

A light green-tinted photograph of footprints in sand, with a dark green horizontal band across the middle containing the title text.

BIBLE READING PLAN: 40 DAYS WITH JESUS



Corps Resources
for individuals





BIBLE READING PLAN: 40 DAYS WITH JESUS

GAIN NEW INSIGHT INTO THE PERSON & WORK OF JESUS CHRIST

40 Days with Jesus is a Bible Reading Plan designed to lead you through the Bible on a journey to better understand Jesus.

Each day in the plan includes a biblical reference to read, and some contemplation questions to ponder.

The plan builds up a broadly biblical picture of Christ starting with the Old Testament anticipation of Christ.

Jesus' ministry is traced through its beginnings, his heralding of the Kingdom of God, his demands of disciples, his teaching in the Sermon on the Mount, his inclusion of outsiders, culminating in his death and resurrection.

OLD TESTAMENT

Day 1 › Prophecy of Eve's Offspring Crushing Satan

Read › Genesis 3

Contemplate › What does God promise the human race in verse 15 with regards to Satan? How does this point to Jesus?

Day 2 › Repentance and Blessings

Read › Deuteronomy 30

Contemplate › What is our understanding of repentance? Is it a one-off event? Do we view God's blessings in light of the process this passage describes?

Day 3 › Prophecy of Jesus' Kingdom Replacing four Earthly Kingdoms

Read › Daniel 7

Contemplate › What is the implication of this prophecy for our earthly kingdoms, political structures and power hierarchies? How should this understanding of God's final intentions shape our engagement in various spheres of influence?

Day 4 › Promise of New Covenant

Read › Jeremiah 31

Contemplate › What is our understanding of the new covenant? Was there something wrong with the old covenant God gave to Israel? What does the strong theme of restoration tell us about God's intentions?

Day 5 › Hope in the Messiah

Read › Isaiah 9:1-7

Contemplate › What does this passage tell us about Jewish expectations of the Messiah? Is this passage referring to the first and/or second coming of Jesus?

Day 6 › The Lord's Suffering Servant

Read › Isaiah 52:13-53:12

Contemplate › Read this passage along with Psalm 22. How do these accounts tally with the gospel accounts of Jesus' death?

JESUS STARTS HIS MINISTRY

Day 7 › The Word

Read › John 1:1-18

Contemplate › What are the implications of Jesus being God's "Word" to us? What does Jesus communicate to us about God? How does seeing Jesus challenge and/or build our understanding of God?

Day 8 › Unusual Conceptions

Read › Luke 1

Contemplate › The opening of barren wombs is a strong theme in the Old Testament. What can we learn about this passage in light of this history of God giving children to those who could not have them? How does this shape our understanding of both John and Jesus' missions?

Day 9 › Jesus as a Child

Read › Luke 2

Contemplate › Why do you think that Jesus birth was first announced to the shepherds? How does God use Simeon and Anna to confirm the importance of who Jesus is and will become?

Day 10 › Jesus' baptism

Read › Matthew 3

Contemplate › Read and compare the other gospel accounts of Jesus baptism? What importance did Jesus baptism have in his ministry and in the coming and establishment of God's kingdom?

Day 11 › The temptation of Jesus and Jesus rejected at Nazareth

Read › Luke 4:1-30

Contemplate › What are the three temptations Jesus is confronted with? Read Genesis 3 and 1 John 2:7-17 in particular v.16 and compare this with the temptations Jesus faced and overcame.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Day 12 › Jesus Feeds The Masses

Read › Mark 6:30-52, 8:1-9

Contemplate › What is the significance of there being 12 baskets of leftovers after everyone had eaten in the context of there being 12 tribes of Israel? Compare this account to the feeding of the four thousand in Mark 8:1-9, which according to Mark 7:31 happened on Gentile lands. Given the significance of the number 7 as meaning completion or perfection, what is the significance of there being 7 baskets of leftovers after Jesus had fed the four thousand Gentiles? What does this tell us about the reach of Jesus' kingdom?

Day 13 › Parables of the Kingdom

Read › Mark 4:1-33

Contemplate › What are the implications about the secret of the Kingdom being given to us by the Father, as opposed to learning about it through parables? In light of Australia being a rich and wealthy nation, how can we be sure that the "the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things" don't choke the word of God in our lives?

