



# New Testament Challenge Syllabus

**Have you actually ever read the New Testament?** Most people haven't. This challenge is your big chance to read it through and learn more about your faith than ever before!

Port Maitland Wesleyan will have the opportunity to read through the New Testament in its entirety. Every day you will be reading several chapters from the New Testament (see the reading plan on pages 3 - 11). Then, on Sundays at Church the teaching will connect to the readings you discussed with others either in person, on the phone/computer etc. that week. The great thing is you will cover way more each week than can be taught on Sundays, but doing all this together will have an enormous impact on your faith.

*Be sure to keep up with your reading and find someone to talk about the questions with.. If you do – God will transform your life!*

The following pages contain a week by week syllabus for our readings.

We would love it if you would join the Port Maitland Wesleyan family on this spiritual adventure as we explore the New Testament together!

# **NEW TESTAMENT CHALLENGE SYLLABUS**

**Monday, February 7<sup>th</sup> to  
Sunday, April 10<sup>th</sup>**

## **Week #1: Week of February 6<sup>th</sup>**

**Day #1** – Monday, February 7 – Read Matthew 1-2,  
Acts 1-3

**Day #2** – Tuesday, February 8 – Read Matthew 3-4,  
Acts 4-6

**Day #3** – Wednesday, February 9 – Read Matthew  
5-6, Acts 7-9

**Day #4** – Thursday, February 10 – Read Matthew 7-  
8, Acts 10-12

**Day #5** – Friday, February 11 – Read Matthew 9-10,  
Acts 13-15

**Day #6** – Saturday, February 12 – Read Matthew  
11-12, Acts 16-18

**Day #7** – Sunday, February 13 – Read Matthew 13-  
14, Acts 19-21

## **Week #2: Week of February 13**

**Day #8** – Monday, February 14 – Read Matthew 15-16, Acts 22-24

**Day #9** – Tuesday, February 15 – Read Matthew 17-18, Acts 25-27

**Day #10** – Wednesday, February 16 – Read Matthew 19-20, Acts 28

**Day #11** – Thursday, February 17 – Read Matthew 21-22, Romans 1-3

**Day #12** – Friday, February 18 – Read Matthew 23-24, Romans 4-6

**Day #13** – Saturday, February 19– Read Matthew 25-26, Romans 7-9

**Day #14** – Sunday, February 20 – Read Matthew 27-28, Romans 10-12

## **Week #3: Week of February 20**

**Day #15** – Monday, February 21 – Read Mark 1-2, Romans 13-15

**Day #16** – Tuesday, February 22 – Read Mark 3-4, Romans 16

**Day #17** – Wednesday, February 23 – Read Mark 5-6, 1 Corinthians 1-2

**Day #18** – Thursday, February 24 – Read Mark 7-8, 1 Corinthians 3-4

**Day #19** – Friday, February 25 – Read Mark 9-10, 1 Corinthians 5-7

**Day #20** – Saturday, February 26 – Read Mark 11-12, 1 Corinthians 8-10

**Day #21** – Sunday, February 27 – Read Mark 13-14, 1 Corinthians 11-13

## **Week #4: Week of February 27**

**Day #22** – Monday, February 28 – Read Mark 15-16,  
1 Corinthians 14-16

**Day #23** – Tuesday, March 1 – Read Luke 1-2, 2  
Corinthians 1-3

**Day #24** – Wednesday, March 2– Read Luke 3, 2  
Corinthians 4-6

**Day #25** – Thursday, March 3 – Read Luke 4, 2  
Corinthians 7-9

**Day #26** – Friday, March 4 – Read Luke 5, 2  
Corinthians 10-11

**Day #27** – Saturday, March 5 – Read Luke 6, 2  
Corinthians 12-13

**Day #28** – Sunday, March 6 – Read Luke 7,  
Galatians 1-3

## **Week #5: Week of March 6**

**Day #29** – Monday, March 7 – Read Luke 8,  
Galatians 4-6

**Day #30** – Tuesday, March 8 – Read Luke 9,  
Ephesians 1-3

**Day #31** – Wednesday, March 9 – Read Luke 10,  
Ephesians 4-6

**Day #32** – Thursday, March 10 – Read Luke 11,  
Philippians 1-2

