



ontrack devotions

ROMANS

JANUARY 2024

MONTHLY PRAYER SHEET

"...The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." James 5:16

Who I Will Reach

How I Will Do It

How It Went

Other Requests

Date Answered

How It Was Answered

MONTHLY COMMITMENT SHEET

Name: _____

This sheet is designed to help you make personal commitments each month that will **help you grow in your walk with God**. Fill it out by determining

1. What will push you
2. What you think you can achieve

If you need help filling out your commitments, seek out someone you trust who can help you. Share your commitments with those who will help keep you accountable.

Personal Devotions:

How did I do with my commitment last month? _____

I will commit to read the OnTrack Bible passage and devotional thought _____ day(s) each week this month.

Church Attendance:

How did I do last month with my attendance? _____

I will attend church _____ time(s) this month.

I will attend small group _____ time(s) this month.

I will attend _____ time(s) this month.

(List any other activities you will participate in this month—Bible study, church events, etc.)

Bible Memory:

How did I do with Bible memory last month? _____

I will memorize _____ verse(s) this month.

Outreach:

How did I do last month with sharing Jesus? _____

I will share Jesus with _____ this month.

I will serve my local church this month by _____

If you were not around and people were talking about you, what would they say? What words would they use to describe you? Would they talk about how committed you are to Jesus? Would they say that they respect you? In today's reading, we learn something about the Christians in Rome that hopefully can be said about each of us. Paul wrote to explain the Gospel—the message of Jesus. He told them that he had been faithfully praying for them and he thanked God for them because their "faith is being reported all over the world." What an incredible statement! When conversation turned to the Christians in Rome, it was about their great faith. In fact, their commitment to Jesus was known by people all over the world. It must grieve the heart of God to know that some people claim to follow Jesus Christ, yet are not known as people who have great faith. It ought to be said of each of us, as individuals and corporately as a church, that we are people of great faith. The world ought to be able to know, just by observing us, that we serve God. Can they see that in your life? What needs to change so they can?

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING

ROMANS 1

According to this passage, what can people conclude about God just by what they generally observe in the world? This section of Scripture reveals two things that people can discover about God just by observing our world. God has created a world that reveals to everyone, no matter where they live, that there is a God. In fact, the world reveals to all of us God's invisible qualities. The first invisible quality seen in the world is His eternal power. People can look all around and see that God is omnipotent—His power is unlimited. Second, the world reveals God's divine nature. It demonstrates to humanity that God is a God of love and mercy. He cares about us as individuals. And who is able to see these things about God? Everyone! God has not hidden it, but made it plain to all people. If they miss it, it is because they have suppressed the truth in their own minds. All will stand before God without excuse, because God has made it known that He does exist. How we respond to this knowledge determines where we will be spending eternity. How are you responding to what God has revealed?

SAY WHAT?

How do we see God's eternal power in the world?

SO WHAT?

How is God's divine nature seen in the world?

NOW WHAT?

How can you help someone who does not know God see Him in this world?

THEN WHAT?

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

EXTRA READING
ROMANS 1

What attribute of God's character leads people to repentance? We often think that it is His justice or His wrath. In today's reading, however, we see that it is something different. According to verse 4, it is His kindness. It is incredible to grasp the contrast shown here between God's kindness and our stubbornness. Paul wrote in the previous chapter that all people stand before God condemned. We can't save ourselves and stand guilty before God. Although everyone deserves hell, God's kindness has provided a way of escape. God sent His Son to the earth that we might find forgiveness of sin. According to Paul, God's riches, kindness, and patience ought to bring us to repentance. Instead, we often respond with stubbornness and an unrepentant heart. Instead of seeking after God, we are self-seeking and reject the truth. We, by nature, would rather follow after evil than live for God. How are you responding to God? Has his kindness led you to repentance?

