

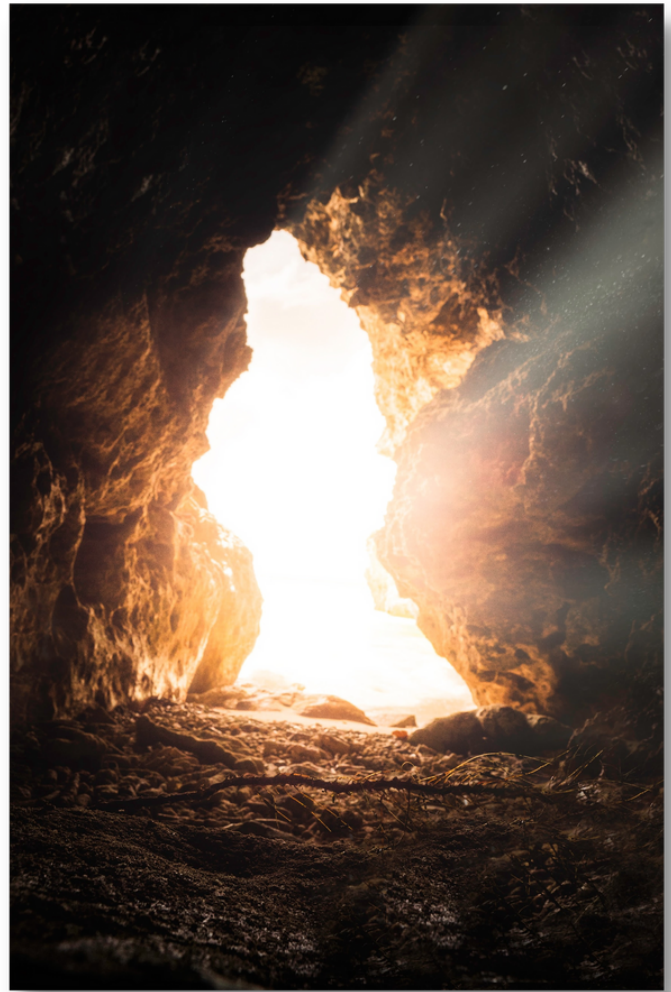


Lent Devotional Plan

Adapted from Deron Spoo's
"The **Good** Book"

Hello church!

We are excited to begin our journey of lent for the next 40 days in preparation for Easter. Lent is a time of remembrance and renewal as we draw closer to Him in prayer, His word, and in fasting.



This year we will be going through a 40-day Lent devotional plan through Deron Spoo's, "*the **Good Book***". We'll specifically focus on 40 chapters of the Bible that speak directly to our identity in Christ and the story of His redemption throughout the Scriptures. May we spend the next 40 days diving deeper into His word to build a lasting foundation for our church and our lives.

Special thanks to our sister church, Radiance Church for compiling this devotional.

For Families

You will find a family specific devotional at the end of each booklet. Please choose whatever day and time to do them with your family (*over a meal, before they sleep, etc.*).



There is no specific day that each devotional corresponds with. **All devotionals have been tailored to be relevant for your children.**

things to consider:

Be intentional.

When God encountered Moses in the burning bush, Scriptures show us that Moses intentionally paused from his daily routine and work to encounter God. Set aside a time and place to spend it with him.

Make a commitment

All of us may be at different points in our walks with God. We encourage you to start where you are. Be open to how God may lead and what he may show you. Whether it be the 4 minute journey or 14 minute journey, commit to one that is both feasible and challenging for you.

Conviction over content

Hebrews teaches us that the Word of God is living and active. It is easy to read merely for content, but the focus of this journey is for the *Word of God to become transformative in your life*. Be open to how He may speak to you and even challenge you.

Seek intimacy, not religiosity

It's easy to make this another religious duty. Remember our prayer is to become more intimate with Him.

For those of you who may be new to this, here are some suggestions on how to get started.

01 — find a consistent time and place

i.e. when you wake up, over lunch, before you sleep.

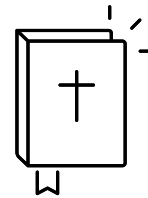


02 — begin in prayer

"Lord, open my eyes, ears, and heart to your Word. I submit myself to the power of your Holy Spirit. Speak to me and may I listen carefully."



03 — read the passage and devotional



04 — reflect on the questions

It's easy to make this another religious duty. Remember our prayer is to become more intimate with Him.



