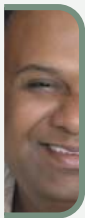


HE IS
able



*Greater
Than We
Think
His
Power
Working
In Us*

**Prayer
Guide**



Contents

Introduction	ii
Overview.....	iii
Week One – Day One.....	1
Week One – Day Two	2
Week One – Day Three	3
Week One – Day Four	4
Week One – Day Five.....	5
Week One – Day Six.....	6
Week One – Day Seven	7
Week Two – Day One	9
Week Two – Day Two.....	10
Week Two – Day Three	11
Week Two – Day Four.....	12
Week Two – Day Five	13
Week Two – Day Six	14
Week Two – Day Seven	15
Week Three – Day One	17
Week Three – Day Two.....	18
Week Three – Day Three.....	19
Week Three – Day Four.....	20
Week Three – Day Five	21
Week Three – Day Six	22
Week Three – Day Seven.....	23

Introduction

Ephesians 3:20 (NLT)

*Now glory be to God! By his mighty power at work within us, **He is Able** to accomplish infinitely more than we would ever dare to ask or hope.
(emphasis added)*

Isn't it amazing that our God who is all knowing and all powerful intends to accomplish infinitely more than we can ever ask or even hope for, by working in us! Our God is truly an awesome God!

In preparation for our giving campaign this devotional guide is intended to help us reflect on who God is, to recall what He has already done in our own lives, as well as through the life of our church and respond to what God has yet to do. It may be used in solitude as a personal devotional or you may choose to work through it together as a family.

Each of the three weeks has five daily devotionals where we will read, reflect on, respond to and rejoice in God's word. On the sixth day there will be a review and further reflection on the week's emphasis and day seven is a chance to hear what God has done for someone else since coming to VCFNP. If you miss a day at any point just pick it up where you left off and keep going!

Some space has been provided for you to make notes of your own thoughts and prayers as well as anything you feel God may be speaking to you. There is also some additional space at the end of this booklet for your notes or you may choose to keep a separate journal.

Translations used:

NLT	New Living Testament
CJB	Complete Jewish Bible
NCV	New Century Version
NIV	New International Version
RSV	Revised Standard Version
WNT	Weymouth New Testament

Overview

Week One: The Promise

During the first week we consider just a few of the promises God makes to His people. We will be invited to reflect on the good things that God has already done for us and challenged to believe for those promises not yet fully realized.

Week Two: The Gift

During the second week we reflect on some of the many gifts that God has already given to us. Some are common and perhaps easily overlooked while others are extraordinary and meant just for you.

Week Three: The Call

During the last week we are challenged to think about what God has called us to do and be in His kingdom... and to respond!
Are you ready to be transformed? Or is that more than you would dare to ask or even hope...? Let's see what God will do.

Week One – Day One

The Promise: We were created to do good things

Read:

Ephesians 2:10 (NLT)

For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so that we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

Reflect:

Did you know that a long time ago God actually planned good things for VCFNP to do? We have been put together by God so that now, together with Jesus, we can all participate in those good things God planned so long ago! Our God who is all powerful and has made everything plans to do His work with His people. *Together* we are His masterpiece!

Respond:

Think about the way you have been made. Ask God to use those things to accomplish His plans. Do you already know one or two of the “good things” God has planned for you to do? What are they? If you don't know, ask God to help you see what He has set aside just for you to do.

Rejoice:

Thank God for some of the good things He has already done through VCFNP. Thank Him for the good things yet to be revealed in your own life as well as the life of our church.

When I look at the night sky and see the work of your fingers – the moon and the stars you have set in place – what are mortals that you should think of us, mere humans that you should care for us?