**Day #33** – Friday, March 11 – Read Luke 12,  
Philippians 3-4

**Day #34** – Saturday, March 12 – Read Luke 13,  
Colossians 1-2

**Day #35** – Sunday, March 13 – Read Luke 14,  
Colossians 3-4

## **Week #6: Week of March 13**

**Day #36** – Monday, March 14 – Read Luke 15, 1  
Thessalonians 1-3

**Day #37** – Tuesday, March 15 – Read Luke 16, 1  
Thessalonians 4-6

**Day #38** – Wednesday, March 16 – Read Luke 17, 2  
Thessalonians 1-3

**Day #39** – Thursday, March 17 – Read Luke 18, 1  
Timothy 1-3

**Day #40** – Friday, March 18 – Read Luke 19,  
1 Timothy 4-6

**Day #41** – Saturday, March 19 – Read Luke 20, 2  
Timothy 1-2

**Day #42** – Sunday, March 20 – Read Luke 21, 2  
Timothy 3-4



## **Week #7: Week of March 20**

**Day #43** – Monday, March 21 – Read Luke 22, Titus 1-3

**Day #44** – Tuesday, March 22 – Read Luke 23, Philemon 1

**Day #45** – Wednesday, March 23 – Read Luke 24, Hebrews 1-2

**Day #46** – Thursday, March 24 – Read John 1-2, Hebrews 3-4

**Day #47** – Friday, March 25 – Read John 3-4, Hebrews 5-7

**Day #48** – Saturday, March 26 – Read John 5-6, Hebrews 8-10

**Day #49** – Sunday, March 27 – Read John 7-8, Hebrews 11-13

## **Week #8: Week of March 27**

**Day #50** – Monday, March 28 – Read John 9-10,  
James 1-3

**Day #51** – Tuesday, March 29 – Read John 11-12,  
James 4-5

**Day #52** – Wednesday, March 30 – Read John 13-  
14, 1 Peter 1-2

**Day #53** – Thursday, March 31 – Read John 15-16,  
1 Peter 3-5

**Day #54** – Friday, April 1 – Read John 17-18, 2  
Peter 1-3

**Day #55** – Saturday, April 2 – Read John 19-20, I  
John 1-5

**Day #56** – Sunday, April 3 – Read John 21

## **Week #9: Week of April 3**

**Day #57** – Monday, April 4 – 2 John 1, 3 John 1, Jude 1

**Day #58** – Tuesday, April 5 – Revelation 1-4

**Day #59** – Wednesday, April 6 – Revelation 5-8

**Day #60** – Thursday, April 7 – Revelation 9-12

**Day #61** – Friday, April 8 – Revelation 13-16

**Day #62** – Saturday, April 9– Revelation 16-19

**Day #63** – Sunday, April 10 – Revelation 20-22

## *Personal Study Reflection Facts and Questions*

### **WEEK 1 Facts and Questions**

#### **Quick Facts about the Book of Matthew:**

- Written by one of Jesus' disciples, Matthew, who was a tax collector before he became a disciple.
- Originally believed to be the first Gospel—though now many scholars believe Mark is the oldest. Was written in the first century AD and completed within a few decades of Jesus' death. So it's a very fresh history.
- Matthew wrote to a Jewish audience (whereas Luke wrote to a Greek audience). Note the many references to Old Testament prophecy (very important to Jews) and that the genealogy in Matthew 1 only goes back to Abraham (the Father of the Israelite people). Luke's genealogy goes all the way back to Adam to emphasize Jesus' universal impact.
- The famous Sermon on the Mount is found in Matthew 5-7

## **Quick Facts about the Book of Acts:**

- Really the Acts of the Apostles (those who saw the resurrected Jesus).
- Best history of the early church – from a handful of believers in Jerusalem to 5,000 in just a short time, to having Christianity spread all across Asia Minor and into Europe in less than one generation. Unprecedented spread of a faith by a persecuted people through peaceful means.
- First half focuses on Peter. The last half focuses on Paul and his journeys.
- Was written by Luke who was a doctor and went with Paul on parts of his three mission trips to plant churches around the Mediterranean.
- Acts is really Part II of the Gospel of Luke (it continues the story) that we will read later this semester.