05 — end in prayer

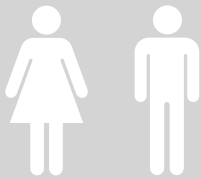
"Lord, thank you for speaking to me. I confess my own ways. Help me to submit to your truth so that your will may be done in my life. Help me love others as you have taught us to."



06 — spend the rest of the day reflecting

Allow the Holy Spirit to speak to you in small moments.





week one

Genesis 1

Genesis 3

Genesis 6

Genesis 12

Genesis 1

1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

3 And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. 4 And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

6 And God said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." 7 And God made the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so. 8 And God called the expanse Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

9 And God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. 10 God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.

11 And God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth." And it was so. 12 The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 13 And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

14 And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years, 15 and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth." And it was so. 16 And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. 17 And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, 18 to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good.

19 And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

20 And God said, "Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens." 21 So God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 22 And God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." 23 And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

24 And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds." And it was so. 25 And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

26 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

28 And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." 29 And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. 30 And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. 31 And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

1 | You're More Like God Than You Think



You're more like God than anything else he created. At times you might feel worthless. Perhaps this is why the first chapter of the Bible sends the unmistakable message that you are priceless. Even on days when you feel barely human, you are, in fact, more like your Creator than anything else in existence.

Genesis 1 is clear: the pinnacle of God's creative work was man and woman. In God's eyes, nothing in the created order was more impressive. Nothing else could serve as the ultimate fruit of his forming power. Genesis 1:27 offers this observation: "So God created man in his own image; he created him in the image of God; he created them male and female."

Externally we bear God's image because of our capacity to experience relationships. That reflects God's own desire to be in relationship with us. We have a built-in need and desire to relate to God and other humans because we were created in his image. That's what allows us to enjoy intimacy with him.

Genesis 1 reveals two essential truths about who you are. First, you are not an accident. You are not the result of cosmic chance; you're an intentional and individual creation of God. Second, God created you as an act of love. God is far from indifferent when it concerns you.

We share ourselves with only those we care about. Just as we share ourselves with only those we care about, God shared the best part of himself with you and me. Nothing else in all creation can make this claim.

So relish this life, knowing that when God sees you, he can't help but see a reflection and resemblance of himself.

Reflection

Acknowledging God as creator is simple and sure way to remove the weight of stress from our lives. We're made according to God's design. And our designer has given us a destiny! Fulfilling that destiny is a matter of putting all of life and our future into his hands. We aren't expected to handle life on our own; we are God's responsibility. What one action or attitude can you change today that will help you better reflect the image of God, your true identity?

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Genesis 3

1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made.

He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" 2 And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, 3 but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" 4 But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. 5 For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." 6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. 7 Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

8 And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" 10 And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." 11 He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" 12 The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." 13 Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

14 The Lord God said to the serpent,

"Because you have done this,
cursed are you above all livestock
and above all beasts of the field;
on your belly you shall go,
and dust you shall eat
all the days of your life.

15 I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and her offspring;
he shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise his heel."

16 To the woman he said,

"I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing;
in pain you shall bring forth children.
Your desire shall be contrary to your husband,
but he shall rule over you."

17 And to Adam he said,

"Because you have listened to the voice of your
wife and have eaten of the tree
of which I commanded you,
'You shall not eat of it,'
cursed is the ground because of you;
in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your
life;
18 thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you;
and you shall eat the plants of the field.
19 By the sweat of your face
you shall eat bread,
till you return to the ground,
for out of it you were taken;
for you are dust,
and to dust you shall return."

20 The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. 21 And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.

22 Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—" 23 therefore the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. 24 He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

2 | When Everything Broke, Including You



Adam and Eve's problem with evil affects us all. Genesis 3 doesn't merely record Adam and Eve's fall into sin. The chapter also highlights the failure of the entire human race to live up to God's original intent of an intimate, obedient relationship with him. Adam and Eve were damaged goods, a trait they passed on to us.

We've mindlessly mutilated the world God intended to reflect his majesty. Sin has affected and infected every area of life. You won't be able to find one area that has escaped sin's negative impact. Power struggles, manipulation, and suspicion mark our relationship (v. 16). Work is more difficult because of sin (v. 17). Sin has shattered the perfect alignment of creation (v. 18). And not to be overlooked, the most devastating result of sin was the introduction of death into God's created order (v. 19). Anyone who has dealt with the death of a loved one will tell you that the event feels unnatural. That's because it is! God created us to experience ultimate life. Instead, we've settled for disobedience and its irreversible consequence, death.