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING

ROMANS 2

How is Paul's message in today's reading true of Christians today? Do you notice any similarities between your church and these Jews? Paul criticized the Jews for an attitude that was not only wrong, but one that could cost them eternity. They thought that because they were Jews by birth, it gave them certain privileges. They were Jews who were familiar with the Law. Therefore, they believed that their knowledge gave them a relationship with God that made them superior to others. They felt that they had the right to instruct others and even guide people in the issues of life. But Paul revealed the error of their attitude. Just because the knowledge they claimed was God's truth did not mean it had changed their lives. They taught that it was wrong to steal, but they stole. They bragged about their relationship with God, yet dishonored Him with their actions. Christians often have this same attitude. They feel they are superior because they know the truth. They talk as if they have a relationship with God, yet live lives no different than the unbelievers around them. Could this describe you? Do you practice what you preach?

SAY WHAT?

In what ways are Christians like the Jews in today's reading?

SO WHAT?

Why is it so easy for Christians to fall into this trap?

NOW WHAT?

What can you do to prevent this kind of attitude from developing in your life?

THEN WHAT?

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

EXTRA READING
ROMANS 2

If you were to condense the point of today's reading into one sentence, what would it be? Paul is trying to illustrate to us that all people stand before God condemned and can only be forgiven by faith in Jesus Christ alone. The Jews believed that in order to be right with God, they had to observe the Old Testament Law. Paul had to show them that they could not earn their way into heaven, even by observing the Law. Paul demonstrated that the Law only showed people that they stood before God condemned. It was designed to reveal how much they needed a Savior, not to provide them with a means of earning salvation. In verse 28, he said again that someone is declared righteous by faith alone and not works. Everyone is a sinner, condemned before God, but can find forgiveness through faith in Jesus Christ. You can't attain heaven or a relationship with God by human effort or your merit. Have you been trying to earn salvation on your own? Who can you talk to today about this?

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING

ROMANS 3



Up to this point in his letter, Paul has been working to convince the Romans that salvation is by grace and not by works. How does today's passage support this position? Paul illustrates it by using Abraham, who is the father of the Jews and someone they would have known about. In Abraham's life, salvation came through grace and not by his works. If salvation came to Abraham by grace, then certainly our salvation would come by grace as well. Paul quoted from the Old Testament in verse 3 to prove this point. He used the Old Testament account to show the readers that Abraham was not even circumcised when God declared him righteous. That alone would demonstrate to the Jews that his works could not have made him righteous, because he was declared righteous before he obeyed the Law. Paul also uses another significant man in Jewish history, David. He illustrates from David's own words that righteousness comes by grace through faith. Realizing that salvation is nothing we can earn, our hearts ought to be filled with humble gratitude to God for all He has done for us. Is yours?

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING
ROMANS 4

The book of Proverbs was designed to help us in "attaining wisdom and discipline; in understanding words of insight; in acquiring a disciplined and prudent life, doing what is right and just and fair; in giving prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the young." As you read through this chapter, write down the verses that are most significant to you in your present circumstances.

VERSE | WHAT TRUTH IT COMMUNICATES | HOW IT IMPACTS MY LIFE

How would you describe your faith? On a scale of 1-10, 1 being no faith and 10 being never any doubt, how would you rate it? Today, we read an impressive statement about Abraham's faith. Verse 21 tells us that Abraham was "fully persuaded that God had the power to do what He had promised." God said it, and Abraham simply believed God would do what He had said. Abraham was a 10. He did not doubt or wonder. He did not build into his life something to fall back on in case God's plan didn't work out. He just believed God. His faith allowed him to leave his home and go to a land that God would show him. He believed God would give him a child in his old age and then was willing to sacrifice that child. How does your faith compare to Abraham's? It is sobering to realize that without faith, it is impossible to please God. How does your level of faith show up in your daily living? God has never given us any reason to doubt Him. What would it take for you to become a person of faith? What can you do to grow in your faith as you begin this new year? Find someone who can help you.

SAY WHAT?

In what area of your life is your faith weak?

SO WHAT?

How does the weakness of your faith demonstrate itself?

NOW WHAT?