Psalm 8:3-4 (NLT)

Week One – Day Two

**The Promise: The *whole* body fits together perfectly;
each one with their own special work**

Read:

Ephesians 4:16 (NLT)

Under [Christ's] direction, the whole body is fitted together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

Reflect:

Have you ever thought about the fact that it is *your work* in the church (not just the leader's work in the church), that helps the other people in our church to grow? While God will accomplish His long term purposes with or without us, the health of our church and what happens today around us is truly dependant on each one of us doing the work that we were made to do. Our unity for God's purposes is maintained as we each do our own special work.

Respond:

Pray for our people at VCFNP. Ask Jesus to fit us together perfectly so each one of us will take our place and fulfill the special work we have been made to do. Ask for grace and courage on those who have yet to begin; and grace and strength on those who have been working, that they would not grow weary in the good things God has given them to do. Pray that as a body, we would be united for God's purposes.

Rejoice:

Let's be thankful to God for each other; that He gives each one of us value, no matter how long we have been a Christian, what our experiences have been, what we have done, our abilities or our age. We each have value in God's kingdom! Thank Him for everyone in our church (even the ones you do not know), for what they are doing that helps our church to be healthy and growing and full of love. Then thank Him for the part He has given you to do.

Always keep yourselves united in the Holy Spirit, and bind yourselves together with peace.

Ephesians 4:3 (NLT)

Week One – Day Three

The Promise: Our trust in God will get the work done

Read:

John 6:27-29 (NLT)

“But you shouldn’t be so concerned about perishable things like food. Spend your energy seeking the eternal life that I, the Son of Man, can give you. For God the Father has sent me for that very purpose.” They replied, “What does God want us to do?” Jesus told them, “This is what God wants you to do: Trust in the one he sent!”

Reflect:

Many times it can be confusing trying to decide what God wants us to do. This scripture lets us know that God knows that, and the very first thing we must “do” is trust Jesus! This is our work... to trust Him! Is there something going on in your life right now for which you really need to trust God? Do you really believe if you ask Him, that God will be able to direct your steps and lead you?

Respond:

Pray for someone you know who has to make an important decision or is struggling with some difficult circumstances. Pray that they would be able to trust God in their circumstances and that they would be granted the faith to believe that He will lead them through it. Do you need to ask someone to pray this way for you also?

Rejoice:

We can thank God that in spite of our selfish desires, our fuzzy understanding of His ways and the weakness of our flesh, He is still able, if we ask Him, to lead us and guide us and bring us into His desire for us. There is nothing too hard for our God! Not even our own hearts!

*Those who know your name **trust** in you, for you, O LORD, have never abandoned anyone who searches for you.*

Psalms 9:10 (NLT)

*Commit your way to the LORD; **trust** in him, and he will act.*

Psalms 37:5 (CJB)

Week One – Day Four

The Promise: “My power works best in your weakness”

Read:

2 Corinthians 12:9 (NLT)

9Each time [the Lord] said, “My gracious favor is all you need. My power works best in your weakness.” So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may work through me.

Reflect:

In the kingdom of God His power actually works best in our weaknesses. Not just any weakness... but in your weakness. This is an astounding truth about God’s kingdom! Do you really believe that God can actually accomplish His purposes in your life through your weaknesses? In fact, *because of your weakness?*

Respond:

Name one or two of your own weaknesses (inabilities, failures, personal habits or traits etc.). Offer these (perhaps again) to God for His purposes. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you remember that when you are weak, that is the time He wants to work through you. Ask God to help you remember to surrender to Him when you are weak and to fill you with His power.

Rejoice:

Can you follow Paul’s example and express your gratefulness to God that it is out of your weaknesses and not just your strengths that God has determined to bring His Kingdom?

But I trust in your unfailing love. I will rejoice because you have rescued me. I will sing to the LORD because he has been so good to me.

Psalm 13:5-6 (NLT)

Week One – Day Five

The Promise: God’s work intends nothing less than our transformation

Read:

Romans 12:2 (CJB)

In other words, do not let yourselves be conformed to the standards of this present age. Instead, keep letting yourselves be transformed by the renewing of your minds; so that you will know what God wants and will agree that what he wants is good, satisfying and able to succeed.