## **The Family Genealogy, Relocation, and Travel (Matt. 1 -2)**

1. What do you know about your genealogy? What would you like to discover about it? (Matthew 1)
2. From Joseph's responsiveness of going to Egypt, what do you learn about faith and obedience? How

long would it take you to say “yes” if God asked you to relocate? What is your story of relocating to Sherwood or the NW? (Matthew 2)

3. What have been your best experiences in group prayer? How is praying with others for a common mission different from private prayer about your individual concerns? (Acts 1)
4. Have you ever traveled where you did not speak the language? What happened? (Acts 2)
5. As the cripple, what would you write as a diary entry for a typical day? When Peter grabs your hand? After the healing? (Acts 3)

### **Meeting John the Baptist, Persecution and Ministry (Matt. 4, Acts 4-6)**

1. Who has been a John the Baptist in your life? How did he or she prepare you to meet Jesus? Is there someone who is pointing you to Jesus as you consider him? (Matt. 3)
2. What is the most persecution you have experienced due to your faith? How did you take it? (Acts 4)
3. Which responsibility at home or work would you gladly give up? Never give up? (Acts 6 – Apostles choose 12 people to carry out ministry of the church. What does this say about who should do the ministry of the church – the pastors or the members?)

### **The Greatest Sermon Ever Preached (Matt. 5-7)**

1. This past week, did you feel more blessed or stressed? What can you do to be more focused on

God's blessings in your life? (Matthew 5 – Sermon on the Mount)

2. What causes you the most worry? What is God saying to you through this passage about handling your particular worry or disappointment? (Matthew 6 – Sermon on the Mount)
3. How did the Lord first get your attention? Was it in some dramatic event or something more subtle? (Acts 9)

### **Miracles, Faith, and Food Stuff (Matt 8 & Acts 10)**

1. Describe a time when you saw a despised or neglected person receive a surprising amount of love and respect. (Matthew 8)
2. As a child, what foods did you refuse to eat? What foods do you still dislike today? (Acts 10 – Peter and Cornelius)

### **Going from City to City – (Acts 14 & 15)**

1. What is the longest you have hiked or hitchhiked your way across country?
2. What was one of the biggest misunderstandings about Christianity you had to overcome before you could believe? (Acts 14)
3. What were some of the expected, extra-biblical rules you were supposed to follow in the church where you grew up? When you became a Christian? (Acts 15)

### **The Kingdom of Heaven, Rest for your Soul, and the Sabbath (Matt 11, 12)**

1. In what specific way can you be an encourager to someone in church leadership? In your family? Among your friends? (Matthew 11)
2. What is one habit or behavior you do which totally annoys others around you? (Matt 12)
3. Where do you have an “open door” for ministry now: In your home? School? Work? Community? How will you take advantage of it? (Acts 15)

### **The Four Soils and the Feeding of 5,000 (Matt 13-14)**

1. Can you see and hear Jesus at work in today’s world? If so, how? (Matthew 13)
2. If you fed 5,000 people at a picnic, what would you serve? (Matthew 14)
3. What place did your parents have to drag you to because you were scared to go there: Circus? Dentist? Elsewhere?



