

#### SPEND DAILY TIME WITH GOD AS YOU READ, THINK, PRAY + ACT.

2025 Focus: 50 Key Truths

Each Friday, explore a key truth about our Christian faith and how we can live in light of this truth.

## $Day \ 1_{\,\underline{\text{Genesis 3:15}}} \ | \ \text{The Hope of the Savior}$

And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel. Genesis 3:15

Scripture begins with the epic story of God creating all things from nothing. God creates man and woman in his own image as the pinnacle of creation. God gives them a garden to enjoy, but expressly prohibits them from eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Tragically, Adam and Eve listen to the sly promptings of the serpent in the garden (Satan) and eat the forbidden fruit. Their rebellion unleashes sin and death in God's good creation. Yet, God proclaims a word of hope—someday he will raise up a deliverer who will crush the head of the serpent. Scripture's storyline centers on the dramatic arrival of this deliverer, Jesus Christ, who would give his life to crush the serpent.

This fall, we journeyed through the Old Testament and watched God's redemptive plan unfold. We have arrived at the moment everything pointed toward. The Bible is not a book of fables or a mere moral guidebook. The Bible is an epic story about so much more! It focuses on the coming and work of Jesus Christ, the snake crusher. This grand story reveals a gracious and good God who refused to abandon his precious creation, stopping at nothing to redeem it through his beloved Son.

**TODAY**: As you open your Bible this week, make a commitment to look for themes and promises that point to Jesus. Ask God for the grace to understand the Christ-centered nature of Scripture. As you do, praise God who sent Jesus to crush the head of the serpent and give you new life.

Join us for Christmas Eve services on December 23 and 24 to celebrate the hope of our Savior. Find service times and locations <u>HERE</u>.

# Day 2 Micah 5:2 | The Line of the Savior

But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times. Micah 5:2

Seven hundred years before Jesus's birth, the prophet Micah ministers to God's people in Judah. Micah calls God's people to walk humbly with God and lead lives of justice and mercy (Micah 6:8). Within this message, he prophesies about the coming deliverer and ruler of Israel, who would be born in the humble town of Bethlehem. Further, Micah proclaims that this coming ruler's origins would be "from of old, from ancient times." The coming of Jesus fulfilled this ancient prophecy with stunning accuracy. Jesus was born in Bethlehem (Matthew 2). But even more, Jesus is the Son of God who has always existed "from ancient times."

This Christmas week, it's important that we slow down enough to remember the identity of Jesus, the baby born in the manger in Bethlehem. Though Jesus was born a humble baby, he is the divine king and Son of God who has always existed. Every Old Testament promise we've studied this fall found its fulfillment in this moment. He is the eternal king who stands as the central figure of Scripture's story and the one worthy of all our praise.

**TODAY**: The eternal king who was born in Bethlehem is personally involved in your life right now. As you navigate Christmas preparations and celebrations this week, pause to remember his presence with you. In the car, while wrapping gifts, during a meal: acknowledge that the One who has always existed is with you in that very moment. Thank him for something specific he has provided or done for you this year.

### Day 3 Isaiah 53 | The Heart of the Savior

But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. Isaiah 53:5

Isaiah, like Micah, prophesies in the southern kingdom of Judah, roughly 700 years before the coming of Jesus. Isaiah's ministry calls people back to the holy and sovereign God of Israel. Isaiah prophesies about the coming day when a Suffering Servant would come for Israel's rescue. This Suffering Servant would become a substitute sacrifice, giving his life for people's sins and salvation. Jesus later identifies himself as this Suffering Servant (<u>Luke 22:37</u>) and gives his life as a ransom on a Roman cross.

Today, on Christmas Eve, we remember how Jesus was born as an innocent baby. Jesus grew up, lived a perfect life (free from any sin), yet died a criminal's death on the cross. Christ gave his life as a substitute sacrifice, meaning that Jesus stood in our place and suffered the penalty we deserve for sin. He lived the life we could never live and endured the death we deserved to die. What love is this? The eternal king became a helpless infant, destined for a brutal death, all for our rescue.

**TODAY**: Have you received this gracious work of our mighty Savior? It is by his wounds that we are healed from sin. The Bible teaches that all who call upon the name of the Lord will be saved (Romans 10:13). If you have never taken that step of faith, call on him for salvation now. If you have, give God praise for the gift of life through Jesus. The one pierced and crushed for our transgressions is the one worthy of all our praise.

# $Day \ 4 \ \underline{\mathsf{Matthew} \ 2} \ | \ \mathsf{The} \ \mathsf{Coming} \ \mathsf{of} \ \mathsf{the} \ \mathsf{Savior}$

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem. Matthew 2:1

God's people longed for the promised Messiah for centuries. Through exile, oppression and silence, they clung to God's promise of a coming King. The prophets foretold his coming through David's line and his birth in the town of Bethlehem (Micah 5:2). The day arrives. Jesus is born in a small town, to a humble woman, in a simple manger, fulfilling many Old Testament prophecies. Angels announce his birth to shepherds, who come and worship. Then, Magi, or wise men, travel from the east to see Jesus. The long-awaited king is born! Magi come filled with joy to bring him gifts and offer their presence in worship.

On Christmas Day, we can easily get caught up in many good but frantic activities: getting or giving presents, attending parties or engaging in various traditions. But in the hustle and bustle, let us not lose sight of the reason for the season. The King has come! His birth brings great joy! He is worthy of our worship and entire lives. Like the Magi who traveled far to honor him, we can also offer wholehearted devotion. We worship Jesus by slowing down and being present, remembering the significance of who he is—fully God and fully human—and why he came to rescue us from sin. The King has come; let's give him praise!

**TODAY**: Praise God for the gift of Jesus, the reason for your celebrations. Consider reading <u>Matthew 2</u> aloud at your gatherings today. Then share with each other one or two ways Jesus, the baby born in the manger, has changed your life.



Day 5 Romans 8:31-39 | Question 50: Security in Christ

Question: How does God guarantee our security in Christ?

**Answer**: God guarantees our security through his purpose, power, gift of eternal life, unfailing love and the indwelling Holy Spirit.

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:38-39

Paul concludes one of Scripture's most profound chapters with a powerful declaration of believers' security. Nothing can separate believers from God's love in Jesus. He lists every conceivable threat, and none can sever the believer's connection to God. This certainty is grounded in five guarantees. 1) God's purpose to transform believers into Christlikeness (Romans 8:29). 2) God's power that raised Christ and shields believers (John 10:28-29; 1 Peter 1:3-5). 3) God's gift of imperishable, eternal life (1 Peter 1:23; Romans 11:29). 4) God's unfailing love shown to sinners (Romans 5:8). 5) God's Spirit, who indwells believers as a down payment on our inheritance (Ephesians 1:13-14).

These five guarantees transform how we live. We can approach God with confidence because of what God has done and is doing. God is at work. Our security rests in Christ's death that once and for all covered our sins. This gives us incredible joy, rest and confidence as we follow him. Our identity and our future are secure. We have been adopted as God's fully loved daughters and sons. We can pursue God with abandon, trusting him to care for us, protect us and guide us. No matter what challenges we face, we are his.

**TODAY**: Thank God for your security in Christ. Rest in knowing that absolutely nothing can separate you from his love in Christ Jesus. Let this assurance free you to worship God with abandon today. Learn more about Security in Christ in our We Believe document <u>HERE</u>.