Reflect:

Did you know that God doesn’t want us to just do what He says but He actually wants us to agree with Him that what He wants is good, satisfying and will succeed? Can you think of something in your life that you are hesitating to turn over to God because you think He might do something you do not want or like? We must *keep letting* our minds be renewed and enlightened by God.

Respond:

Be honest with God concerning something you may be worried about trusting Him with. Then invite the Holy Spirit to come and renew your mind so you will not be afraid to trust God. Now sit quietly before the Lord and allow His Spirit to wash your mind, renew your thoughts and break off the standards of this life that have caused you to feel that God cannot be trusted with any particular circumstance.

Rejoice:

Let’s rejoice that our transformation includes being able to agree with a God who wants only what is good and satisfying for us! Even though your mind may not yet be completely renewed, can you agree that what God is planning to do is always going to be good and satisfying for you?

And the LORD will guide you continually, and satisfy your desire with good things, and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.

Isaiah 58:11 (RSV)

Week One – Day Six

The Promise: Fulfilled in Jesus

Read:

2 Corinthians 1:20-22 (NLT)

For all of God's promises have been fulfilled in [Christ Jesus]. That is why we say "Amen" when we give glory to God through Christ. It is God who gives us, along with you, the ability to stand firm for Christ. He has commissioned us, and he has identified us as his own by placing the Holy Spirit in our hearts as the first installment of everything he will give us.

Reflect:

This week we have considered just a few of the promises God makes to His people. Things like:

We have been made for a life of doing good
In Christ each one of us has a unique value in the church
His power is perfect when we are weak
When we trust God *He changes us*

And here's another promise: Giving us His Holy Spirit is not the fullness of what God intends to give. It is only the first installment of what He intends to give to us!

Respond:

What would be an appropriate response to the One who has not only made so many extravagant promises but has also provided the Way for their fulfillment?

Rejoice:

"...we say 'Amen' when we give glory to God through Christ..."

When we say "Amen" we are actually saying, "It is true" or "So be it". When we give glory to God we acknowledge the truth that in Christ all God's promises have been fulfilled; giving God glory is our "Amen" to both the promise and its fulfillment!

Spend some time giving God glory by remembering what He has done for you since coming to Vineyard North Phoenix. Will you glorify Him further by sharing one or two of those things with someone else?

Week One – Day Seven

Betty Thompson

Several years ago a guest speaker named Bob Craine was at the Vineyard preaching for the weekend. At the end of the Sunday night service he said that he felt God was going to perform healing and if you wanted to receive healing to come forward for prayer.

Some others from our Small Group went forward. As I was praying for each of them to be healed my own need for healing came to mind. For years I had a bad lower back that gave me pain when standing or walking for a long period of time. One of the things that I would do to help relieve this pain was to wear inserts in my shoes and this did help some.

Several ladies began praying for me and one of them placed her hand on my lower back. As she did, my back got extremely hot and the heat actually spread to my entire body. I felt the presence of the Holy Spirit on me during this time.

After that night I have not worn my shoe inserts anymore. I can walk and stand for long periods of time without any pain whatsoever! I just praise God for this healing and His continued blessings!

Karen Powell

Our first year in Arizona (1994) was very difficult. We had many trials such as loss of job, vehicle repossession, power being turned off (with three small children in the house) and other things such as these.

There actually was a day when we literally had no food in our house. We had only been going to a small group for a short time and we didn't want to burden them with our problems. But finally we realized we had to put down our pride and ask for help.

A couple hours after I called our leaders (Bob & Monica James) Bob showed up at our door with boxes and bags of food. He didn't want us to pay him and the grace and kindness shown really encouraged us.

Two months after Bob brought the food it was Christmas time. My husband had a job now and was working hard to get caught up on the bills. But we still had no money to get a tree or presents for our three beautiful children.