Day 14 › Rich man & Lazarus

Read › Luke 16:19-31

Contemplate › Do you think wealth played a contributing factor to the man's blindness to Lazarus? What do you think God requires of His followers regarding the issues of justice, mercy and faithfulness?

DISCIPLESHIP

Day 15 › The First Disciples

Read › Luke 5:1-11

Contemplate › What qualities do you think Jesus saw in Peter that he said you will be catching people (verse 11)? What prompted Peter to leave everything and follow him immediately? What can we learn from Peter's responsiveness?

Day 16 › Jesus and Nicodemus

Read › John 3:1-21

Contemplate › What does it mean to be born-again? Why did Jesus share what he did to in this chapter with a religious leader? Would Jesus say similar things to religious leaders today? What difference does it make that Jesus said “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him” to a Religious person not a “Sinner”?

Day 17 › Cost of Discipleship

Read › Luke 9:57-10:24

Contemplate › What things in life get in way of us following Jesus? Look specifically at the different reasons people gave and relate it to your own life. What does work in the harvest field look like? Are we ready to be sent out?

Day 18 › Rich Young Ruler

Read › Mark 10:17-31

Contemplate › Think for a moment about the way that money shapes your life and the world around you? The rich young ruler had a lot of external things right when he met Jesus. However Jesus exposed the issue inside this man; he loved money more than God. How likely is it that living in Australia money could take the place of God in our lives? What do we need to do to make sure we are serving God alone?

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Day 19 › Sermon on the Mount

Read › Matthew 5

Contemplate › Jesus describes the character of a disciple. What are some of these Christlike qualities he describes? How are we developing these Christlike qualities?

Day 20 › Sermon on the Mount

Read › Matthew 6

Contemplate › Jesus continues in this chapter to explore four aspects of Christlike character. Like yesterday identify some of these and how are they be developed in our lives?

Day 21 › Sermon on the Mount

Read › Matthew 7

Contemplate › Do you believe Jesus really expected this level of morality and integrity from his followers? Compare the book of James to the Sermon on the Mount. Is this really the way God expects us to live? How often do we fall short of this standard?

Day 22 › Inner Purity

Read › Mark 7:1-23

Contemplate › Take a moment to reflect on a number of traditions you observe as part of your faith. Why are they important to you? Where did you learn them? Will you continue to observe them? Will you pass them down to your children? How many of those traditions are outwardly focused where others can see compared to inwardly focused where only God can see? Why do we follow some commandments and not others and place some higher than others?

JESUS & OUTSIDERS

Day 23 › Jesus and the Samaritan Woman

Read › John 4:1-42

Contemplate › What is the significance of both Jesus speaking to a woman and the fact she was a Samaritan? What does verse 24 about worship mean in light of this story?

Day 24 › Jesus Heals a Leper and a Gentile!

Read › Matthew 8:1-13

Contemplate › Read Leviticus 14:4-32 in relation to verse 4. Why Jesus ask the man to go to the priest? Why does Jesus tell him not to say anything to any one? What importance does Jesus healing a Gentile have in that context and what would be equivalent person or group today if Jesus were to do the same thing today?

Day 25 › Divorce & Children

Read › Mark 10: 1-16

Contemplate › Under Jewish law a man could only be found guilty of adultery if he slept with another man's wife. It wasn't adultery if the other woman wasn't married! What is the significance of Jesus saying that if he marries another woman he has committed adultery against his first wife?

How does this turn social convention on its head? How does Jesus' welcome of children turn social convention on its head?

Day 26 › Loving the Outsider

Read › Luke 10:25-37

Contemplate › Samaritans in Jesus' day were despised by the Jews. In today's culture what groups of people are despised and why? How would Jesus show his love and grace to these people? What does this mean for how we should love those same people?

Day 27 › Jesus' Upside Values

Read › Luke 14:1-25

Contemplate › Jesus at the beginning of the story talks about how legalistic the Pharisees had become about the Sabbath. What are some examples of ways in which our Christian practice has become legalistic? How can we go about inviting the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind (verse 14) to fellowship with us?