## **WEEK 2 Facts and Questions**

### **Quick Facts about the Book of Romans:**

- Paul probably wrote Romans around 58 AD from Corinth. He was about to return to Jerusalem with an offering he had raised from the churches he had planted to give to the church in Jerusalem which was suffering severe persecution.
- Romans is the only letter Paul wrote to a church he had nothing to do with starting and which to this point he had not been in contact with. Thus, note how Romans seems impersonal compared to Paul's other letters to churches. There are few details of practical problems in Romans because Paul does not personally know the church.
- Romans is the most theological and least practical of Paul's letters. Another reason (see the first reason above) is that Rome was the center of the known world at this time and a capital of intellect. Romans is laid out more as a theological treatise perhaps in part because Paul wanted to lay out the intellectual validity of the faith to those in Rome.
- Paul desperately wanted to visit Rome (which he would later do in chains, and eventually he would die there), so in this letter he introduces himself to the church in Rome. Paul's passion was spreading the Good News of Jesus as far as he could. Like New York today, what

influenced Rome influenced the world. But besides wanting to share in Rome, Paul also may have wanted to establish a base from which to take missionary journeys farther west (maybe as far west as Spain).

### **The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard (Matt. 20)**

1. If you had been one of the first hired workers, how would you have felt at pay time?
2. How do you feel about recent converts getting the same benefits as you in the kingdom?
3. Does being gracious to the workers at the eleventh hour equate to being unfair to the workers who were hired early in the morning?

### **The Parable of the Talents (Matt. 25)**

1. What were the master's expectations of his servants while he was away?
2. Why do you think the master became angry with the servant with one talent?
3. What are some talents, either material or immaterial, in your life that Jesus expects you to steward well and multiply?

### **Paul Sails for Rome (Acts 27)**

1. When was a time God brought you through a storm on your way to a destination that you knew he wanted you to go?
2. What is the danger of equating comfort with God's will for your life?

3. What does it say about God that he would chose to take Paul to Rome as a prisoner on a ship that wrecked?

### **All Things Working for the Good of Those Who Love Him (Rom. 8:28)**

1. Looking back, how have you seen things work out for your good even though it did not make sense at the time?
2. What situation could this verse be applied to in your life presently?
3. Why is it important that the verse ends with the phrase “who have been called according to his purpose”?

### **Being a Living Sacrifice (Rom. 12)**

1. What do you hear when Paul says do not conform to the world? How do we stay engaged with our culture and those around us while remaining faithful to this command?
2. What does it mean to offer your body as a living sacrifice?
3. What are some ways you have been able to practice the renewing of your mind?

## WEEK 3 Facts and Questions

### Quick Facts about the Book of Mark:

- Mark is believed to be the earliest of the four Gospels. It was written within a few decades of the death of Jesus and was in circulation among the early church. It is the earliest account of Jesus' life that has survived.
- There are sections of Mark that appear almost word for word in both Matthew and Luke (written just a few years later). This leads scholars to believe that both Matthew (one of Jesus' disciples) and Luke (a doctor who traveled with Paul on some of his missionary journeys) had the Gospel of Mark sitting in front of them and were using it as a reference as they wrote their own Gospels.
- It is believed that Mark is Peter's account of Jesus' life, and that Mark wrote down the account from listening to Peter tell stories about Jesus (perhaps from Peter's sermons).
- Mark was the nephew of Barnabas and traveled with Paul and Barnabas on Paul's first missionary journey. But Mark abandoned the journey. Later when Paul and Barnabas were about to go on a second missionary journey, Barnabas wanted to take Mark, but Paul didn't. So, Barnabas and Mark went together and Paul and Silas went together. Later on, Paul and Mark reconciled and Mark traveled with Paul again.

- Mark is the shortest Gospel in length. In fact, there are only 24 verses in all of Mark that don't also appear somewhere in Matthew or Luke.
- Notice that the Gospel of Mark is all about action. It has fewer of Jesus words but tells story after story of Jesus in rapid fashion.
- Notice that in Mark the disciples seem to always lack faith and never seem to understand who Jesus is until the very end. Compare that to the blind man Jesus heals in Mark 8:22-26. Note that the blind man can't see clearly at first...and then later the picture becomes clear. That is a picture of the disciple's faith in Mark – gradual.