A woman in our church bought us a tree as a gift to us. And a couple days before Christmas we got a call from the church, saying someone wanted

to deliver some Christmas gifts to our family! We were so blessed and humbled as we watched our children open their gifts. There was even something in there for my husband and myself. Since then we have gone through many joys and difficulties and our family here at VCFNP has always been there to support us. Thank you VCFNP!

Week Two – Day One

The Gift: God’s Creation

Read:

Psalm 104:24 (CJB)

*What variety there is in your works, O LORD! How many [of them there are]!
In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creations.*

Reflect:

Consider some of the things we can know about God from the creation that we witness all around us. Think about the variety and order of God’s creation, from the vastness of uncountable universes, to the mysteries of sub-atomic particles. Consider the many differences in the people that you know.

Respond:

Thank God for some of the things in His creation that give you particular pleasure (the ever changing display in the sky, certain plants or animals, natural occurrences, etc.). Tell someone else one or two things that you especially love about God’s creation.

Rejoice:

As Christ was the exact representation of the Father on the earth, so now the church is to be the full expression of Jesus; the One who fills all creation! The church as the full expression of the one who fills all creation?! Who can understand such things? Our God is awesome in His power and His wisdom; His ways are beyond our ability to figure out!

[God] has put all things under [Christ’s] feet and made him head over everything for the church, which is his body, the full expression of him who fills all creation.

Ephesians 1:22-23 (CJB)

Week Two – Day Three

The Gift: God’s Comfort and Joy

Read:

Jeremiah 31: 13-14 (NLT)

The young women will dance for joy, and the men – old and young – will join in the celebration. I will turn their mourning into joy. I will comfort them and exchange their sorrow for rejoicing. I will supply the priests with an abundance of offerings. I will satisfy my people with my bounty. I, the LORD, have spoken!

Reflect:

The LORD is confident! He declares that He *will* be able to exchange all our sorrow with rejoicing. Have you ever experienced sadness so profound that you were not sure you would ever be able to laugh again? Can you recall a time of sadness when you experienced God’s comfort? Perhaps you have even had that very sadness turned into real joy?

Respond:

If you are in the midst of a great sadness take a moment to ask the Holy Spirit to bring comfort to your heart. Then sit quietly and allow the LORD to answer your prayer. Remember, ALL of God’s promises have already been fulfilled in Jesus. Or perhaps you know someone else who is grieving. Ask the Holy Spirit to visit them with His comfort or thank the Lord for the comfort He has brought to you in times past.

Rejoice:

Though some sadness in this life cannot be measured, can you still offer thanks to God for His promise to exchange all our sadness with rejoicing and satisfy us with His bounty?

I will tell of the LORD’s unfailing love. I will praise the LORD for all he has done. I will rejoice in his great goodness, which he has granted according to his mercy and love... In all [my] suffering he also suffered, and he personally rescued [me]. In his love and mercy he redeemed [me]. He lifts [me] up and carries [me] through all the years. Isaiah 63: 7-9 (NLT)

Week Two – Day Four

The Gift: God’s Peace

Read:

John 14:27 (NLT)

I am leaving you with a gift – peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give isn’t like the peace the world gives. So don’t be troubled or afraid.

John 16:33 (NLT)

I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world.

(editorial emphasis)

Reflect:

In today’s world the promise of peace is precious, but audacious! Who can promise peace with all we see and hear going on in the world today? What sort of a person would guarantee peace?! Yet Jesus freely, confidently, offers us peace, His peace. How can He do that? How can we really have peace while we are in this world?

Respond:

Peace is closely linked to desire. Are there any “parts” of your heart or mind that are not at peace? Examine your desire. There is only one desire that actually leads us into peace and that is the desire for God. Can you surrender your most intense desires and trust God to care for your best interest? Take a moment right now and practice receiving the gift of peace.

Rejoice:

It is good to rejoice in the *promise* of peace, but we can also rejoice in the *experience* of peace won for us when Jesus overcame the world.

