkie, "The Beauty of Holiness," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2017, 9-12.

1 THESSALONIANS 4:16-18; 5:1-10;

2 THESSALONIANS 1:4-10

If I am faithful and watchful, I will be prepared for the Savior's Second Coming.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:1-10, Paul used several metaphors to teach important truths about the time when Jesus will return to the earth. As you study these metaphors, consider writing down the impressions that come to you about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ:

"A thief in the night": _____

"Travail upon a woman with child": _____

Other metaphors you find: _____

What additional truths do you learn about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ from 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18; 5:1-10; 2 Thessalonians 1:4-10? What are you prompted to do to watch and prepare for His coming?

See also Dallin H. Oaks, "Preparation for the Second Coming," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2004, 7-10.

2 THESSALONIANS 2

An apostasy, or falling away from truth, was prophesied to precede the Second Coming.

Amid increasing persecutions, many of the Thessalonian Saints believed the Savior's Second Coming must be near. But Paul knew that before Jesus returned to earth there would be an apostasy—a rebellion or "falling away" from the truth (see 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4). You could deepen your understanding of the Great Apostasy—and your appreciation for the Restoration—by exploring some of the following resources:

Scriptures that foretold the Apostasy: Isaiah 24:5; Amos 8:11-12; Matthew 24:4-14; 2 Timothy 4:3-4

Scriptures that show the Apostasy was already beginning in Paul's time: Acts 20:28-30; Galatians 1:6-7; 1 Timothy 1:5-7

Observations about the Great Apostasy by Christian reformers:

Martin Luther: "I have sought nothing beyond reforming the Church in conformity with the Holy Scriptures. . . . I simply say that Christianity has ceased to exist among those who should have preserved it" (in E. G. Schweibert, *Luther and His Times: The Reformation from a New Perspective* [1950], 590).

Roger Williams: "The apostasy . . . hath so far corrupted all that there can be no recovery out of

that apostasy till Christ send forth new apostles to plant churches anew” (in Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom* [1877], 851).

Erasmus: “Everything is now so entangled with these questions [of doctrine] and decrees that we

dare not even hope to call the world back to true Christianity” (*The Praise of Folly*, trans. Clarence H. Miller, 2nd ed. [2003], 155–56).

See also 2 Nephi 28; “Apostasy,” Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org.



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to discuss based on your family’s needs. Here are some suggestions:

1 THESSALONIANS 3:9–13

What impresses you about the feelings Paul had for his friends? How can we foster such feelings for our family, friends, and fellow Saints?

1 THESSALONIANS 4:13–18

How can we use these verses to comfort ourselves or someone else when a loved one passes away?

1 THESSALONIANS 5:14–25

Review Paul’s counsel in 1 Thessalonians 5:14–25, and find a phrase that your family wants to focus on. Consider writing it on a poster to display in your home. Family members may add a note on the poster when they see each other living by the counsel on the poster.

2 THESSALONIANS 3:13

Do we ever feel “weary in well doing”—overwhelmed, perhaps, with the demands of discipleship? What helps us when we feel this way? (See Galatians 6:9; D&C 64:33.) How can we support each other when this happens?

Improving Our Personal Study

Seek revelation daily. “Revelation often comes ‘line upon line’ (2 Nephi 28:30), not all at once. . . . Don’t think of [gospel study] as something you make time for but as something you are always doing” (*Teaching in the Savior’s Way*, 12).



Resurrected Christ, by Robert T. Barrett



OCTOBER 28–NOVEMBER 3

1 and 2 Timothy; Titus; Philemon

“Be Thou an Example of the Believers”

Sometimes it’s helpful to approach your scripture study with one or more questions in mind. Invite the Spirit to guide you to answers as you study, and record any inspiration you receive.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

In the epistles Paul wrote to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, we get a glimpse into the heart of a servant of the Lord. Unlike Paul’s other epistles to entire congregations, these were written to individuals—Paul’s close friends and associates in God’s work—and reading them is like listening in on a conversation. We see Paul encouraging Timothy and Titus, two leaders of congregations, in their Church service. We see him

entreating his friend Philemon to forgive a fellow Saint and treat him like a brother in the gospel. Paul’s words were not addressed to us directly, and he may never have expected that so many people would one day read them. Yet we find in these epistles counsel and encouragement for us, whatever our personal ministry in the service of Christ might be.



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

1 AND 2 TIMOTHY; TITUS

Who were Timothy and Titus?

Timothy and Titus had served with Paul on some of his missionary journeys. During their service, they earned Paul's respect and trust. Timothy was later called as a Church leader in Ephesus, and Titus was called as a leader in Crete. In these epistles, Paul gave the leaders instruction and encouragement regarding their responsibilities, which included preaching the gospel and calling men to serve as bishops.

See also Bible Dictionary, "Pauline Epistles," "Timothy," "Titus."



Bishops are called to provide spiritual guidance to ward members.

1 TIMOTHY 4:10–16

If I am “an example of the believers,” I can lead others to the Savior and His gospel.

Timothy was relatively young, but Paul knew that he could be a great Church leader despite his youth. What counsel did Paul give to Timothy in 1 Timothy 4:10–16? How can this counsel help you lead others to the Savior and His gospel?

See also Alma 17:11.

2 TIMOTHY

“God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”

2 Timothy is believed to be the last epistle Paul wrote, and it seems that he knew his time on earth was short (see 2 Timothy 4:6–8). As you read this epistle, think about how Timothy might have felt knowing that he might soon be without his trusted mentor and leader. What did Paul say to encourage him? What do Paul's words teach you about facing your own trials and fears?

2 TIMOTHY 3

Living the gospel provides safety from the spiritual dangers of the last days.

We are living in “the last days” that Paul spoke of, and the “perilous times” have come (2 Timothy 3:1). As you read 2 Timothy 3, write down the perils of the last days that are mentioned (see also 1 Timothy 4:1–3):

Can you think of examples of these perils in the world around you—or in your own life? How do these perils, like the people described in verse 6, “creep into [your house], and lead [you] captive”? What counsel do you find in 2 Timothy 3, and elsewhere in these epistles, that could keep you and your family safe from these spiritual dangers? (see, for example, 1 Timothy 1:3–11; 2 Timothy 2:15–16; Titus 2:1–8).

PHILEMON**Who was Philemon?**

Philemon was a Christian who had been converted to the gospel by Paul. He owned a slave named Onesimus, who escaped slavery, met Paul, and converted to the gospel as well. In a letter to Philemon, Paul encouraged his friend to forgive Onesimus and receive him “not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved” (verse 16).

PHILEMON**Followers of Christ forgive one another.**

Have you ever been in a situation when someone sought your forgiveness? Think about that situation as you read the epistle to Philemon. What did Paul teach Philemon about why he should forgive Onesimus? Are there any messages to you in this epistle?