### **Quick Facts about the Book of 1 Corinthians:**

- Paul stayed longer with the church in Corinth than he did in any of the other churches he started.
- In 55 AD (25 years after Jesus' death), Paul learned that things were not all well in Corinth and wrote to the church there from the city of Ephesus. Paul is very personal and straight-forward in this letter because he knew the people of the church so well (in contrast with Romans where he didn't know them well at all).
- Paul wrote several letters to Corinth (at least four). His letters existed on scraps of papyrus until 90 AD when they were all collected together. Some authors believe

that part of Paul's letters to the Corinthians got thrown in together when they were copied. In 1 Corinthians 5:9, Paul refers to a previous letter he wrote to the church. Some scholars believe it is lost. Some believe that part of it is contained in 2 Corinthians 6:13 – 7:2. (Remember, originally there were no verses and chapters – just Paul's writings grouped together.) Then in 2 Corinthians 7:8 Paul refers to a previous "severe" letter he wrote. Some scholars believe it lost – others believe it to be 2 Corinthians 10-13.

- So there are a couple of possibilities with the four letters we know Paul wrote to Corinth:
  - (1) We have lost the first one. The second one is 1 Corinthians. We lost the third (severe) letter. The fourth one is 2 Corinthians.
  - (2) The first letter is 2 Corinthians 6:13-7:2; the second is 1 Corinthians; the third is 2 Corinthians 10-13; and the fourth is 2 Corinthians 1-9.

### **John the Baptist Beheaded (Mark 6:14-29)**

1. Why do you think Mark included this flashback to Herod between sending out the disciples (v. 6-13) and their return (v. 30-31)?
2. What do you do when God's message leaves you puzzled with an ending like this?
3. What would this story say to someone facing persecution, then and now?

### **The Rich Young Ruler (Mark 10: 17-26)**

1. Why do you think Jesus told him to sell everything and give to the poor?
2. What did the rich young ruler gain by choosing his wealth over Jesus' command?
3. What is one thing you can do this week to let go of material things and embrace God's kingdom more fully?

### **Marriage (1 Cor. 7)**

1. What do you consider the most important ingredient in a good marriage and why?
2. Why should marriage be aspired to?
3. In what ways can God use singleness for his kingdom?

### **Love (1 Cor. 13)**

1. How does the love described here compare to love as typically defined in our culture?
2. In your opinion, what is the best way to develop the ability to love others?
3. What from culture do you think illustrates the love described in chapter 13 (movies, books, etc.)?

## WEEK 4 Facts and Questions

### Quick Facts about the Gospel of Luke:

- Luke was a Gentile and has the distinction of being the only non-Jewish New Testament writer.
- As a Gentile (a non-Jewish person), Luke's gospel is targeted primarily to Gentiles. Note that Luke's genealogy of Jesus in Luke 3 is different from Matthew's in Matthew 1. Matthew traced Jesus back to Abraham because it was important for him to communicate to Jews that Jesus was the promised Messiah from the line of Abraham and David. But Luke traces Jesus all the way back to Adam. Why? So that Gentiles can see that Jesus died for everyone from the line of Adam – everyone in the world, not just Jews.
- Note that in Luke, Jesus talks more about women and the poor than in any other Gospel writer. Luke is clear that Jesus is empowering to women and compassionate to the poor. Mary is emphasized more in Luke whereas Joseph is emphasized more in Matthew. Also note that in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5, when Jesus gives the Beatitudes, he says “blessed are the poor in spirit”; but in Luke 6, when Jesus gives his Sermon on the Plain, he has a slightly different message and says “blessed are the poor.” Although they were both concerned with both spiritual and physical redemption, Matthew was more focused on the spiritual and Luke



on the physical, perhaps because we know Luke was a physician.