What can you do to grow in your faith?

THEN WHAT?

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

EXTRA READING
ROMANS 4

Paul tells the Romans in today's reading that they should rejoice in their suffering because it produces perseverance. What about perseverance is so great that these people should rejoice when they had an opportunity to get it? The definition of perseverance is "steadfast endurance, standing our ground, or never giving up." James tells us that, in order for us to be mature and complete, not lacking in anything, perseverance must finish its work. Perseverance is a quality that is necessary to be mature. Paul tells us that perseverance produces character, and character produces hope. We can conclude that without suffering we have no perseverance, and without perseverance we have no maturity, no character, and no hope. In light of how important perseverance is to our spiritual lives, Paul encourages us to rejoice when suffering comes. It is the only way to acquire perseverance. How are you responding to the suffering that God has allowed in your life? Your suffering is producing character that will change your life!

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING

ROMANS 5

One of the greatest struggles we have is gaining victory over sin. In today's and tomorrow's reading, we will learn five keys to gaining victory over sin. First, Paul says that we must know what is true. We must understand and believe what Scripture teaches. It tells us that we were baptized into Jesus Christ and now we have a new life. We also know that our old self was crucified with Jesus. It is dead and has no authority over us. Second, we must count ourselves dead to sin. The word count here means letting what you know to be true in your head make its way down to your heart. You believe what Scripture says as truth! Third, offer yourselves to God. The progression Paul has in mind is to know the truth, feel it in your gut, and then give yourself to God and not let sin have any control in your life. Yield to God, not to sin. You can say no to sin and live a victorious life. We must know the truth, believe the truth, and then live out the truth. Of these three, which one do you need to begin working on? What can you do to start the process? Who can you ask to help you? Living victoriously is possible!

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING
ROMANS 6

In today's reading, Paul gives to us the final steps for being able to live a victorious life. If you have not read the first part of the chapter or the devotional thought from yesterday, go back and read it so that you can understand the entire flow of this chapter. The fourth thing we must do to gain victory over sin is to obey. Sin is not your master and you do not have to obey it. In fact, if you are a slave to righteousness, having been saved, you must now obey God and not give in to sin. The reality is that you have a choice. You have been set free. You can say no to sin and yes to righteousness. Fifth, Paul says to serve righteousness as if you were a slave. Paul did not say that you will never sin, but that you do not have to sin. We are not helpless against sin's dominance after salvation. Since you have become a slave to righteousness, serve it as a slave. As we have seen from this text, to gain victory we must know the truth, count ourselves dead to sin, offer ourselves to God, obey what He commands, and serve righteousness as a slave. Use today's questions to help you make the changes that will help you live victoriously.

SAY WHAT?

What commands from this chapter do you need to believe as truth?

SO WHAT?

What should you do so that this truth is lived out in your life?

NOW WHAT?

How can you obey God rather than sin?

THEN WHAT?

How can you serve righteousness as a slave in your day to day living?

EXTRA READING

ROMANS 6

Why did God give the Law to the nation of Israel? What did He want them to see from having it? If we follow what Paul wrote in this chapter without thinking through it, we may come to the conclusion that he thought the Law was a negative thing. Paul anticipated that, and addressed it by giving to us four facts concerning the Law. First, he explains that the Law reveals what sin is. Without the Law, we would not know what God considers sin. Second, the Law stirs sin in people. When we know what God expects or what His Law states, our sinful nature desires to disobey it. Third, the Law left man ruined. Man realizes that he has no power over sin and gives in to it. Fourth, the Law shows the sinfulness of man. It clearly demonstrates that, without a Savior, man is doomed. There is no way man can overcome sin and fulfill the righteous requirements of the Law without the Savior. Without the Law, we do not see our need or turn to God as the only way of salvation. God desires that we acknowledge who we are and what He's done, but many do not. You cannot live righteously without the Savior. Does your life reflect that truth?