See also 1 Nephi 7:16–21; Mosiah 26:30–31; Gospel Topics, “Forgiveness,” topics.lds.org.



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

1 TIMOTHY 2:9–10

While aspects of Paul’s counsel for women to dress modestly do not apply to our time, we can all learn from his counsel to “adorn [ourselves] . . . with good works.” Your family might enjoy putting together a fashion show, with family members dressing up in clothing or jewelry labeled with different kinds of good works. What are some good works your family could do this week?

1 TIMOTHY 4:12

To help your family members desire to be “an example of the believers,” consider inviting them to draw pictures of how people have been good examples to them. How have these people inspired us to follow Jesus Christ? President Thomas S. Monson’s message

“Be an Example and a Light” (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2015, 86–88) might give some ideas.

1 TIMOTHY 6:7–12

Why do you think “the love of money” is considered “the root of all evil”? What are the dangers of focusing our lives on money? How can we be content with the blessings we have?

2 TIMOTHY 3:14–17

According to these verses, what blessings come to those who know and study the scriptures? Perhaps family members could share scriptures they have found to be especially “profitable.”

PHILEMON 1:17–21

What was Paul willing to do for Onesimus? How is this similar to what the Savior willingly did for us? (see also 1 Timothy 2:5–6; D&C 45:3–5). How can we follow the examples of Paul and the Savior?

Improving Our Teaching

Teach clear and simple doctrine. The gospel is beautiful in its simplicity (see D&C 133:57). Rather than trying to entertain your family with lessons requiring much preparation, strive to teach pure and simple doctrine (see 1 Timothy 1:3–7).



Studying the word of God helps keep us safe from the spiritual dangers of the last days.



Balm of Gilead, by Annie Henrie

NOVEMBER 4–10

Hebrews 1–6

Jesus Christ, “the Author of Eternal Salvation”

Recording spiritual impressions helps you recognize what the Holy Ghost wants to teach you. Acting on your impressions demonstrates your faith that those promptings are real.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

We all have to give up something in order to accept the gospel of Jesus Christ—whether that be bad habits, incorrect beliefs, unwholesome associations, or something else. For Gentiles, conversion often meant abandoning false gods. For the Hebrews (Jews), however, conversion proved to be, if not more difficult, a little more complicated. After all, their cherished beliefs and traditions were rooted in the worship of the true God and the teachings of His prophets, extending back thousands of years. Yet the Apostles taught that the law of Moses had been fulfilled in Jesus Christ and that a higher law was now the standard for believers. Would accepting Christianity mean that the

Hebrews must give up their earlier beliefs and history? The Epistle to the Hebrews sought to help settle such questions by teaching that the law of Moses, the prophets, and the ordinances are all important, but Jesus Christ is greater (see Hebrews 1:1–4; 3:1–6; 7:23–28). In fact, all these things point to and testify of Christ as the Son of God and the promised Messiah the Jews had been waiting for. The message for the Hebrews, and for all of us, is that sometimes we must give up traditions to make Jesus Christ the center of our worship and our lives—for it is through Christ “that we may obtain mercy” (Hebrews 4:16).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

HEBREWS

Who wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews?

Some scholars have questioned whether Paul wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews. The literary style of Hebrews is somewhat different from Paul's other letters, and the earliest versions of the text did not name an author. However, because the ideas expressed in Hebrews are consistent with Paul's other teachings, Latter-day Saints, in keeping with Christian tradition, have generally accepted that Paul was at least involved in writing this epistle.

See also Bible Dictionary, "Pauline Epistles."

HEBREWS 1–5

Jesus Christ is "the express image" of Heavenly Father.

Many Jews found it difficult to accept Jesus Christ as the Son of God. The Epistle to the Hebrews teaches that everything about Jesus testifies of and exemplifies His Father. As you read the first five chapters of Hebrews, you might keep a list of Jesus Christ's titles, roles, attributes, and works you find mentioned. What do these things teach you about the Savior? What do they teach you about Heavenly Father?

What does the following statement from Elder Jeffrey R. Holland add to your understanding of the teachings in these chapters? "Jesus . . . came to improve man's view of God and to plead with them to love their Heavenly Father as He has always and will always love them. . . . So feeding the hungry, healing the sick, rebuking hypocrisy, pleading for faith—this was Christ showing us the way of the Father" ("The Grandeur of God," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2003, 72).

HEBREWS 2:9–18; 4:12–16; 5:7–8

Jesus Christ suffered temptation and infirmities so that He can understand and help me.

Do you feel that you can "come boldly unto the throne of grace" and seek mercy? (Hebrews 4:16). One message of the Epistle to the Hebrews is that despite our sins and weaknesses, God is approachable and His grace is attainable. What do you find in Hebrews 2:9–18; 4:12–16; 5:7–8 that strengthens your confidence that Jesus Christ will help you with your mortal challenges? Consider recording in a journal your thoughts and feelings about what the Savior has done for you.

See also Mosiah 3:7–11; Alma 7:11–13; 34.

HEBREWS 3:7–4:11

In order to receive God's blessings, I must "harden not" my heart.

Even though they had been converted to Christianity, some of the Jewish Saints found it difficult to fully accept the gospel of Jesus Christ and its blessings. By retelling the story of the ancient Israelites, Paul hoped to persuade the Jews to avoid the mistake their ancestors made—rejecting God's blessings because of unbelief. (You can read the story Paul alluded to in Numbers 14:1–12, 26–35.)

Consider how Hebrews 3:7–4:11 might apply to you. To do this, you might ponder questions like these:

- How did the Israelites provoke the Lord? (see Hebrews 3:8–11). What are the consequences of having a hard heart?
- When have I allowed my heart to become hardened? Are there any blessings God wants to give me that I am not receiving because of a lack of faith?

- What can I do to develop a soft and contrite heart? (see Ether 4:15; Proverbs 3:5–6; Alma 5:14–15).

See also 1 Nephi 2:16; 15:6–11; Jacob 1:7–8; Alma 12:33–36.



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

HEBREWS 1:8–9

In what ways has Jesus shown that He loves righteousness and hates iniquity? If we have unrighteous desires, what can we do to change them?

HEBREWS 2:1–4

Can you think of an object lesson to help your family understand what it means to keep a firm hold on the gospel truths “which we have heard”? You might illustrate this with an object that is hard to hold onto. How are our efforts to maintain our testimony like catching and holding this object? How can we make sure “the

things which we have heard” do not “slip” away from us? (verse 1).

HEBREWS 2:9–10

To explore the phrase “captain of their salvation,” you could begin by discussing what a captain is. What does a captain do? How is Jesus Christ like a captain for us and our salvation?

HEBREWS 5:1–5

These verses can help you have a discussion about what it means to be called of God to hold the priesthood or to fulfill other Church callings by someone who has authority. What can we learn from the example of Jesus Christ about receiving and fulfilling callings?