- Remember, Luke is also the author of Acts. The Gospel of Luke is Part I and Acts is Part II. Again, Luke was a physician (which might explain his passion for what Jesus said about physical pain and suffering) who traveled with Paul on many of his missionary journeys.
- Also note the special emphasis on prayer as you read Luke. Jesus is continually getting away from the people and the commotion to find a secluded place to be with God and pray. If Jesus needed that on a continual basis – how much more do we need it?

### **Quick Facts about the Book of 2 Corinthians:**

See facts about 1 Corinthians on pages 22 & 23. Those facts give a summary of both 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians.

### **The Temptation of Jesus (Luke 4)**

1. What is the significance of Jesus being tempted after he had fasted for 40 days?
2. How does Satan's use of scripture differ from the way Jesus uses it?
3. How do the three temptations correlate with Satan's tempting in the Garden (Gen. 3) and what John says about sin (1 John 2:16)?

### **The God Who Comforts Us (2 Cor. 1:3-7)**

1. What is the relationship between God's ability to comfort us and our ability to comfort others?
2. What does it mean to you that Paul refers to God as the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort?
3. How can distress in your life be viewed in light of this passage?

### **We are the Temple of God (2 Cor. 6: 14-18)**

1. What is the difference between being yoked with unbelievers and having relationships with unbelievers?
2. What does it mean that you are the dwelling place of God?
3. How does the teaching of Romans 12 about being a living sacrifice correlate with this passage?

### **No Longer Under the Law (Galatians 3)**

1. What question does Paul ask in verse two and why is this so crucial?
2. What "additions" to faith might outsiders sense in Christian circles that would serve as barriers to their faith?
3. How is attempting to be right with God through keeping the law like being in prison?

## **WEEK 5 Facts and Questions**

### **Galatians**

- Be ready – Paul is very angry in this book. He is writing to the church at Galatia that he helped start. In his absence, some “Super Apostles” have come and are speaking against Paul and his teachings. Some of them are telling the Galatians that everyone has to follow the Jewish law to be saved. Paul’s response is...how should I say it...very confrontational.

### **Ephesians**

- Ephesians was written while Paul was in prison, probably very near to the end of his life.
- Some believe that Ephesians was a circular letter that was originally written to be passed from church to church.

### **Philippians**

- Paul wrote this letter to the church when he was in prison in Rome.
- Note that the famous passage in Philippians 2:5-11 about having the same attitude of Christ was probably an early hymn recited or even sung in the early church.

## **Colossians**

- The town of Colosse was the smallest and least significant town or city to which Paul wrote.
- Colossians is perhaps the most different of all of Paul's letters. If you put them side by side, it would stand out as not fitting in as much. The reason is that in Colossians Paul is writing to counteract a heresy (we don't know exactly what) and Paul speaks in spiritual language he doesn't use in his other letters. We get to see another side of Paul here.

## **The Cost of Being a Disciple (Luke 14)**

1. When has a family relationship or close friendship been a hindrance to your whole-hearted devotion to Christ?
2. What price have you had to pay to follow Christ? How hard or easy has that been?
3. What are some things you are currently doing that keep you from losing your saltiness?

## **Made Alive in Christ (Ephesians 2)**

1. What does it mean to you that your salvation moved you from being dead to being alive? How is this different than being moved from bad to good?
2. We have been seated with Jesus in the heavenly realms. What are the implications of this verse in your life and how have you applied them to your life this week?

3. What good work do you feel God may have in mind for you?

### **Imitating Christ's Humility (Philippians 2)**

1. What does it mean to consider someone "better than yourself" (v. 3)? How does humility differ from being a doormat?
2. How do you balance meeting the needs of others with meeting your own needs?
3. Jesus "making himself nothing" is one of the more theological passages in the Bible. What does it say about God that he would include a theological truth in the context of a command for us concerning our attitudes? How do you balance studying theology with practical obedience in simple areas of life?