The desire of all our soul is to remember you and your name. My soul desires you at night, my spirit in me seeks you at dawn.

Isaiah 26:8b-9a (CJB)

Week Two – Day Five

The Gift: Knowing God

Read:

Psalm 36: 5 – 9 (NLT)

Your unfailing love, O LORD, is as vast as the heavens; your faithfulness reaches beyond the clouds. Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, your justice like the ocean depths. You care for people and animals alike, O LORD. How precious is your unfailing love, O God! All humanity finds shelter in the shadow of your wings. You feed them from the abundance of your own house, letting them drink from your rivers of delight. For you are the fountain of life, the light by which we see.

Reflect:

Love, faithfulness, righteousness, justice, care, protection, provision, pleasure, life, light - just a few of the ways revealed in this scripture of how David knew God. How many of these attributes of God have been revealed to you during different times in your life? Do you believe God wants you to know Him in all the ways David just mentioned?

Respond:

Are there any attributes of God that David spoke about that you have not yet experienced? Which ways do you need to see God revealed right now? God wants you to know Him. Thank God for all the ways He has made Himself known to you so far and express your desire to Him for the many ways you still want to know and understand Him.

Rejoice:

The one true living God, who is all powerful and all knowing desires for you to know Him personally and intimately!

But may all who search for you be filled with joy and gladness. May those who love your salvation repeatedly shout, "The LORD is great!" As for me, I am poor and needy, but the Lord is thinking about me right now. You are my helper and my savior. Do not delay, O my God.

Psalm 40:16-17 (NLT)

Week Two – Day Six

The Gift: Jesus

Read:

Psalm 32:1-5 (NLT)

Oh, what joy for those whose rebellion is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight! Yes, what joy for those whose record the LORD has cleared of sin, whose lives are lived in complete honesty! When I refused to confess my sin, I was weak and miserable, and I groaned all day long. Day and night your hand of discipline was heavy on me. My strength evaporated like water in the summer heat. Selah

Finally, I confessed all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide them. I said to myself, "I will confess my rebellion to the LORD." And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone. Selah

Reflect:

Of all the gifts we considered this week - God's creation, His provision, His comfort and peace and even the revelation of Himself to us - the removal of our sin is more profound and mysterious than them all. Without the removal of our guilt we could not receive God's other gifts; and there is no removing our guilt apart from the life and death of Jesus.

The Old Testament word Selah is a musical instruction to create an interlude with the intention of allowing time for reflection. Reread the scripture above and consider Jesus...

Respond:

What would be an appropriate response to the One who not only gives good gifts without number, but also assures our receipt of them with the blood of His own Son?

Rejoice:

What joy! We no longer have to hide our failures... because of Jesus, being honest with God about our sin now brings forgiveness, instead of judgment!

These are the words [David] sang: "The LORD is my rock, my fortress, and my savior; my God is my rock, in whom I find protection. He is my shield, the strength of my salvation, and my stronghold, my high tower, my savior, the one who saves me from violence. I will call on the LORD, who is worthy of praise, for he saves me from my enemies.

2 Samuel 22:2-4 (NLT)

Week Two – Day Seven

Paul Kephart

From my earliest childhood I would always seem to get “stuck” on some tasks. I always had this feeling that if something wasn’t locked right or wasn’t put away right, or if it wasn’t done just right something bad would happen. This happened many times every day. I would repeat some tasks a dozen times or more. This sometimes added up to an hour or more of wasted time every day. Sometimes I could force myself to walk away, but usually I couldn’t. This was very frustrating and time consuming.

In my early twenties I learned I suffered from obsessive/compulsive disorder (OCD). Over the years I have gotten counseling and done much research to find some relief. I prayed and prayed for healing many times every day, but to no avail.

After coming to the Vineyard I went to a Men’s Retreat in February 2001. On the last night I answered an altar call for prayer. The person praying for me prayed a spirit of discipline on me. This was significant because even the greatest human discipline cannot overcome the oppression of OCD. But even after this, I knew I still had the problem.