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING
ROMANS 7

What happens to those who trust Christ Jesus as their Savior? Today's reading gives us the answer to that question. These verses give us a clear contrast of those who live by the Spirit and those who do not. Use the chart provided to record the characteristics of those who live by the Spirit and those who do not. As you do, ask yourself which one describes your life. What you discover will help you know the steps you need to take. Be honest as you complete it.

VERSE:

LIVE BY THE SPIRIT:

THOSE WHO DO NOT:

EXTRA READING
ROMANS 8



PROVERBS 27

The book of Proverbs was designed to help us in “attaining wisdom and discipline; in understanding words of insight; in acquiring a disciplined and prudent life, doing what is right and just and fair; in giving prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the young.” As you read through this chapter, write down the verses that are most significant to you in your present circumstances.

VERSE | WHAT TRUTH IT COMMUNICATES | HOW IT IMPACTS MY LIFE

What we have learned so far from Romans is incredible. These verses are no different. Paul's letter has demonstrated to us that we can have victory over sin and live a righteous life. Today, we see that the process of becoming like Jesus is guaranteed! Although it is difficult, and we may wonder at times if we will ever get there, God has guaranteed that it will happen. Paul tells us, in verses 28-30, that God works out everything for good. You see, those God saved, He has predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son. Those who know Jesus Christ as their Savior will become like Him. The events of salvation are not only enough to save us and get us to heaven, but are also enough to make us like Jesus. To drive the point home, Paul listed the kinds of things we might fear will keep us from becoming like Jesus. But, in verse 37, he reminds us that we are more than conquerors! Not only is our salvation guaranteed, but our sanctification is as well. Use these facts to encourage yourself and others to press on because all things work together for good.

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING

ROMANS 8



Does God choose some to be saved? According to today's reading, the answer is yes. Does that mean that God chooses some people to go to hell? According to this passage, the answer is no. This is called election. While election might seem to be a contradiction, this passage helps us understand it more clearly. Paul tells us that people come to Jesus according to God's purpose, not because of what they have done. He illustrates this truth with the life of Rebekah. Before the twins, Esau and Jacob, were even born and could do good or evil, God chose Jacob over Esau. Does that make God unjust? No. All people, throughout all time, deserve to go to hell. No one who goes to hell can say he deserved anything else. God has simply chosen to bestow mercy on some. We can accuse God of having selective mercy, but never of being unfair because we all deserve hell. God wants those who have received Jesus by faith to know we had nothing to do with our salvation. We should have hearts filled with humble gratitude for what God has given to us, and serve Him with love and devotion every day. We have what we don't deserve! Does your life demonstrate that knowledge?

SAY WHAT?

Why do you think people have such a hard time understanding election?

SO WHAT?

What impact should this truth have on how we view salvation?

NOW WHAT?

How should you respond in light of God's offer of mercy?

THEN WHAT?

What personal commitment should you make in light of what you have read today?

EXTRA READING
ROMANS 9

When the first portion of this letter was read to the Jews, it must have shocked them. How could the Jews, who pursue righteousness with a great deal of effort, miss salvation? Even more astonishing is how could the Gentiles, who did not even pursue righteousness, obtain salvation? The key to understanding this is in the motives of the two groups and their methods of pursuing righteousness. The Jews were trying to obtain righteousness through good works. In their pride, they refused to accept the fact that righteousness was out of their reach. Their pride was so great that instead of allowing the Law to demonstrate that salvation could not be earned, they continued to do good things to earn it. The Gentiles came to God by faith, knowing they could never earn salvation on their own. Pride did not get in the way of their salvation. The Gentiles, in humility, received by faith what the Jews sought after with great effort, but failed to see. Salvation is available to those who realize they could never earn their way into heaven. Are you one of those people? Pride will prevent many from accepting God's gift. Do not let it do that to you!