Improving Personal Study

Try different approaches. Instead of always studying the scriptures in the same way, consider various study ideas. For some ideas, see “Ideas to Improve Your Personal Scripture Study” at the beginning of this resource.



Christ Visits the New World, by *Walter Rane*



Melchizedek Blesses Abram, by Walter Rane

NOVEMBER 11-17

Hebrews 7–13

“An High Priest of Good Things to Come”

As you read Hebrews 7–13, you may receive impressions through the Holy Ghost. Consider ways you can record them; for example, you could record them in this outline, in the margins of your scriptures, or in the Gospel Library app.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

Even faithful Saints at times suffer “reproaches and afflictions” that can shake their confidence (see Hebrews 10:32–38). Paul knew that Jewish converts to Christianity were experiencing serious persecution because of their new faith. To encourage them to stay true to their testimonies, he reminded them of the long tradition of faithful believers from their own history: Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sara, Joseph, Moses—“a cloud of witnesses” that God’s promises

are real and worth waiting for (Hebrews 12:1). This heritage of faith is shared by all those who look “unto Jesus [as] the author and finisher of our faith” (Hebrews 12:2). Because of Him, whenever adversity makes us want to “draw back,” we can instead “draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith” (Hebrews 10:22, 38). For us, as for the ancient Saints, Jesus Christ is our “high priest of good things to come” (Hebrews 9:11).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

HEBREWS 7:1–22

The Melchizedek Priesthood is the higher priesthood.

For centuries, the Jews had exercised the Levitical Priesthood, also known as the Aaronic Priesthood. But with the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ came the greater Melchizedek Priesthood, which offered even greater blessings. What do you learn about the Melchizedek Priesthood from Hebrews 7? Here are some examples of truths you might find:

Joseph Smith Translation, Hebrews 7:3, 21: Those who are ordained to the Melchizedek Priesthood “are made like unto the Son of God” and are “[priests] forever.”

Hebrews 7:11: The Levitical Priesthood does not offer “perfection” and was therefore superseded by the Melchizedek (see D&C 84:18–22).

Hebrews 7:20–21: The Melchizedek Priesthood is received through an oath (see D&C 84:19–44).

What blessings have you received from the Melchizedek Priesthood and its associated ordinances?

See also Alma 13:1–13; Doctrine and Covenants 121:36–46; Gospel Topics, “Melchizedek Priesthood,” [topics.lds.org](https://www.lds.org/topics.lds.org); Guide to the Scriptures, “Melchizedek,” [scriptures.lds.org](https://www.lds.org/scriptures.lds.org); Henry B. Eyring, “Faith and the Oath and Covenant of the Priesthood,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2008, 61–64; Dallin H. Oaks, “The Keys and Authority of the Priesthood,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2014, 49–52.

HEBREWS 9:1–10:22

Ancient and modern ordinances point to Jesus Christ.

The original Hebrew readers of this epistle would have been very familiar with the ancient tabernacle and

the ordinances Paul described. But some did not fully recognize that the purpose of these ordinances was to point to the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

In biblical times, on a yearly holiday called the Day of Atonement, a high priest entered the holiest place (or Holy of Holies) in the Jerusalem temple and sacrificed a goat or lamb to atone for the sins of Israel. Paul explained that Jesus Christ is a high priest who offers a single sacrifice—His own life—to atone for the sins of the world (see Hebrews 9:24–10:14).

Think about the ordinances you participate in today. How do these ordinances point you to Jesus Christ?

To learn more about ancient Jewish ceremonies and their symbolism, see the videos “The Tabernacle” and “Sacrifice and Sacrament” ([LDS.org](https://www.lds.org)).

HEBREWS 11

Faith requires trusting in God’s promises.

If someone asked you to define faith, what would you say? Sister Anne C. Pingree, former member of the Relief Society General Presidency, drew on language from Hebrews 11 to give this definition: “Faith, the spiritual ability to be persuaded of promises that are seen ‘afar off’ but that may not be attained in this life, is a sure measure of those who truly believe” (“Seeing the Promises Afar Off,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2003, 14).

Consider developing your own definition of faith as you ponder the ideas in Hebrews 11. What do the examples of the people mentioned in this chapter teach you about faith? (See also Ether 12:6–22.)

See also Alma 32:21, 26–43; Jeffrey R. Holland, “An High Priest of Good Things to Come,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 36–38; Gospel Topics, “Faith in Jesus Christ,” [topics.lds.org](https://www.lds.org/topics.lds.org).



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

HEBREWS 10:32–36

You might invite family members to share spiritual experiences when they felt “illuminated” with truth. How can these experiences help us “cast not away therefore [our] confidence” in times of trial or doubt?

HEBREWS 11

How can you help your family members learn from the faithful examples mentioned in Hebrews 11? It might be fun to act out the stories of some of these examples. Or perhaps your family could discuss the examples of other faithful people you know—including

ancestors, Church leaders, and members of your community.