The next morning one of the speakers said, “God doesn’t want to just change the ‘old man’, He wants to kill him. He wants to destroy sin in our lives.” Then He asked, “Who is going back down the mountain to Phoenix the ‘old man’, or the ‘new, free man’?” At that instant I knew I had to answer the final call for prayer.

One of the men praying for me asked, “Paul, do you believe that Jesus Christ can heal you right here and now?” I knew my healing depended on how I answered and I said, “Yes, I do.” They continued to pray for me and then we returned to our seats. We were given a chance to share about our experiences at the retreat and God showed me the Scripture James 5:16 “Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.” Aside from my wife and counselors, I had never told anyone else about my problem, not even my parents. But God was telling me that if I wanted my healing to be complete, I had to confront my sins of fear and pride and stand before the men at the retreat and tell them of my lifelong struggle. So I did.

Praise God! Since I returned from the retreat I have not had a single problem with obsessive/compulsive disorder!!! Sometimes the enemy tries to creep in and tell me, “You’re not healed.” But I tell him, “The Lord rebuke you, Satan” and he leaves.

A few weeks after the retreat my daughter asked my wife, "Mommy, where did the man go?" My wife asked, "What man?" My daughter replied, "The man who was mean to Daddy." My wife asked her, "What did he look like?" My daughter said, "He was gray." My wife asked, "What color were his eyes?" My daughter replied, "Black." Then my wife asked her, "Who made him go away?" And my 30 month old daughter replied, "God did."

WOW! I believe this to have been the "old man" that she somehow saw. A confirmation from heaven that my healing was and is complete! Amen!

Week Three – Day One

The Call: We are Called by Name

Read:

Genesis 22:1 (NLT)

*Later on God tested Abraham's faith and obedience. "Abraham!" **God called.** "Yes," he replied. "Here I am."*

Genesis 46:2 (NLT)

During the night God spoke to [Jacob] in a vision. "Jacob! Jacob!" he called.

"Here I am," Jacob replied.

Exodus 3:4 (NLT)

When the LORD saw that he had caught Moses' attention, God called to him from the bush, "Moses! Moses!"

"Here I am!" Moses replied.

1 Samuel 3:10 (NLT)

And the LORD came and called as before, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel replied, "Yes, your servant is listening."

Reflect:

It can be a scary thing to be called by God. What does He want me to do? Where will I have to go? What will I have to give up? But really our first response is only to "hear Him out". Just like these giants of our faith did. Let God know you are listening. Remember, He wants to bring us into agreement with what He wants not to just do something for Him. Do you believe that God can really change your heart and mind so that you not only do, but also desire to do whatever He is calling you to?

Respond:

Can you say to God, "Here I am, I am listening to you" and leave all the other questions for later? Are you willing to be convinced by God of your calling? If not, can you tell God the things that are keeping you from trusting Him?

Rejoice:

Can you thank God, believing that what He has for you to do will be satisfying to you?

In most solemn truth I tell you that he who trusts in me--the things which I do he shall do also; and greater things than these he shall do, because I am going to the Father.

John 14:12 (WNT)

Week Three – Day Two

The Call: Holiness and Purity

Read:

1 Thessalonians 4:7 (NLT)

God has called us to be holy, not to live impure lives.

Reflect:

Why would God call us to something that He already knows we can never do? Because His call is never based on who we are. It is always based on who He is. If you think holiness and purity are not possible for you then you have understood correctly. The call is not to just do something for God but to be like Him. Being pure means we are not mixed together with any other things.

Respond:

Being holy, in this sense, means we are set apart, separate, unmixed... pure. Separate yourself from the reasons you have for your chronic, recurring failures and join yourself to the life that is in Christ. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you.

Rejoice:

Rejoice because holiness and purity are not only possible in Christ, but reasonable and a pleasure!