Day 28 › Lost Sheep, Coins and Sons

Read › Luke 15

Contemplate › All the tax collectors and sinners were drawn to Jesus. The Pharisees did not like it. Is our attitude like the older brother's when people who are not like us come to faith in Christ? Or do we rejoice with the angels in heaven over the repentance of a sinner?

JESUS' DEATH AND RESURRECTION

Day 29 › Jesus Enters Jerusalem

Read › Mark 11

Contemplate › Contrasts the way Jesus entered Jerusalem to the way important and high profile people often make an entrance? What kind of people were welcoming Jesus? In the light of the Old Testament stories about the glory of God coming into the temple and the glory departing when God was displeased with his people, what is the significance of Jesus' visit to the temple after his triumphal entry? And his swift exit?

Day 30 › The Son of Man as Servant

Read › Mark 10:32-45

Contemplate › Is there any significance to the fact that this is the third time recorded in Mark's Gospel that Jesus speaks of his impending death and resurrection? Mark 10:45 is a key verse in terms of the gospel and how leadership is defined. What is our understanding and experience of both these in light of Jesus statement?

Day 31 › Jesus Washes His Disciples Feet

Read › John 13

Contemplate › The disciples repeatedly argue through the gospels about who of them is the greatest, who will sit at Jesus' right hand in his kingdom. Jesus consistently rebuked them and told them that the greatest in the kingdom is the one who serves. What can we learn from Jesus' example of washing his disciples' dirty, smelly feet about service in the kingdom? How often have you exhibited this kind of servant attitude? How tempting is it to call the exercise of power service? Is it really service based on Jesus' example here?

Day 32 › The End of the Age

Read › Matthew 24:1-51

Contemplate › How can we prepare for the persecution and the hatred of Christians in the times leading up to the end? Even though Jesus himself does not know the day or the hour, is it reasonable to suggest that the end is coming based on some of the signs seemingly being fulfilled?

Day 33 › Preparing for the End

Read › Matthew 25:1-46

Contemplate › In each of the three stories in what ways are we to be prepared? What is God's expectation about how we should live in light of Christ's soon returning? Is it an acceptable stance to "bunker down" and just wait for Jesus to come and take us away? Or is there work that we will be accountable for when he returns?

Day 34 › Our Life in the Trinity

Read › John 14-16

Contemplate › How can we know the Father? What is the relationship between the Father and Son? What are the implications of us being invited into Jesus' relationship with His Father? Are you experiencing a life filled by the Spirit? Does the Holy Spirit's power flow through you in service and love toward others and sharing the gospel? If not, why do you think that is?

Day 35 › Jesus' Prayer for His Disciples and Us

Read › John 17

Contemplate › Look and reflect on the different areas Jesus prays for you in this prayer? What are priorities are shown in this prayer? What are the different gifts he has given to us? How important is church unity?

Day 36 › Jesus' Arrest

Read › Mark 14

Contemplate › Mark's Gospel gives a nice concise description of the events leading up and resulting in Jesus death. What stood out for you? Did you think Mark missed anything significant that the other gospels mention? If so what? Read those passages in comparison to Mark's account.

Day 37 › Jesus' Trial & Crucifixion

Read › Mark 15

Contemplate › What do you learn about Jesus from this account of his trial and execution? Why do you think the women stayed when the other disciples abandoned him? How much of a risk was it for Joseph to ask Pilate for his body?

Day 38 › The Resurrection

Read › Luke 24

Contemplate › What do you find significant in His visit to the Garden (vs. 1-12) and on the road to Emmaus (vs. 13-35)? What human / bodily characteristics are demonstrated in Jesus' appearance to the eleven disciples? What different things were the disciples minds open to understanding?

Day 39 › Jesus Reinstates Peter

Read › John 21

Contemplate › What were the disciples doing? What is the irony of this? Why did Jesus focus on Simon Peter and then John? What specific things does he tell Peter and John? What were the future ramifications for each of them?

Day 40 › The Great Commission

Read › Matthew 28

Contemplate › What was the reason and importance behind the soldiers being bribed to lie about the tomb? How do you think you and the church are going in fulfilling this commission Jesus spoke about?



**PRODUCED (2010) BY THE SALVATION ARMY
AUSTRALIA SOUTHERN TERRITORY
CORPS PROGRAMME DEPARTMENT
SALVATIONARMY.ORG.AU/CORPSRESOURCES**