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING

ROMANS 9

Since God chooses those who are going to be saved, does that mean we do not have to tell others about Jesus? While it is true that those who are to be saved will become saved because of what God does, we still must do our part to share the message of Jesus with them. We find in these verses two principles that confirm our responsibility. First, in verse 11, we see that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. There is no difference between Jew or Gentile. Salvation is available to everyone, and we must demonstrate that by sharing the message of the Gospel with all people. Second, verses 14 and 15 clearly state that people will only respond to the message if they first hear it. God has chosen His children to be the means by which the Gospel is communicated. You and I have the awesome responsibility of taking the message to people so that God can enable them to respond. These verses should motivate us to spread the Gospel to every corner of the world. There are people who are waiting to hear about Jesus. Will you be the one to tell them?

SAY WHAT?

How can you better prepare yourself to share the message of the Gospel with anyone, at any time?

SO WHAT?

How can you maximize your opportunities to share Jesus with people?

NOW WHAT?

Name some friends and family members who need to hear the Gospel. How and when will you tell them?

THEN WHAT?

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

EXTRA READING
ROMANS 10

In light of what we have been learning in Romans, are we to conclude that God's promises to Israel have changed? Are those promises transferred to those of us who follow Jesus? After hearing the letter, some of the Jews must have wondered if the church was going to replace Israel in light of God's promises. Paul clearly states that God has not rejected the Jews or shut them out from salvation. He will keep for Himself a remnant who have accepted Jesus, and will fulfill the promises He made through these Jews. God is currently allowing Gentiles to be saved and enjoy what He first offered to the Jews. Since many Jews have rejected the Gospel, God has permitted Gentiles the opportunity to be grafted in. We, who are not Jews, should be humbled to know that we have been given this opportunity to be saved along with the Jews. God is not finished with the Jews, nor has He rejected them. The promises He made to them through Abraham and David will one day be fulfilled. Therefore, we can be sure that the promises He made to us will also be fulfilled, regardless of what the future holds.

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING

ROMANS 11

What is a doxology? A doxology is an expression of praise to God. It is the response of a heart filled with the wonder of God. It is often found in Scripture after a description of truth such as we find in today's reading. Paul has written about the wonder of salvation for many chapters. He explained in his letter to the Romans how God made it possible for all to have eternal life and to have their sins forgiven. The more he wrote and described all God did for us, the more praise flowed from his heart. This doxology flows out under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. As we read it, we can see how Paul viewed God and the incredible things He had done for him. Have you ever written a doxology? Have you ever been so moved by what you heard or discovered that you wanted to tell God how wonderful He is and how good He has been? Why not take time today to do just that. Think back on what God has been teaching you and write your own doxology.

SAY WHAT?

God, you are...

SO WHAT?

I praise You, for You have...

EXTRA READING
ROMANS 11

The book of Proverbs was designed to help us in "attaining wisdom and discipline; in understanding words of insight; in acquiring a disciplined and prudent life, doing what is right and just and fair; in giving prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the young." As you read through this chapter, write down the verses that are most significant to you in your present circumstances.

VERSE | WHAT TRUTH IT COMMUNICATES | HOW IT IMPACTS MY LIFE

Paul makes a major shift in his writing in this chapter. Did you notice it? He started with doctrinal discussions and how we ought to live in light of the truth he has described. Now, he writes about practical ways these truths ought to impact our everyday lives. One of those ways is to not allow ourselves to be conformed to the world. How do we keep ourselves from being conformed to the world? The answer to that question is simple. It is just hard to accomplish. In order to keep ourselves from being conformed to the world, we must be transformed. According to verse 2, we are transformed by renewing our mind. This is the key to keeping ourselves from being conformed to the world. We renew our mind by saturating it daily with Scripture. We renew our mind by memorizing Scripture so that we can recall it when we need to. We renew our mind by refusing to allow anything sinful to enter it. It is simple, but hard. Be aware of what you knowingly and unknowingly allow in your mind. Be committed to the renewing of your mind.