And yet we know that we become right with God, not by doing what the law commands, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be accepted by God because of our faith in Christ – and not because we have obeyed the law. For no one will ever be saved by obeying the law... I myself no longer live, but Christ lives in me. So I live my life in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Galatians 2:16-20 (NLT)

So I advise you to live according to your new life in the Holy Spirit. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves.

Galatians 5:16 (NLT)

Week Three – Day Three

The Call: Love One Another

Read:

Colossians 3:15 (NLT)

And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are all called to live in peace. And always be thankful.

Galatians 5:13 (NLT)

*For you have been **called** to live in freedom – not freedom to satisfy your sinful nature, but freedom to serve one another in love.*

Reflect:

OK, this is more like it... a call to peace and freedom! But we are called to live in peace with each other, and freedom has been given so that we might serve each other. These have to do with how we relate to the rest of the body of Christ, and not just the ones we like or agree with, but the whole body. The unsaved are hindered in believing in Jesus when there is discord and strife among us.

Respond:

Examine yourself. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you anyone (or any group) in the body of Christ that you are not at peace with (in your own heart) or anyone you are not “free” to serve. Where can you work to bring peace? Who can you serve in love?

Rejoice:

Be glad because Jesus has prayed for us!

My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

John 17:20-23 (NIV)

Week Three – Day Four

The Call: Go Fish!

Read:

Matthew 4:19 (NLT)

Jesus called out to them, "Come, be my disciples, and I will show you how to fish for people!"

Reflect:

Probably the two most popular questions in the world of fishing are, "Did you catch anything?" which is quickly followed by, "What kind of bait were you using?" Anyone who fishes knows that not only do different fish bite at different kinds of bait, but what worked yesterday might not work today... God has made an endless selection of "bait" available to us, our own lives for starters, along with so many gifts and promises. Have you caught any fish (people) lately? What kind of bait are you using?

Respond:

If you're having some trouble with your catch ask the Lord where to cast your net or what sort of bait He's using and then go fishing!

Rejoice:

It is the Lord!

Simon Peter said, "I am going out to fish." The others said, "We will go with you." So they went out and got into the boat. They fished that night but caught nothing. Early the next morning Jesus stood on the shore, but the followers did not know it was Jesus. Then he said to them, "Friends, did you catch any fish?" They answered, "No." He said, "Throw your net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they did, and they caught so many fish they could not pull the net back into the boat. The follower whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!"

John 21:3-7a (NCV)

Week Three – Day Five

The Call: The Cross

Read:

Mark 8:34-35; 9:1 (NLT)

Then [Jesus] called his disciples and the crowds to come over and listen, "If any of you wants to be my follower," he told them, "you must put aside your selfish ambition, shoulder your cross, and follow me. If you try to keep your life for yourself, you will lose [true life]. But if you give up your life for my sake and for the sake of the Good News, you will find true life... Jesus went on to say, "I assure you that some of you standing here right now will not die before you see the Kingdom of God arrive in great power!"

Reflect:

You knew somebody was going to bring up the cross... and not just any cross, but *your* cross... Now it's not *quite* as bad as our enemy has tried to make it seem. The real struggle, the real guilt, the real dying have all been done for us. What is left is for us to give Jesus control of the life we know; in order to live in the Life we have been promised. Will there be some real giving up and giving away? Yes. But the promise is in proportion to the call... seeing with our own eyes the coming of the kingdom of God... with power!

Respond:

Our "cross" has nothing to do with our salvation. Only the cross of Christ has the power to save. Our "cross" (i.e. surrendering our life and its desires) has everything to do with the coming of the kingdom of God in our life. If you are not quite ready to see the coming of God's kingdom just ask for what you lack... But if you are ready to see God's kingdom come with power... then take up your cross and follow.

Rejoice:

"I assure you some people standing here right now will not die before you see the Kingdom of God arrive in great power!"