HEBREWS 12:2

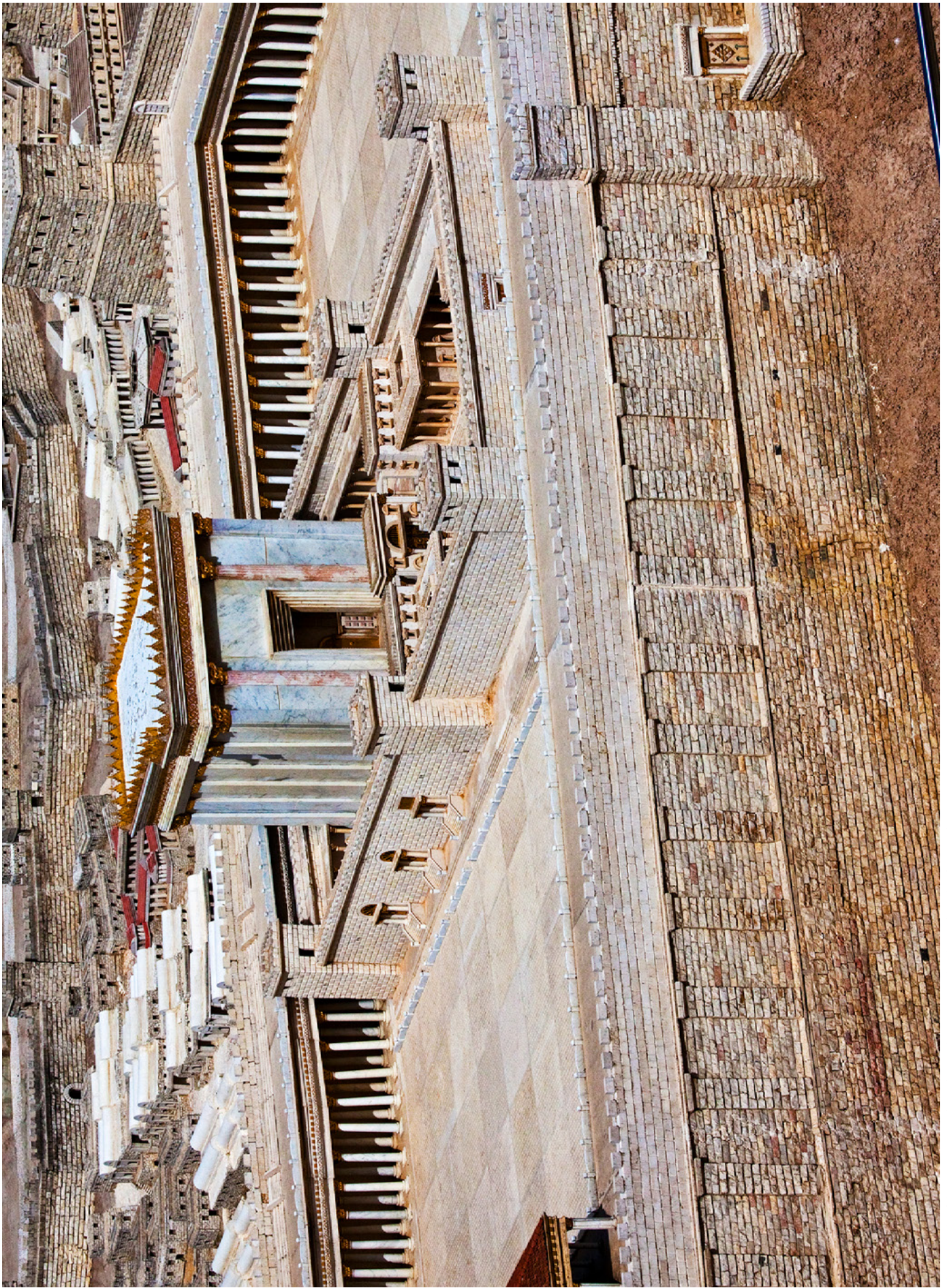
According to this verse, why was Jesus willing to endure the pain and suffering of the cross? What does this teach us about how we can endure our trials? President Russell M. Nelson gave some helpful insights on this verse in his message “Joy and Spiritual Survival” (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2016, 81–84).

HEBREWS 12:5–11

Why does the Lord chasten and correct us? What do family members notice about the way the Lord sees chastisement as you study these verses together? How do these verses affect the way you give or receive chastisement?

Improving Our Teaching

Use music to invite the Spirit and learn doctrine. The First Presidency said, “Music has boundless powers for moving [us] toward greater spirituality” (“First Presidency Preface,” *Hymns*, x). Perhaps a song about faith, such as “True to the Faith” (*Hymns*, no. 254), would supplement a family discussion from Hebrews 11.



The symbols of the ancient temple and its ordinances taught about the role of Jesus Christ.



Abraham on the Plains of Mamre, by Grant Romney Clawson

NOVEMBER 18–24

James

“Be Ye Doers of the Word, and Not Hearers Only”

As you read the Epistle of James, pay attention to phrases that stand out to you, and record them. How are you prompted to live these truths?

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

Sometimes just one verse of scripture can change the world. James 1:5 seems like a simple bit of counsel—if you need wisdom, ask God. But when 14-year-old Joseph Smith read that verse, “it seemed to enter with great force into every feeling of [his] heart” (Joseph Smith—History 1:12). Thus inspired, Joseph acted on James’s admonition and sought wisdom from God through prayer. And God did indeed give liberally, giving Joseph one of the most remarkable heavenly visitations in human history—the First Vision. This vision changed the course of Joseph’s life and led to the Restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ on the earth.

All of us are blessed today because Joseph Smith read and acted on James 1:5.

What will you find as you study the Epistle of James? Perhaps a verse or two will change you or someone you love. You may find guidance as you seek to fulfill your mission in life. You may find encouragement to speak kindly or to be more patient. Whatever inspires you, let these words “enter . . . into every feeling of [your] heart.” Remember to “receive with meekness the . . . word,” as James wrote, “which is able to save your souls” (James 1:21).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

JAMES

Who was James?

It is generally believed that the author of the Epistle of James was a son of Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ, and therefore the half brother of the Savior. James is mentioned in Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3; Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; and Galatians 1:19; 2:9. It appears from these scriptures that James was a Church leader in Jerusalem and had been called as an Apostle (see Galatians 1:19).

JAMES 1:2–4; 5:7–11

Patient endurance leads to perfection.

“Waiting can be hard,” President Dieter F. Uchtdorf taught. “We want what we want, and we want it now. Therefore, the very idea of patience may seem unpleasant” (“Continue in Patience,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2010, 56). After reading James 1:2–4; 5:7–11, what would you say was James’s main message about patience? What additional insights do you have after reading the rest of President Uchtdorf’s message? How can you show the Lord that you’re willing to be patient?

JAMES 1:3–8, 21–25; 2:14–26; 4:17

Faith requires action.

How do you know if you have faith in Jesus Christ? How do your works demonstrate your faith in God? Think about these questions as you study James’s teachings about faith. It might be interesting to also read about Abraham and Rahab, two examples James mentioned (see Genesis 22:1–12; Joshua 2). How did they show that they had faith in God?

Reading James 1:3–8, 21–25; 2:14–26; 4:17 may help you think of ways you could be a better doer of the word. Record any impressions you receive, and make plans to act on them.

See also Alma 34:27–29; 3 Nephi 27:21.

JAMES 1:26; 3:1–18

The words I speak have the power to hurt or bless others.

Among the rich imagery James used throughout his epistle, some of his most vivid language is found in his counsel *about* language. Consider making a list of all the ways James described the tongue or mouth. What does each comparison or image suggest about the words we speak? Think of something you can do to bless someone with your words (see D&C 108:7).

JAMES 2:1–9

As a disciple of Jesus Christ, I should love all people, regardless of their circumstances.

James warned the Saints specifically against favoring the rich and despising the poor, but his warning can apply to any biases or prejudices we may have toward others. It can be difficult to recognize the ways in which we negatively judge others, but the Lord has promised that He will help us see where we need to improve (see Ether 12:27). As you prayerfully study James 2:1–9, search your own heart and listen for the Holy Ghost’s promptings. Do you sense any changes you need to make in the way you treat or think of others?



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss based on your family's needs. Here are some suggestions:

JAMES 1:5

Consider reading James 1:5 and inviting a family member to summarize the account of the First Vision (see Joseph Smith—History 1:8–13 or the video “Ask of God: Joseph Smith’s First Vision” on LDS.org). Invite family members to share their testimonies of the Prophet Joseph Smith and experiences when Heavenly Father answered their prayers.

