

### Friday: *It's Personal...*

**Read:** John 1:14 <sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

**Reflect:**

These verses are talking about Jesus, the Son of God, “The Word”. Even though God’s Word is “Special Revelation” – in reality it is merely a testimony about “The Special Revelation” – Jesus.

Please understand, what you’ve just read doesn’t invalidate what you’ve read the previous four days. Yet it does help put the previous four days in perspective. The reason the Bible is important to us is because it helps us understand and therefore submit to God (i.e., Father, Jesus, Holy Spirit).

The verb for “dwelt” means “pitched a tent”. The related noun is used in the Old Testament to indicate the Tabernacle – the place of God’s presence. So what John is saying is that God’s presence was fully among us in the person of Jesus! That is amazing! I’m so glad we have God’s Word to tell us about that...

**Respond:**

How does Jesus help us to more fully understand God?

Read John 5:36-40. How are those verses a warning to us?

Are you still praying for your list of people who need to enter into a covenant relationship with God?

How can you demonstrate the important balance of “grace and truth” to someone today?

**Pray:** Pray for Prairie View Christian Camp (a summer camp and retreat center in Arkansas City, KS), another mission New Life supports monthly. Pray for Bob Griffin, Larry Hayes, and Roy Andrews – elders of New Life – pray they are truly led by God as they serve here. Ask God for a growing desire to represent what it means to be a Christian in ways that brings Him glory. Pray for our worship “service” on May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### Saturday: *It's Worth Talking About...*

**Read:** John 4:39-41 <sup>39</sup> Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me all that I ever did.” <sup>40</sup> So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. <sup>41</sup> And many more believed because of his word.

**Reflect:**

From these verses in John’s Gospel we can see that it isn’t enough to just know that Jesus came and lived among us. This marvelous truth needs told to others.

Although you can’t tell by English translations, v39 includes our focus this week, “the word”. More word for word it’s like “believed...because of the word of the woman who was continually testifying...” That’s cool isn’t it? She couldn’t stop talking about Jesus.

Tomorrow New Life is going to have a different type of worship service. In fact, it is a worship “service” – meaning that we will serve our great God by serving others. In a world as apathetic (sometimes hostile) as ours is toward Christianity, it seems that the only way many will come to faith is by seeing “faith in action”...which is what true faith manifests itself as.

**Respond:**

How can you prepare yourself today for worship tomorrow?

When was the last time you told someone about a good movie, a sale, or a TV show? When was the last time you told someone about Jesus?

Don’t forget to bring food for your family to have a picnic tomorrow after our time of serving together.

**Pray:** Pray for the National Missionary Convention – another mission New Life supports regularly. Pray for those God is prompting to come to New Life tomorrow to be obedient and come. Pray that our worship service tomorrow will be pleasing to God. Pray that God will put you in contact with someone you can impact positively for Him today. Pray for Ed Asbury, Keith Krause, and Mike Haag – deacons at New Life – pray they are truly led by God as they serve here.

# Biblical What?

April 26 – May 2

In a culture such as ours, which values individualism, the thought of anything (or anyone) having authority over us is not a pleasant thought for many. Generally speaking, here in America we like our “freedom” very much thank you.

While freedom can be a good thing – in many ways it is an illusion...or at least misunderstood. Think about it, we aren’t really as free as we think we are – right? Are you free to drive as fast as you want to drive? I suppose you could be (within the limits of your car)...but if you get caught there are consequences. In light of that it seems a person is “more free” when they obey the speed limit (i.e., submit to an authority). At least that way their heart won’t skip a few beats when they see a cop car and wonder how fast they were going.

We like to do what we want with our money. However, if you own a home, chances are extremely good that someone else told you how much interest you had to pay on the money you borrowed – right? I suppose a person could not pay the interest and insist on only paying back the principle over 15 or 30 years – but I think that person would find themselves without their home before long. In light of that, it seems the home owner is “more free” when they submit to the authority of the bank and pay its interest rates.

What I’m getting at is that we submit to authority every single day here in America as “free” citizens. It’s nothing new to us...but evidently that is part of the issue isn’t it? Generally speaking most people just accept some things as “the way they are” because they don’t know any different (or they rebel and pay the consequences – if caught).

Yet when it comes to the Bible we have an interesting dilemma on our hands. Many times we claim to believe it is authoritative for us. Yet do our actions verify that belief?

Looking at this from another point of view, since God is the Creator of the Universe, we are accountable to Him. We can choose not to be...but eventually we will pay the penalty (sort of like the speeding and interest analogies – but much worse). Yet if we submit to Him we are the most free we could ever be because His Word to us reveals Who He is and what He desires from us.

The question then becomes will we submit to the authority of the Bible? Will we do so for not only our benefit – but for the benefit of others as well? I.e., so others come to submit to God.

### Monday: *In the beginning...*

**Read:** Genesis 1:1-3 <sup>1</sup> In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> And God said, “Let there be...”

**Reflect:**  
These seem like such simple words, but in reality they divide much of humanity into (at least) two camps. People either believe these words or they do not. To believe these words takes faith. Let’s face it, they can’t be “proven”... although they will one day be verified by default (i.e., history unfolds as God has declared and *ipso facto* – true).

Yet don’t be fooled into thinking it only takes faith to believe the words in Genesis 1. It also takes faith to not believe them. After all, if Genesis is untrue, we still had to come from somewhere! Incidentally, these words can’t be “disproven” either (and we would never know anyway).