(editorial emphasis)

For those who have been *longing* to see God's kingdom come in power, giving up other things will seem a pretty good exchange for the chance to see it with their own eyes... and a real reason to rejoice! Let those with an ear, hear!

Now I am sending forth upon you what my Father promised, so stay here in the city until you have been equipped with power from above.

Luke 24:49 (CJB)

Week Three – Day Six

The Call: Demonstrate Jesus

Read:

Isaiah 42:6-8a (NCV)

The Lord says, "I, the Lord, called you to do right, and I will hold your hand and protect you. You will be the sign of my agreement with the people, a light to shine for all people. You will help the blind to see. You will free those who are in prison, and you will lead those who live in darkness out of their prison. I am the Lord. That is my name."

Reflect:

This week we have considered some of the things to which God is calling us, some are very exciting and others are, well... scary, and some are both! But the truth is they are all summed up in our call to demonstrate Jesus.

Everything He did, we *must* also do in order to demonstrate Him perfectly, even as He perfectly demonstrated the Father to us while He was on the earth. As we come to know Him we *can* accurately demonstrate Jesus to the world.

Respond:

What would be an appropriate response to the One who has not only shown us the Father but opened the way to Him?

Rejoice:

[Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; Colossians 1:15 (RSV)

For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son...

Romans 8:29 (NLT)

*"I am the servant of the Lord. Let it happen to me as you say!"
Luke 1:18 (NCV)*

Week Three – Day Seven

Suzanne Hopkins

I was raised in a Catholic family but always felt judgment and condemnation from church and from God. I felt ashamed and “not good enough” to be in the presence of the Lord. I somehow missed the love and grace of Jesus and suffered all my life for my ignorance.

My sister Carolyn began attending the Vineyard. I remember seeing the weekly outlines on her refrigerator and making snide comments that she was disillusioned and weak. One Sunday we decided to do something fun but Carolyn said first we needed to go to church.

I reluctantly agreed and attended my first Vineyard service in 1997. The teaching was, “Do All Paths Lead to Heaven?” Brian’s gift for delivering the Word of God so that it applied to everyday life lit the fire in my heart.

I was so moved and full of relief and understanding of what God was really about, I told everyone I could about the service the entire next week! I could hardly wait to go to church the following week. My heart was rejoicing in the knowledge that Jesus loved me always unconditionally!

The guilt I carried all my life was finally gone. I no longer felt constantly ashamed. My insides were screaming to let out this joy and explain the truth to all the other people I knew who were suffering just like me. I remember just telling everyone, “We don’t need to suffer anymore! God’s love and grace comes at the speed of light, in the darkest night and there is no reason to wait!”

Linda Bradley

While growing up religion was confusing to me. I was told to follow the Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule but all around me the people were gossiping about each other and having affairs including our preacher.

After I became an adult, I started looking elsewhere for answers and thought I had them with the new age movement. I read tarot cards, worked on the psychic hot line, I followed astrology, thought that aliens were real. You name it; I believed it and did it.

After my own son had two of his three sons he came over with his wife and their small group leader to talk to me. He didn’t want me teaching his sons new age stuff when he was teaching them about God and Jesus. He said I could only see my grandsons if he and my daughter-in-law were present so

they could make sure I wouldn't teach anything new age. Of course I agreed to what he wanted.

Mother's Day was the next Sunday so I decided to go to his church (the Vineyard) and surprise him so that he could see that his Mom was not all bad. I, however, got the surprise because I liked the church, the music, the people and kept coming back. Two months later I asked Jesus to be my Savior and was baptized that following September on Labor Day.

Going to the Vineyard is not like the church I went to as a child. Brian and the other pastors do as they teach, and they are also teaching me what a Christian is truly supposed to be. My relationship with my son, his wife and my grandsons is terrific and I shall always be grateful that God used my son to lead me to His son.









VCFNP.com
vineyard
christian fellowship of north phoenix

6250 W Peoria Ave
Glendale, AZ 85302

tel 623.934.4000
fax 623.934.3747