JAMES 1:26–27

Consider watching the video “True Christianity” (LDS.org) in connection with these verses. Then read James’s definition of pure religion and discuss ways your family can make the practice of your religion more pure.

JAMES 3

James 3 includes many images that could inspire memorable object lessons to help your family

remember to speak kindly. For example, you could discuss how a small spark or match can start a large fire, and family members could think of times when an unkind word caused a problem (see verses 5–6). Or you could serve something sour or bitter in something that is usually used for sweet food—such as lemon juice in a honey jar. This could lead to a discussion about ensuring that our words are sweet and uplifting (see verses 9–14).

JAMES 4:5–8

Why should we “draw nigh to God” when we face temptation?

JAMES 5:14–16

Perhaps sharing a personal experience about receiving a priesthood blessing could encourage family members to “ask for a priesthood blessing when [they] are in need of spiritual power” (Dallin H. Oaks, “The Importance of Priesthood Blessings,” *New Era*, July 2012, 4).

Improving Personal Study

Act on what you learn. As you study, listen to promptings from the Spirit about how you can apply what you are learning to your life. Commit to follow these promptings and live the gospel more fully. (See *Teaching in the Savior’s Way*, 35.)



Let Him Ask of God, by John McNaughton



Christ Preaching in the Spirit World, by Robert T. Barrett

NOVEMBER 25–DECEMBER 1

1 and 2 Peter

“Rejoice with Joy Unspeakable and Full of Glory”

As you read the Epistles of Peter, you may receive promptings to act. Record these promptings while you are “yet in the Spirit” (D&C 76:80) so you can accurately capture what you are being taught.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

Shortly after His Resurrection, the Savior made a prophecy that must have been troubling to Peter. He said that when Peter was old, he would be carried “whither [he] wouldst not . . . , signifying by what death he should glorify God” (John 21:18–19). When Peter wrote his epistles, he knew that this prophesied martyrdom was near: “Shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me” (2 Peter 1:14). Unfortunately, such severe persecution was common for the Saints in Roman provinces, to whom Peter was writing (see 1 Peter 1:1). And yet his words were not filled with fear or pessimism. Instead,

he taught the Saints to “greatly rejoice,” even though they were “in heaviness through manifold temptations.” He counseled them to remember that “the trial of [their] faith” would lead to “praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ” and to “the salvation of [their] souls” (1 Peter 1:6–7, 9). Peter’s faith must have been comforting to those early Saints, as it is encouraging to Saints today, who are also “partakers of Christ’s sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, [we] may be glad also with exceeding joy” (1 Peter 4:13).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

1 PETER 1:3–9; 2:19–24; 3:14–17; 4:12–19

I can find joy during times of trial and suffering.

At first glance, it might seem strange that Peter used words like *rejoice*, *happy*, *glory*, and *exceeding joy* in association with words we typically associate with hardship: *heaviness*, *temptations*, *grief*, *fiery trial*, and *sufferings* (see 1 Peter 1:6; 2:19; 4:12–13). Peter's message to the early Saints was the same message taught by President Russell M. Nelson: "Saints can be happy under every circumstance. . . . When the focus of our lives is on God's plan of salvation . . . and Jesus Christ and His gospel, we can feel joy regardless of what is happening—or not happening—in our lives. Joy comes from and because of Him. He is the source of all joy" ("Joy and Spiritual Survival," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2016, 82).

As you read 1 Peter 1:3–9; 2:19–24; 3:14–17; 4:12–19, what gives you hope that you can find joy even in the midst of difficult circumstances?

1 PETER 3:18–20; 4:1–6

The gospel is preached to the dead so they can be judged justly.

One day, each person will stand at the judgment bar and "give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead" (1 Peter 4:5). Some might wonder how God can judge all people fairly when their opportunities to understand and live the gospel are so different. Notice the doctrine that Peter taught in 1 Peter 3:18–20; 4:6 to help the Saints in his day understand that God's judgments will be just. How do these verses strengthen your faith in God's fairness and justice?

To study this doctrine further, explore Doctrine and Covenants 138, a revelation President Joseph F. Smith received as he pondered these writings of Peter. What blessings come to those who make the ordinances of

the gospel available to their family members who have died and are still waiting for these ordinances?

See also "Baptisms for the Dead," Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org.

2 PETER 1:1–11

Through the power of Jesus Christ, I can develop my divine nature.

Do you ever feel that becoming like Jesus Christ and developing His attributes is not possible? Elder Robert D. Hales offered this encouraging thought about how we can develop Christlike attributes: "The attributes of the Savior . . . are interwoven characteristics, added one to another, which develop in us in interactive ways. In other words, we cannot obtain one Christlike characteristic without also obtaining and influencing others. As one characteristic becomes strong, so do many more" ("Becoming a Disciple of Our Lord Jesus Christ," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2017, 46).



Each Christlike quality we develop helps us weave a spiritual tapestry of discipleship.

Consider reading 2 Peter 1:1–11 in conjunction with Elder Hales's message. What do you learn from these two Apostles that helps you in your efforts to become more Christlike?

See also 1 Peter 4:8; David A. Bednar, "Exceeding Great and Precious Promises," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2017, 90–93.



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

1 PETER 2:5–10

As you read these verses with your family, consider using rocks to help family members visualize Peter's teachings that the Savior is our "chief corner stone." How are we like the "lively [living] stones" that God is using to build His kingdom? What do we learn from Peter about the Savior and our role in His kingdom? What is Peter's message to your family?

1 PETER 3:8–17

How can we "be ready always to give an answer" to those who ask us about our faith? Your family might

enjoy role-playing situations in which someone approaches them with a question about the gospel.

1 PETER 3:18–20; 4:6

What can you do as a family to learn about your deceased ancestors? Perhaps on a deceased ancestor's birthday you could cook your ancestor's favorite meal, display pictures, or tell stories from your ancestor's life. If possible, you could also plan to receive ordinances for this ancestor in the temple.

2 PETER 1:16–21

In these verses, Peter reminded the Saints of his experience on the Mount of Transfiguration (see also Matthew 17:1–9). What do we learn from these verses about the teachings of prophets? (see also D&C 1:38). What gives us confidence to follow our living prophet today?

Improving Our Teaching

"Be ready always." Informal teaching moments at home can come and go quickly, so it's important to take advantage of them when they arise. How can you strive to "be ready always" to teach your family members gospel truths and share "the hope that is in you" (1 Peter 3:15) when teaching moments arise? (See *Teaching in the Savior's Way*, 16.)



Even though Peter faced much persecution and opposition, he remained steadfast in his testimony of Christ.