### **Jesus' Triumph over Sin (Colossians 2)**

1. What does it mean that Jesus canceled the written code with his death on the cross?
2. If Jesus disarmed the powers and authorities by making a public spectacle of them, then why do we struggle with overcoming spiritual warfare?
3. How can these verses help you fight the spirits/thoughts of accusation and/or guilt in your life?

## **WEEK 6 Facts and Questions**

### **Quick Facts about 1 Timothy:**

- Timothy was a young man who was probably converted during Paul's first missionary journey.
- When Paul returned to the area a year or two later, Timothy was recommended to him as a faithful disciple of Christ who would make a good traveling companion.
- Timothy is always associated with Paul in a mentor/apprentice relationship.
- Paul addresses the false teachers who were characterized as proud, arrogant, contentious, and greedy. These teachers were more involved in speculating about obscure matters rather than exposition about Christ and the Christian lifestyle of love.

### **Quick Facts about 2 Timothy:**

- Although similar to 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy is far more personal in tone. Paul wishes to pass on the commitment of a life lived for the cause of Christ to a younger man who will carry the torch further.
- Paul writes this letter waiting for his full trial, but he did not expect to be released.
- Whether he ever saw Timothy again is unknown.

- According to tradition, Paul was beheaded shortly after this letter was written.

### **The Prodigal Son (Luke 15)**

1. Of the two brothers, which reminds you of your own story?
2. Why do you think the Father did not take time to get an explanation from his son?
3. Have there been seasons of your life where you were in the pig pen? If so, how did you feel God received you when you returned?
4. Why was the “obedient” son perhaps more lost than the “wild” son?

### **The Lord’s Grace to Paul (1 Timothy 1: 12-20)**

1. What was your life like before you knew Christ?
2. According to verse 15, why did Jesus come into the world? How does this make you feel?
3. How do you feel about talking about your past life when you share your faith?
4. Why is someone like a Paul such a good witness to unbelievers?
5. How can you incorporate Paul’s story into your habit of witnessing?

### **Leadership in the Church and for Each Believer (1 Timothy 3)**

1. Although applied specifically to leaders here, why are these qualities important for all Christians?

2. Of these qualities, what are two or three you have made progress with in this past year?
3. In which area do you want to grow now? How can this group help you?

### **Love of Money (1 Timothy 6)**

1. What is the “great gain” in “godliness with contentment”? (v. 6)
2. Why do you think we struggle with our finances?
3. Is there a difference between enjoying money and being a lover of money?

### **A Workman Approved by God (2 Timothy 2:14-26)**

1. According to verses 15-16 and 22-24, what should you pursue and what should you flee?
2. How do you know if you are “quarreling about words” or standing up against false teachings? Which do most Christians spend more time doing?
3. What action steps can you take to produce the following in your life this week? Righteousness? Faith? Love? Peace?



## **WEEK 7 Facts and Questions**

### **Quick Facts about John**

- John refers to himself in the book as “the disciple whom Jesus loved.”
- John was the only disciple who did not die a martyr’s death.
- He wrote the Gospel of John at the end of his life. It is the last of the four gospels to be written, and more than likely he had read Matthew, Mark, and Luke.
- John’s Gospel is the most theological of the four and he uses a lot of imagery– like calling Jesus the light of world, the bread of life, the door, the vine, etc. There are also the seven “I AM” statements from Jesus.
- John takes six chapters to cover the scene between Jesus and his disciples the night before his crucifixion as they celebrated Passover, which we now celebrate as Communion.

## **WEEK 8 Facts and Questions**

### **Quick Facts about James**

- James was the brother of Jesus. He did not believe in Jesus divinity until after Jesus was resurrected and ascended into Heaven.
- He was one of the first leaders in the early church.
- Many scholars believe James was the first book written – chronologically-speaking – in the NT.
- Some scholars believe that James is a commentary on the Sermon on the Mount from Matthew 5.
- James was one of the first Christian martyrs when the persecution of the church began.