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING
ROMANS 12

If we looked at the people you spend your time with, what would we discover? What does the spiritual condition of the people you spend most of your time with tell us about yours? What does their popularity tell us about you? What does how popular the people I hang around with have to do with who I am? According to today's reading, the answer to all those questions is a lot! Paul gives us instructions about dealing with people. He talks about those who persecute you and those who are your enemies. Then, in verse 16, he makes an important statement. He says, "be willing to associate with people of low position." Paul realized that pride will keep you from doing just that. If you hang around only with the popular or beautiful people, then you are proud. Paul would tell us to stop being proud and be willing to spend time with people of low position. Invite them to go with you to a party. Ask them to sit with you at church. Choose them for your study group. In other words, be their friend. The question still remains—what do the people you spend your time with tell you about yourself? When is the last time you associated or identified with people of low position?

SAY WHAT?

How can you better associate with people of low position?

SO WHAT?

Why is it that you do not do this more often?

NOW WHAT?

What needs to change in your life for you to fulfill God's expectations in this area?

THEN WHAT?

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

EXTRA READING

ROMANS 12



What do you think about during the day? If we could play a video of your thoughts today, would you be comfortable if anyone saw it? In today's reading, we have one of the most important principles in the Bible that helps us with our battle against sin. It is found in verse 14. In fact, you could call it the "13:14 principle." In this verse, Paul tells us to clothe ourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ and to not even think about how to gratify the desires of our sinful nature. It goes beyond giving in to sin and includes thinking of ways to sin. It's when we intentionally seek out ways to gratify our sinful desires. When we could mistakenly see or hear something, we need to move away so that we do not. Our priority should be preventing any impure sight or sound from entering our minds. We should not put ourselves in a position where we could sin. We guard our minds and allow no thought to enter that dishonors God. How are you doing with the 13:14 principle?

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING
ROMANS 13

When you are faced with an important decision, how do you decide what to do? If you find yourself in a situation that requires a decision, you will find great encouragement from today's reading. Paul tells us that when we need to make a choice, we need to keep two important thoughts in mind. First, our motives need to be pure. Our desire ought to be to please God and bring glory to His name, not what is comfortable or easiest for us. Secondly, we must keep in mind that we will all appear before the judgment seat to give an account for the choices we have made. It is not others who evaluate the choices we make, it is God Himself who will evaluate each of our choices. With these two thoughts in mind, how do the choices you have made measure up? Have you thought about what others are doing and what they might think as opposed to what God thinks? Remember, do everything for the Lord, and never forget it is before Him you will stand to give an account. Those two thoughts will help you make good decisions.

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING

ROMANS 14

Today, we find an important principle regarding how we ought to respond to our brothers and sisters in Christ. It is one that is often misunderstood. Paul tells us that, in light of what he previously wrote, we are to stop judging and not put a stumbling block or obstacle in someone's way. What implications does that have? It means that we are not to engage in any activity that would cause a weaker believer to sin. We should carefully consider what we do in light of what a new follower of Jesus would think. We may tempt them to sin. How would we do this? Many times a new follower of Jesus will evaluate right or wrong based the choices of someone who has been following Jesus for a long time. Certain behaviors could influence the new believer in a negative way. Soon the new believer may be making unwise decisions. Some may also stumble when copying another's actions, causing them to violate their conscience. If you engage in an activity that isn't helping a new follower of Jesus, do you justify your actions, belittle him, or just do something else? Our choices should always be based on their impact on others. Are yours?

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING
ROMANS 14

What impact does Scripture have on you? Make a list of some of the ways it has changed you recently. An important way Scripture ought to influence you is found in verse 4 of today's reading. One reason God deals with the many topics, issues, and expectations in Scripture is to encourage us by increasing our endurance. As we read and spend time in it, Scripture enables us to endure painful circumstances. It provides the strength to keep pressing on. People who spend little or no time in the Scriptures are people who are more prone to quit or give up under pressure. What is the result of spending time in Scripture? We have HOPE! God wants to give us hope, and He gives it through His Word. When we feel like giving up and are discouraged, we need to go to the Word and in it find endurance and encouragement. As a result, God will flood our hearts with hope. Often, when we are discouraged or feel like giving up, Scripture is the last place we go. Make reading God's Word THE priority of your life. Contained in it's pages is everything you need.