Perfect Love, by Del Parson

DECEMBER 2-8

1-3 John; Jude

"God Is Love"

As you read the Epistles of John and Jude, seek inspiration about how you can show your love to God. Record these impressions and act on them.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

When John and Jude wrote their epistles, the predicted Apostasy was underway, a result of both intense persecution and corrupt doctrine. Some false teachers even questioned whether Jesus Christ had actually appeared "in the flesh" (see, for example, 1 John 4:1-3; 2 John 1:7). So the Apostle John began his first epistle by giving his personal witness of the Savior: "This is the testimony which we give of that which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our

hands have handled, of the Word of life" (Joseph Smith Translation, 1 John 1:1 [in 1 John 1:1, footnote *a*]). But perhaps the strongest message of John's epistles is love: God's love for us and the love we should have for Him and all His children. After all, John had personally experienced the Savior's love (see John 13:23; 20:2), and he wanted the Saints to feel that same love in the face of hardship and opposition, for "there is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear" (1 John 4:18).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

1 JOHN

God is light, and God is love.

If you were to choose one or two words to describe God, what would they be? In his epistles, John used the words “light” and “love” (1 John 1:5; 4:8, 16). As you read 1 John, ponder John’s experiences as recorded in the Gospel of John, and consider how these experiences may have taught John about the light and love of God. What personal experiences have taught you that God is light and love?

See also John 3:16–21; 15:9–17; 2 Nephi 26:24; Doctrine and Covenants 50:24; 88:6, 12–13; 93:36–37.

1 JOHN 2:24–3:3

I can become like Jesus Christ.

Does the goal of becoming Christlike ever seem too lofty to you? Consider John’s encouraging counsel: “Little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence . . . [and] we shall be like him” (1 John 2:28; 3:2). What do you find in 1 John 2:24–3:3 that gives you confidence and comfort as a disciple of Jesus Christ? As you study John’s epistles, look for other principles or counsel that can help you in your effort to become more Christlike.

See also Moroni 7:48; Doctrine and Covenants 88:67–68; “Becoming Like God,” Gospel Topics, [topics.lds.org](https://www.lds.org/topics).

JOSEPH SMITH TRANSLATION, 1 JOHN 4:12

Has “no man . . . seen God at any time”?

Joseph Smith Translation, 1 John 4:12 clarifies that “no man hath seen God at any time, *except them who believe*” (in 1 John 4:12, footnote *a*; see also John 6:46; 3 John 1:11). The scriptures record several instances when God the Father has manifested Himself to faithful individuals, including John himself (see Revelation 4; see also Acts 7:55–56; 1 Nephi 1:8; Doctrine and Covenants 76:23; Joseph Smith—History 1:16–17).

1 JOHN 5

As I exercise faith in Jesus Christ and am born again, I can overcome the world.

The idea of overcoming the world appears multiple times in John’s writings. John recorded Jesus saying, “In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). And in Revelation 2–3, John recorded the Lord’s promises to those who overcome the world. What did John say about overcoming the world in 1 John 5:3–5? As you read 1 John 5, look for what we must do to overcome the world and gain eternal life. What might overcoming the world look like in your life? You could also find answers and insights in Elder Neil L. Andersen’s message “Overcoming the World” (*Ensign or Liahona*, May 2017, 58–62).



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

1 JOHN 2:8–11

To help your family ponder John’s teachings, gather in a dark room and let family members experience the difference between walking “in darkness” and walking “in the light.” How does hatred cause us to walk in

darkness and stumble? How does loving each other bring light into our lives?

1 JOHN 3:21-22

What in these verses increases the “confidence” that we have in God and in our ability to receive answers to our prayers? You could also search “Prayer” in the Bible Dictionary, Guide to the Scriptures (scriptures.lds.org), or Gospel Topics (topics.lds.org).

1 JOHN 5:2-3

Are there any commandments that we consider “grievous” or difficult to follow? How does our love for God change the way we feel about His commandments?



Keeping God's commandments helps us overcome the world.

JUDE 1:3-4

Are there any spiritual dangers that have “crept in” to our lives and family? (Jude 1:4). How can we follow Jude’s admonition to “earnestly contend for the faith” and resist these dangers? (Jude 1:3). What can we do to ensure that “peace, and love, be multiplied” in our family? (Jude 1:2).

Improving Personal Study

Find God’s love. Elder M. Russell Ballard taught, “[The] gospel is a gospel of love—love for God and love for one another” (“God’s Love for His Children,” *Ensign*, May 1988, 59). As you read the scriptures, consider noting or marking words and phrases that show evidence of God’s love.



Walk with Me, by Greg K. Olsen



The Good Shepherd, by Del Parson

DECEMBER 9-15

Revelation 1–11

“Glory, and Power, Be unto . . . the Lamb for Ever”

Consider writing down questions you have about what you read in Revelation. You can then search for answers to your questions or discuss them with a family member or in Church classes.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

Have you ever struggled to express to others what you felt during a powerful spiritual experience? Everyday language can feel inadequate to describe spiritual feelings and impressions. Perhaps this is why John used such rich symbolism and imagery to describe his majestic revelation. He could have simply stated that he saw Jesus Christ, but to help us understand his experience, he described the Savior using words like these: “His eyes were as a flame of fire,” “out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword,” and “his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength” (Revelation

1:14–16). As you read the book of Revelation, try to discover the messages John wanted you to learn and feel, even if you don’t understand the meaning behind every symbol. Why might he have compared Church congregations to candlesticks, Satan to a dragon, and Jesus Christ to a lamb? Ultimately, you don’t have to understand every symbol in Revelation to understand its important themes, including its most prominent theme: Jesus Christ and His followers will triumph over the kingdoms of men and of Satan.



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

REVELATION

How can I make sense of the book of Revelation?

The book of Revelation can be hard to understand, but don't get discouraged. John's promise may inspire you to keep trying: "Blessed are they who *read*, and they who *hear and understand* the words of this prophecy, and *keep* those things which are written therein, for the time of the coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (Joseph Smith Translation, Revelation 1:3 [in the Bible Appendix], emphasis added).

The following questions and resources can provide insights as you study Revelation:

- Who was John? (See 1 Nephi 14:18–27; Bible Dictionary, "John.")
- How is the book organized, and what are some themes to look for? (See Bible Dictionary, "Revelation of John.")
- What do the symbols in Revelation represent? (See Doctrine and Covenants 77; *New Testament Student Manual* [Church Educational System manual, 2014], 525–68.)

It might also be helpful to look for insights in the Joseph Smith Translation of various Revelation passages. (See the footnotes and the Bible appendix.)

REVELATION

John's vision teaches how Heavenly Father saves His children.

As you begin studying the book of Revelation, think about how the things you read connect to what you know about Heavenly Father's plan for the redemption and exaltation of His children. You could start by reviewing the overview of the plan of salvation in *Preach*

My Gospel (pages 47–59). Then, as you read John's account of his vision, ask yourself questions like these: What truths do I learn from Revelation about what Heavenly Father has done to help me return to Him? How can this help me understand God's plan for me?