Yet even amid the devastation and depression of Genesis 3, there is hope. God walked through the garden in search of the humans in hiding. When confronted and questioned, Adam replied, "I was afraid" (v. 10). Humans respond to fear in one of three predictable ways: we flee, fight, or hide. By running, we try to escape the fear. In fighting, we attempt to overpower our fear. When we hide, we admit the problem won't go away, so we try to go away. Consumed with the fear of being found disobedient, Adam and Eve hid from God, hoping to avoid his penetrating gaze.

Which tactic are you using to avoid God today? Are you running from him? Are you wrestling with God for ultimate control of your life? Or are you simply in hiding?

Whatever your tactic, God's presence in the garden sends us a clear message: God hasn't left us alone in our brokenness. He continues to search for hiding humans even today.

Reflection

Over the course of history, Christian leaders produced a list called the Seven Deadly Sins. While this list isn't found in the Bible, there is wisdom in listening to the voices of the past. These sins are capable of causing incredible damage to our lives and destruction to our relationship with God. The Seven Deadly Sins are pride, lust, greed, gluttony, envy, anger, and sloth.

Which of these sins is the greatest source of temptation in your life? What excuses do you make for not ridding your life of this sin? What stands in the way of you taking responsibility for your actions and opening yourself to God's restoration.

Genesis 6

1 When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, 2 the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose. 3 Then the Lord said, "My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years." 4 The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown.

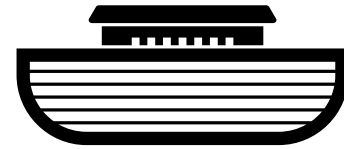
5 The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 And the Lord regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. 7 So the Lord said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them." 8 But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.

9 These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God. 10 And Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

11 Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence. 12 And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. 13 And God said to Noah, "I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence through them. Behold, I will destroy them with the earth. 14 Make yourself an ark of gopher wood. Make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch. 15 This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark 300 cubits, its breadth 50 cubits, and its height 30 cubits. 16 Make a roof for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above, and set the door of the ark in its side. Make it with lower, second, and third decks. 17 For behold, I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life under heaven. Everything that is on the earth shall die.

18 But I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. 19 And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every sort into the ark to keep them alive with you. They shall be male and female. 20 Of the birds according to their kinds, and of the animals according to their kinds, of every creeping thing of the ground, according to its kind, two of every sort shall come in to you to keep them alive. 21 Also take with you every sort of food that is eaten, and store it up. It shall serve as food for you and for them." 22 Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.

3 | Staying Afloat in Troubled Times



Genesis 6 teaches several powerful truths we would do well to apply to our lives. First, we capture a glimpse of authentic obedience in this chapter. Noah's story dispels the common myth that obedience to God makes our lives easier. The wishful thinking that following Christ automatically makes the rest of life convenient is a cultural concept, not a biblical one. But be assured, while following God may be hard at times, it's the best decision you'll ever make.

Second, the story of the flood is a profound picture of community. Ark has a subtlety of meaning that can be understood in two very different ways. First, it can mean "palace." When floodwaters rise, any dry boat will feel like luxury accommodations. Second, ark can also be understood as "coffin." Noah's ark was a big box, containing eight family members who lived together in tight quarters for more than a year. Yes, coffin comes to mind.

Such is the reality of community. In the floodwaters of life, people are a palace. But at the same time, the very people we love most will also demand our greatest patience. Community can make us feel like the wealthiest people alive and, at the same time, claustrophobic from close contact. The truth is that while community resembles both a palace and coffin, Christ followers need community to stay afloat in the floodwaters of life.

Finally, Genesis 6 gives us a glimpse of trust. In the details of constructing the ark, notice the one part left out that is standard for outfitting boats: the rudder. The ark was designed to drift, not for Noah to navigate. Noah and his family put themselves fully into the hands of God. And perhaps this is the grand lesson we can take from Noah's great challenge. We may not always be able to fix the problems that present themselves to us, but it is always wise to surrender ourselves to the care of God.

Reflection

When John F. Kennedy was president, among the items on the Oval Office desk was a coconut paperweight. During World War II, Japanese forces hit his PT-109 boat. Stranded in the Solomon Islands, Kennedy carved an SOS message on this coconut and gave it to two natives to deliver to a nearby base. That coconut is a reminder that there are times when we all need to be rescued. Noah's rescue was the result of simple trust in God, who provided the ark to save Noah and his family.

How do you need God to rescue you today? Even if you feel adrift, it's all right to ask God for his help. Have you asked? Once you do, wait in simple trust for God's response.