The primacy of God’s word is vital for Christianity. Yet we live in a culture that does not value being instructed on how to live; at least not if it’s at odds with our preferences. Therefore, adhering to the Bible automatically puts us at odds with much of the world because we are conceding there is One to Whom all are accountable.

**Respond:**  
Do you know anyone who doesn’t believe in the creation account of Genesis? Do you know why? What can you do?

How many copies of God’s word do you have? Do you know anyone without one? What can you do about it?

Make some time to read Psalm 119 this week.

**Pray:** Pray for the CEA (Christian Evangelizing Association of Kansas – a mission New Life regularly supports), the church planting organization monetarily supporting New Life. Thank God for the privilege of worshipping Him yesterday – pray the Holy Spirit will continue His work and that we will cooperate. Thank God for His wonderful Word.

### Tuesday: *It’s Plain...*

**Read:** Romans 1:18-20 <sup>18</sup> For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. <sup>19</sup> For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. <sup>20</sup> For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

**Reflect:**  
Since verse 18 basically jumps off the page, perhaps it would be good to read all of chapter one before continuing with today’s thoughts.

These verses talk about the “faith” needed to believe Genesis 1. They imply faith is logical because it “is plain” that God exists based on the splendor of nature. This way of God revealing Himself to us is called “General Revelation”. It’s so clear that God exists that Paul says those who deny it “suppress the truth”.

Yet despite the reality of God’s existence based on creation, we still don’t know what type of god He is. We can tell He’s orderly, powerful, creative, etc. But how do we know He’s loving, kind, merciful, etc.? For that we need “Special Revelation” – His Word.

**Respond:**  
What is the most awe-inspiring part of creation to you?

While these verses are talking about the suppression of God’s “general revelation” – are you guilty of suppressing His “Special Revelation”?

Are Christians “without excuse” if they are disobedient to God’s word?

**Pray:** Pray for Lincoln Christian Seminary, Manhattan Christian College, and Ozark Christian College (missions supported regularly by New Life). Ask God to bless the Bible studies that will take place tonight – pray for the spiritual growth of those who will attend. Pray for our worship “service” on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Ask God to help you be obedient to His Word – pray for endurance to do your part too.

### Wednesday: *It’s Special...*

**Read:** 2 Timothy 3:16-17 <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

**Reflect:**  
These are possibly among the favorite verses of many Christians. They clearly point to the importance of God’s Word – His “Special Revelation”.

However, in these verses Paul is speaking (primarily if not exclusively) about what is our Old Testament Scriptures. The Bible we have was not in existence when Paul wrote 2 Timothy – in fact he (and others) were living it! So does this mean that only the Old Testament is inspired by God?

In 1 Thessalonians (likely our earliest New Testament “book”) Paul says that the Thessalonian Christians accepted his words as “the word of God” (1Thess2:13). At the end of the letter Paul instructs them to read his letter to all of “the family” (1Thess5:27). This meant it was read in the same setting at the Old Testament Scriptures – which indicates the letter was on equal footing (i.e., viewed as authoritative).

**Respond:**  
How has God’s word been “profitable” for you? Have you told anyone about it?

How much time do you spend reading in God’s Word each day?

Are there parts of the Bible you haven’t read? Is there a reason why? Will you let me know?  
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**Pray:** Pray for Shiloh Home of Hope and Emporia Christian Schools (two ‘local’ missions we regularly support). Pray for our upcoming service project on May 3<sup>rd</sup>; pray God is glorified through what we do that day – pray for willing hearts to serve as well. Pray for the elders and official church board meetings this Sunday – pray they are productive, guided by the Bible, and God-honoring.

### Thursday: *It’s Trustworthy...*

**Read:** 2 Peter 1:20-21 <sup>20</sup> knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone’s own interpretation. <sup>21</sup> For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

**Reflect:**  
In light of Wednesday’s thoughts – do the above verses indicate that Paul was out of line in asserting his letter needed to be read in public? I suppose this could be true, but later in this letter Peter equates Paul’s words with Scripture (2Pet3:15-16). Peter knew others were reading them – and was glad.

In another letter Paul wrote he took a ‘verse’ from the ‘Old Testament’ (Deut25:4), linked it with words from Jesus (Matt10:10), and called it “Scripture” (1Tim5:18). Evidently Paul viewed what Jesus had to say as authoritative.

All of this makes sense doesn’t it? Creation clearly indicates there is a God (e.g., Rom1; Ps19) – yet we need to know specifics about this God. Are we accountable to Him or to ourselves? Does He love us or could he care less about what happens to us? Is our trust in Him useless, or will it be rewarded? Does He...

**Respond:**  
If the Holy Spirit was vital for the writing of Scripture – how important do you think He is for properly understanding it?

If you think God is telling you something through prayer, or another person (or any other way), that contradicts His Word – which do you think is wrong?

What are three of the most important truths you know from God’s Word?

**Pray:** Pray for Cookson Hills (a Christian Children’s Home), which is another mission New Life regularly supports. Pray for the worship team as they prepare tonight to lead us in corporate worship of God on Sunday. Pray for Brent McCrory – the preaching minister of New Life – pray He will be truly led by God as he serves here. Pray for the Unity and Purity of New Life so that we can make Him famous.