It may help you to know that in general:

- Much of chapter 12 deals with events in the premortal life (see also "Premortality," Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org).
- Chapters 6–11, 13–14, 16–19 describe mortal life and events in the history of the earth (see also "Mortality," Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org).
- Chapters 2–3, 15, 20–22 describe the Final Judgment and the glory that awaits the faithful in the eternal realms (see also "Postmortality," Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org).

REVELATION 2–3

Jesus Christ knows me personally and will help me overcome my challenges.

The Savior's words in Revelation 2–3 reveal that He understood the successes and struggles unique to each branch of the Church in John's day. He reassured the Saints in several congregations that He was aware of, among other things, their "works," "tribulation," "poverty," and "charity" (Revelation 2:2, 9, 19)—along with some ways they could improve.

These chapters can remind you that the Savior understands your strengths and weaknesses and wants to help you overcome your earthly challenges. What does Jesus Christ promise to those who overcome? What changes do you feel prompted to make to overcome your challenges?

REVELATION 5**Only Jesus Christ could make Heavenly Father’s plan possible.**

Although you don’t remember it, you were likely present for the events John described in Revelation 5. As you read about these events, consider what it must have been like when we all realized that Jesus Christ (the “Lamb”) would make Heavenly Father’s plan possible (open the book and loose the seven seals). Why could Jesus Christ alone do this? How can you show your faith in Him as your Savior?

See also Job 38:4–7; “Atonement of Jesus Christ,” Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org.

REVELATION 6–11**The Restoration preceded the destruction that will take place before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.**

Revelation 6–11 describes events that will take place during the earth’s temporal existence (see D&C 77:6), including the Restoration of the gospel in the latter days (see Revelation 7). As you read about the events John prophesied and watch some of them unfold, what are you inspired to do to better prepare yourself and your family for the Second Coming?

**Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening**

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

REVELATION 2–3

Pretend John was asked to give a message to your family like the ones he gave to the churches during his time. What would he say is going well? How might you improve?

REVELATION 3:20

Show the picture of the Savior knocking at the door (see the picture that accompanies this outline). Invite your family to read Revelation 3:20 and discuss questions like the following: Why does Jesus knock instead of just coming inside? How can we invite His influence into our home?

REVELATION 7:9, 13–14

What can these verses teach us about why we wear white for temple ordinances?

Improving Our Teaching

Encourage questions. Questions are an indication that family members are ready to learn and give insight into how they are responding to what they’re being taught. Teach your family how to find answers in the scriptures. (See *Teaching in the Savior’s Way*, 25–26.)



Let Him In, by Greg K. Olsen



Safe in a Stable, by Dan Burr

DECEMBER 16-22

Christmas

“Good Tidings of Great Joy”

For some, Christmas can be a hectic time. Consider how your study of the New Testament can help bring a spirit of peace and sacredness into your life. Ponder the influence of the Savior’s birth and mission on your life, and record any spiritual impressions that come.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

Why does the birth of a baby bring such great joy? Perhaps because a new baby can be a symbol of hope. There’s something about a brand-new life full of possibilities that invites us to ponder what life might hold for that child and what wonderful things he or she will accomplish. Never has this been truer than at the birth of the Son of God, Jesus Christ. Never has there been more hope placed in a child, and never has there been one born with so much promise.

When an angel invited shepherds to seek a newborn child in a manger, he also gave them a message about

that child. It was a message of hope—that this baby had come to earth to fulfill a sacred mission. The shepherds made their message “known abroad . . . and all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart” (Luke 2:17–19). Perhaps it would be good to follow Mary’s example this Christmas: to ponder in your heart the things you have learned about the Savior this year. How did He fulfill His mission of redemption in the accounts you have read? And more important, how has His mission changed your life?



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

MATTHEW 1:18–25; 2:1–12; LUKE 1:26–38; 2:1–20

Jesus Christ condescended to be born among us on earth.

Even if you have read or heard the story of the birth of Jesus Christ many times before, study it this time with this thought in mind: “Christmas is not only a celebration of *how* Jesus came into the world but also of knowing *who* He is—our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ—and of *why* He came” (Craig C. Christensen, “The Fulness of the Story of Christmas” [First Presidency Christmas devotional, Dec. 4, 2016], broadcasts.lds.org).

What do you know about who Jesus Christ was before He was born? (see, for example, John 17:5; Mosiah 3:5; D&C 76:13–14, 20–24; Moses 4:2). How does this knowledge affect the way you feel when you read about His birth?

What do you know about why Jesus Christ came to earth? (see, for example, Luke 4:16–21; John 3:16–17; 3 Nephi 27:13–16; D&C 20:20–28). How does this knowledge affect the way you feel about the Savior? How does it affect the way you live?

See also 2 Corinthians 8:9; Hebrews 2:7–18; 1 Nephi 11:13–33; Alma 7:10–13; “The Nativity” (video, LDS.org).

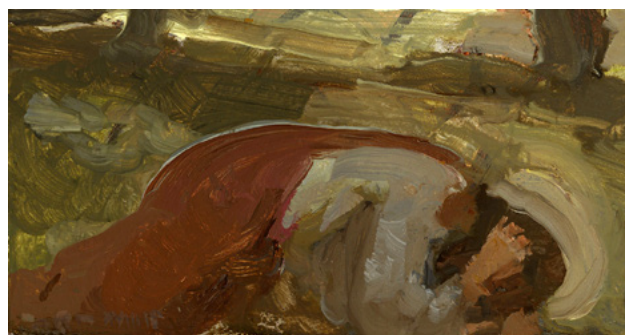
1 CORINTHIANS 15:21–26;

COLOSSIANS 1:12–22; 1 PETER 2:21–25

Jesus Christ fulfilled His mission and made it possible for me to inherit eternal life.

Although the story of Christ’s birth was surrounded by miraculous events, His would be just another birth if it

weren’t for the great work that He accomplished later in His life. As President Gordon B. Hinckley put it, “The babe Jesus of Bethlehem would be but another baby without the redeeming Christ of Gethsemane and Calvary, and the triumphant fact of the Resurrection” (“The Wondrous and True Story of Christmas,” *Ensign*, Dec. 2000, 5).



Gethsemane, by J. Kirk Richards

Evidence of the Savior’s divine mission and His powerful love for others is found throughout the New Testament. Which passages or accounts come to your mind? You might look back through this resource or your study journal and review some of the impressions you recorded. You could also read 1 Corinthians 15:21–26; Colossians 1:12–22; 1 Peter 2:21–25 and ponder how the Savior and His work have blessed your life. What do you feel inspired to change in your life? How will you draw on the Savior’s power?