### **Quick Facts about 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter**

- Both are written by Peter towards the end of his life.
- Peter references Paul's letters in his letters and refers to them as equal with Old Testament scripture.
- Context of these letters: In 64 AD, a great fire destroyed much of Rome. It was widely believed that the Emperor Nero was responsible for the fire. However, he blamed the Christians for it and this

began their persecution. Peter writes this letter to offer hope in the midst of suffering.

- Soon after he wrote these letters, Peter was crucified upside down.

### **The Death of Lazarus (John 11)**

1. Why does Jesus deliberately delay in traveling to see Lazarus? (v. 6)
2. Why do you think Jesus wept?
3. How did Jesus respond to Martha when she questioned him for taking so long to get there?
4. How did Jesus respond to Mary when she questioned him for taking so long to get there?
5. How are the responses different? How do they demonstrate the heart of Jesus in identifying with others?

### **When You Face Trials (James 1)**

1. What are some ways that you have been able to “consider it pure joy” when you were faced with a difficult circumstance?
2. How does perseverance play into this type of attitude? What difficult situation have you had to demonstrate perseverance in?
3. James says “every good and perfect gift is from above” (v. 17). What are some good gifts that God has given you over this past year?

### **Living for God (1 Peter 4)**

1. What type of changes began to take place in your life after you gave it to Christ?

2. What did your friends think about this? Did they respect you or did they mock you?
3. How do you maintain relationships with friends who do not honor God while honoring God with your life?

### **False Teachers (2 Peter 2)**

1. Why do you think it is easy for people to follow false teachers?
2. Has there ever been a time when you were persuaded by someone who you now view as a false teacher?
3. What are some ways that you can guard against following the teachings of a false teacher?

## **WEEK 9 Facts and Questions**

### **Quick Facts about 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> John**

- They are both very short, only having one chapter each.
- They were written by the Apostle John in 80 – 90 A.D.
- These books address the issue of hospitality for itinerant teachers who were serving to spread the Gospel as well as how to handle false teachers who were looking for a free stay from well intentioned believer.

### **Quick Facts about Jude**

- Jude was one of Jesus' biological brothers who, like James (another brother), came to believe in Jesus after the resurrection and ascension.
- The theme of the book is to contend for the faith against false teachers.
- Dated anywhere from 65 – 80 A.D.

## **Quick Facts about Revelation**

- Written by the Apostle John while he was in exile on the Island of Patmos.
- The focus of Revelation is Jesus and that he shall overcome.
- Interpreted many ways over the centuries; however, the book's central purpose is not to arouse speculation about the future. Rather, it is meant to encourage Christians in every age to maintain their faith despite opposition, and to do so in the confidence that they will share in Jesus' ultimate victory over all forces that oppose him and his people.

## **Hospitality (2<sup>nd</sup> John and 3<sup>rd</sup> John)**

1. How have you shown hospitality to others in the past?
2. Have you ever traveled into another county and been shown hospitality in a great way?
3. Why do you think John links love and obedience to Jesus' commands in 2<sup>nd</sup> John?

## **Being Aware of False Teachers (Jude)**

1. How could someone be vulnerable to a false teacher?
2. How can you defend the teachings of Scripture without offending those who do not believe them?

3. Have you ever had to confront someone who was teaching something that was not true and how did you handle it? What are your thoughts on whether or not it is your place to say something?

### **The Church in Ephesus (Revelation 2:1-7)**

1. What good things characterized this church?
2. How might its strengths have been the cause of its failure?
3. What are the characteristics of forsaking our first love when it comes to our relationship with God? Have you ever found yourself there? What did you do?

### **The Church in Laodicea (Revelation 2: 14-22)**

1. How does wealth keep us from seeking Jesus? Why would he say, “I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich”? (verse 18)
2. When have you experienced the rebuke and discipline of Jesus from his heart of love? (verse 19)
3. Is your life characterized more by a thermometer (you reflect your surroundings) or a thermostat (you regulate your surroundings)? What would Jesus say concerning this? (verse 15-16)