SAY WHAT?

In what ways has Scripture changed your life?

SO WHAT?

What passages have you read recently that have given you hope?

NOW WHAT?

What have you read recently that has helped you endure a difficult situation?

THEN WHAT?

What personal commitment can you make about your Bible reading?

EXTRA READING

ROMANS 15



PROVERBS 29

The book of Proverbs was designed to help us in “attaining wisdom and discipline; in understanding words of insight; in acquiring a disciplined and prudent life, doing what is right and just and fair; in giving prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the young.” As you read through this chapter, write down the verses that are most significant to you in your present circumstances.

VERSE | WHAT TRUTH IT COMMUNICATES | HOW IT IMPACTS MY LIFE

If a friend of yours was asked to list three characteristics that you're known for, which ones would they choose? Hopefully, the traits would be the three that Paul used in today's reading to describe the Romans. First, he said that they were full of goodness. They were morally right and were known for their virtue. Would people describe you in this way? Second, they were complete in knowledge. That did not mean that they knew everything about the Bible, but that they were doctrinally sound. They must have spent time in the Bible and paid attention when it was taught. Would people say you are complete in knowledge? Third, they were competent to instruct. The word used here for instruct is most often translated admonish. It is not teaching or leading a small group, but able to give counsel, encouragement, a warning, or a rebuke to someone. Are you competent to instruct others? Is your lifestyle and level of Biblical knowledge such that you could encourage and counsel others? What would it take for you to become someone who is known by these characteristics? When will you get started?

SAY WHAT?

What would you need to change to become someone who is full of goodness?

SO WHAT?

What would it take for you to be known for being complete in knowledge?

NOW WHAT?

What would it take for you to be competent to instruct?

THEN WHAT?

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

EXTRA READING
ROMANS 15



Think through the past few years and name the people who have been an influence in your life. Have you let them know how much you appreciated it? In this chapter, Paul did just that. He closed his letter by naming individuals who had encouraged and influenced his life. How encouraging it must have been for Phoebe to know that she had touched the life of Paul and had her name written in this letter. When the letter was read publicly, those whose names were mentioned must have been blessed and encouraged. Too often, we do not take the time to let people know the affect they have had on our lives. In fact, the people who have touched our lives the most probably do not even know they have done so. Why not take some time today to tell someone you know how much you appreciate them and the influence they have had on your life. It would encourage them so much. Why not also think of ways you can become a person who is touching the lives of others? What would it take to become someone who would get the kind of note we are talking about?

SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING
ROMANS 16

You are now one month into the new year. How are you doing? Are you making progress on the goals you set back in December? Those spiritual disciplines you determined to develop, are you developing them? The people you wanted to impact for Jesus, are you building those relationships? Why not take some time today for some self-examination? You may have entered this year with some goals to see yourself change in some areas and grow in others. Ask God to clearly reveal to you areas in which you need to make adjustments. Use the questions and today's Bible reading to help. Be honest and willing to make the changes necessary.

SAY WHAT?

What were some of my goals for this year?

SO WHAT?

What progress am I making in those areas?

NOW WHAT?

What adjustments do I need to make based on my observations?

THEN WHAT?

How am I going to make sure those adjustments take place?

EXTRA READING

PSALM 139



Get out of the rut next Summer.

The longest-standing tool in our toolbox, the **Wilderness Outfitting** program presents an opportunity for the intentional leader to gain accelerated access to **real connection** with those they lead.

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FOR ALL WHO ARE LED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD ARE
SONS OF GOD. FOR YOU DID NOT RECEIVE THE
SPIRIT OF SLAVERY TO FALL BACK INTO FEAR, BUT
YOU HAVE RECEIVED **THE SPIRIT OF ADOPTION**
AS SONS, BY WHOM WE CRY, "ABBA! FATHER!"

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