Genesis 12

1 Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. 2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

4 So Abram went, as the Lord had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. 5 And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people that they had acquired in Haran, and they set out to go to the land of Canaan. When they came to the land of Canaan, 6 Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. 7 Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built there an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him. 8 From there he moved to the hill country on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. And there he built an altar to the Lord and called upon the name of the Lord. 9 And Abram journeyed on, still going toward the Negeb.

10 Now there was a famine in the land. So Abram went down to Egypt to sojourn there, for the famine was severe in the land. 11 When he was about to enter Egypt, he said to Sarai his wife, "I know that you are a woman beautiful in appearance, 12 and when the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife.' Then they will kill me, but they will let you live. 13 Say you are my sister, that it may go well with me because of you, and that my life may be spared for your sake."

14 When Abram entered Egypt, the Egyptians saw that the woman was very beautiful. 15 And when the princes of Pharaoh saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh. And the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house. 16 And for her sake he dealt well with Abram; and he had sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male servants, female servants, female donkeys, and camels.

17 But the Lord afflicted Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife. 18 So Pharaoh called Abram and said, "What is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife? 19 Why did you say, 'She is my sister,' so that I took her for my wife? Now then, here is your wife; take her, and go." 20 And Pharaoh gave men orders concerning him, and they sent him away with his wife and all that he had.

4 | Faith isn't Safe



The best way to capture the essence of Abraham's life and lifestyle is with the label faith. When God invites us into the adventure of following him, he rarely tells us where we'll end up. The only way to discover the end of the story is to take the first step.

Consider the African impala. Despite its amazing ability to leap thirteen feet high, a zookeeper can keep it contained behind a small three-foot wall. Zookeepers know the impala will refuse to jump if it can't see where its feet will land. "Look before you leap," we're taught. But the faith Abraham modeled shows us that once we've heard clearly from God, we are to leap and leave the looking up to him.

New testament writers applauded Abraham for being a model of faith. James 2:23 says that "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness, and he was called God's friend." Romans 4:20-21 adds. "[Abraham] did not waver in unbelief at God's promise but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, because he was fully convinced that what God had promised, he was also able to do."

If you take the time to read and reflect on the rest of Abraham's biography, you quickly discover he was a deeply flawed individual. In fact, you won't make it out of Genesis 12 without seeing Abraham's compulsion to lie. His life was potholed with errors and inconsistencies. More than once Abraham disobeyed God and disappointed the people closest to him. This man of faith also tended to repeat the same mistakes over and over.

Our faith doesn't instantly free us from our faults. The promises of God over our lives don't translate into instant perfection. The standard we live by as we follow God isn't immediate perfection but continual progress. To remain in the struggle against sin is a winning strategy. To continue to strive and refuse to settle is the pattern of people making headway in their relationship with God.

May we always endeavor to step out in faith, allowing God to lead us to a country on the far side of complacency. Playwright Neil Simon stated it well: "If no one ever took risks, Michelangelo would have painted the Sistine [Chapel's] floor." Following God involved taking chances. Blessings await us on the far side of risk. And it all begins with faith, which is anything but safe.

Reflection

Abraham was a model of stepping out in faith. As we take steps to follow God, we grow in our friendship with him. In what way is God currently prompting you to step out in faith and trust him?

Consider Hebrews 11:6 "Without faith it is impossible to please God, since the one who draws near to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him."

Genesis 1

25 God made all sorts of wild animals, livestock, and small animals, each able to produce offspring of the same kind. And God saw that it was good.

26 Then God said, "Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground."

27 So God created human beings in his own image.

In the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.





Made in the Image of God

Did you know that God, the creator of the universe, was the one that created you?

Even though God created the beautiful sky and the amazing animals that we see outside, nothing is as special as His best creation: you!

You're His greatest creation and you might be thinking to yourself, "how?"

Well, God didn't make you like everything else that He made.

He made you special by making you in His image and that makes you more like God than anything else He created.

If God is our creator and He knows us better than anyone else, we can put all of our trust in Him. We can trust Him with our lives, families, and even friendships.

Reflection/Prayer

1. What do you love the most about yourself? How do you feel about being made in the image of God?

2. Do you believe that God has the best plans for you?

3. As a family, come up with one fun way to remind yourselves of this truth

(i.e. do a self portrait activity, come up with a phrase that everyone can remember)

Prayer: "Dear God, Thank you for creating us in your image. Thank you for making us special and knowing what's best for us. Jesus, help us remember that we can trust in you..."