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

MATTHEW 1:18–25; 2:1–12; LUKE 1:26–38; 2:1–20

How can you celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ with your family? Here are a few ideas, or you can come up with your own:

- Read or act out parts of the Nativity story together.
- Watch the video “The Nativity” (LDS.org).
- Explore some of the resources on christmas.mormon.org; jesuschrist.lds.org; or “Christmas,” Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org.
- Watch a First Presidency Christmas devotional (broadcasts.lds.org).
- Sing Christmas hymns together, or choose neighbors or friends to visit and sing to them (see *Hymns*, nos. 201–14).
- Perform an act of service.

- Ask family members to look for details in the Nativity story that give them ideas for ornaments or decorations they could make to remind them of Jesus Christ.

1 CORINTHIANS 15:21–26; COLOSSIANS 1:12–22; 1 PETER 2:21–25

Why are we grateful that Jesus Christ was born? What gifts has He given us? How can we show Him our gratitude?

“THE LIVING CHRIST: THE TESTIMONY OF THE APOSTLES”

If you want to help your family focus on the Savior at Christmastime, perhaps you could spend some time reading and studying together “The Living Christ: The Testimony of the Apostles” (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2017, inside front cover). Maybe you could memorize passages from “The Living Christ” or look for descriptions of the Savior’s life in the New Testament that support statements in it. You could also invite each family member to write his or her own testimony of Jesus Christ and, if so prompted, read it to the family.

Improving Personal Study

Look for Jesus Christ. The scriptures teach us that all things testify of Jesus Christ (see Moses 6:62–63), so we should look for Him in all things. As you read the scriptures, consider noting or marking verses that teach you about Him. Take time in the days leading up to Christmas to look for things around you that testify of Jesus Christ.



The Nativity, by Brian Call



The City Eternal, by Keith Larson

DECEMBER 23–29

Revelation 12–22

“He That Overcometh Shall Inherit All Things”

As you read Revelation 12–22, look for parallels between what John saw and what you see in today’s world. Seek spiritual guidance to help you find personal lessons as you immerse yourself in John’s symbolic language.

RECORD YOUR IMPRESSIONS _____

Imagine a woman “travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.” Now imagine “a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns” hovering over the woman, poised to “devour her child as soon as it was born” (Revelation 12:2–4). To understand these verses of John’s revelation, remember that these images represent the Church and kingdom of God and the peril they would face. For the Saints who experienced intense persecution in John’s day, victory over evil may

not have seemed likely. This victory can also be hard to foresee in a day like ours, when the adversary is at “war with the saints” and has “power . . . over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations” (Revelation 13:7). But the end of John’s revelation gloriously shows that good will prevail over evil. Babylon will fall. Jesus Christ will reign as King of Kings. “God shall wipe away all tears,” and the faithful will reign with Him and “inherit all things” (Revelation 21:4, 7).



Ideas for Personal Scripture Study

REVELATION 12:7–17

The War in Heaven continues on earth.

We don't know a lot about the War in Heaven, but there is a vivid though brief description of it in Revelation 12:7–11. As you read these verses, picture yourself as part of that premortal conflict. What do these verses teach about how you and God's other faithful children overcame Satan? What does this imply about how you can overcome him in our day as he continues to "make war with [those who] have the testimony of Jesus Christ"? (verse 17).

See also 1 Nephi 14:12–14; "War in Heaven," Gospel Topics, [topics.lds.org](https://www.lds.org/topics); Bible Dictionary, "Michael," "War in Heaven."

REVELATION 14:6–7

Who is the angel that John saw preaching the gospel?

One fulfillment of the prophecy in these verses occurred when Moroni appeared to Joseph Smith and led him to the records that he translated and published as the Book of Mormon. This book contains the "everlasting gospel" that we are charged with preaching unto "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" (Revelation 14:6).

REVELATION 17–18

The Lord invites me to flee Babylon and her sins.

Revelation 17–18 contains unsettling images describing the sin, materialism, and lusts of Babylon—the symbol of worldliness and wickedness. Think of examples of Babylon-like conditions that exist today in the world, and ponder what you can do to follow the counsel to "come out of" Babylon and "be not partakers of her sins" (Revelation 18:4).

REVELATION 20:12–15

All of God's children will be judged out of the book of life.

Suppose an author offered to write a book about your life. What details or experiences would you want included? If you knew that your future actions would also be recorded, how would you approach your life differently? Think about this as you read about Judgment Day in Revelation 20:12–15. What do you hope will be written about you in the book of life?

See also Bible Dictionary, "Book of life."

REVELATION 21; 22:1–5

If I am faithful, I will receive celestial glory.

In contrast to the descriptions of Babylon, Revelation 21–22 describes the celestial glory that awaits faithful followers of Christ. What images, phrases, or promises in these chapters inspire you to remain faithful even when it's difficult?

REVELATION 22:18–19

Do these verses mean that there cannot be any additional scripture besides the Bible?

Some people have cited Revelation 22:18–19 as a reason to reject the Book of Mormon and other latter-day scripture. However, Elder Jeffrey R. Holland taught:

"There is now overwhelming consensus among virtually all biblical scholars that this verse applies only to the book of Revelation, *not* the whole Bible. Those scholars of our day acknowledge a number of New Testament 'books' that were almost certainly written *after* John's revelation on the Isle of Patmos was received. . . .

"But there is a simpler answer. . . . The whole Bible as we know it—one collection of texts bound in a single volume—did not exist when that verse was written" ("My Words . . . Never Cease," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2008, 91).



Ideas for Family Scripture Study and Family Home Evening

As you read the scriptures with your family, the Spirit can help you know what principles to emphasize and discuss in order to meet the needs of your family. Here are some suggestions:

REVELATION 12; 19; 21

Some family members might enjoy and benefit from drawing pictures of the visions described in Revelation. For example, drawing pictures based on Revelation 12 could lead to discussions about the War in Heaven (see verses 7–11). Pictures based on Revelation 21 could inspire conversations about the celestial kingdom. You could also show the picture that accompanies this outline and ask family members to find verses in Revelation 19 that the picture is portraying.

REVELATION 12:11

What might the phrase “the word of their testimony” mean? How do our testimonies of Jesus Christ help us and others overcome Satan?

REVELATION 13:11–14

What thoughts do your family members have about the deceiving beast? How do we detect and avoid deceptions we see in the world today?

REVELATION 20:2–3

How do 1 Nephi 22:26; Doctrine and Covenants 43:30–31 help us understand what it may mean for Satan to be “bound”?

REVELATION 22:1–4

What might be the symbolic meaning of having the Savior’s name “in [our] foreheads”? (Revelation 22:4; see also Revelation 13:16–17).

Improving Our Teaching

Follow up on invitations to act. “When you follow up on an invitation to act, you show [your family members] that you care about them and how the gospel is blessing their lives. You also give them opportunities to share their experiences, which strengthens their commitment and allows them to support one another in living the gospel” (*Teaching in the Savior’s Way*, 35).



Christ in red robes sitting upon a white horse.

THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

