

Monday - Isaiah 64:1-9

Its hard to admit the truth. Isaiah, speaking on behalf of the nation of Israel, was sharing a hard, honest self-examining confession. Israel had seen God do so much, yet they ignored God. These must have been hard words to admit. Honest self-examination can take us to some dark places. But its only when we know our real motives and our real need, that we can be open and available to God’s grace. Isaiah & Israel were now at a place to seek and receive mercy. God is always willing to give it. When did you last dig deep and do some serious self-examination? Are you ready to acknowledge the darkness and let the Jesus in?

Pray: Almighty God, I’m all too human. I know I fall short. Help me take an honest look at myself, confess, and find mercy in you.

Tuesday - Matthew 4:12-17

Only light can overcome darkness. Darkness is a strange thing. Actually, it is not a “thing” but the absence of a “thing”. Darkness is measured by its absence of light. The only way to create darkness is to shut out the light. Darkness is a willful choice. When Jesus came preaching repentance, he was urging people to confess and make a different decision. Turn from choosing darkness and instead allow the light in. We try all sorts of things to bring fullness to our lives. But only light can overcome our darkness. Don’t limit your exposure to Christ.

Pray: Light of the World, you stepped down into my darkness. Open my heart. Let me see. Help me open myself fully to you.

Wednesday - John 4:13-14

I love coffee. I carry my travel mug with me everywhere, sipping my coffee. Coffee has me tricked. Coffee dehydrates. The same goes for sodas and many energy drinks. They lower your fluid level even as you take in these fluids. The more I drink the more thirsty I become. Much of this world operates like coffee & soda. Things make us feel good, feel like we are satisfying our thirst. Yet they actually rob us of the one thing we really need to quench our thirst. Only Jesus can satisfy. We will always need more and crave more until we allow Jesus to enter in and satisfy our hearts. Do you thirst? What will you choose to drink today?

Pray: LORD Jesus, I confess that I often try to let the world and things satisfy me. Forgive me. Please fill me and satisfy my heart.

Thursday - Colossians 1:15-20

Who is Jesus? This is a big question. We know that a man named Jesus existed. He influenced a lot of people. Some called him a great teacher. Others thought he was crazy or dangerous, so they crucified him. But who was he, really? This passage makes a bold claim...that Jesus was the visible image of the invisible God. Jesus was incarnate God...fully God and fully human. How is it possible? I don’t know. But...what if its true? What if the God of the Universe did truly enter into the human race to reconcile the world to himself? What if He did die on the cross and rise from the tomb? What if He really does want all of me, to live in me, to work through me? What if he wants all of you?

Pray: Is this all true? Are you Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? Did you reconcile the world to you through Jesus? Do you want me?

Friday - 1 Peter 1:3-6

I have a friend who recently lost his mother. As he and I talked, he said he felt a little guilty because he wasn’t grieving as much as he thought he should. I knew what he meant. I too, miss my mom. But my friend and I, along with both of our mothers, share a strong faith in Jesus. We miss our mothers, but because of Jesus we simply have such hope that it comforts us in our grief. Even in our struggles, we have joy because we know Jesus has us, loves us, and will care for us. We lean hard on this hope. Hope is a difficult word to define. But when you have it, and when it is fully satisfied, there is no denying it. Do you have confidence in Jesus? How are you experiencing your hope today?

Pray: God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we give you thanks for your great mercy that we are born again! Praise to you!

Saturday - 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Problems grab our attention. Have you ever been having a good day, but then one little thing can ruin it? Think about a good shirt with a little stain... It might not be noticeable to most, but its all we see. Hope in Jesus changes how we see things. When we have hope, we remember the big picture. We fix our eyes on the victory already achieved by Jesus. Its not easy. The stains, the pains, the loss, the grief sometimes grab our attention. But we need never be lost or overcome in them. Allow Hope of Jesus to renew you daily, fixing your eyes on the glory that will come.

Pray: Jesus, help us never give up, never fear, and never be overcome, because we hope in you! You already have the victory!

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Today’s Scripture

Isaiah 7:14 (NLT)

All right then, the Lord himself will give you the sign. Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel (which means ‘God is with us’).

Luke 1:26-38 (NLT)

(v26-28) In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David. Gabriel appeared to her and said, “Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you!”

(v29-33) Confused and disturbed, Mary tried to think what the angel could mean. “Don’t be afraid, Mary,” the angel told her, “for you have found favor with God! You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. And he will reign over Israel forever; his Kingdom will never end!”

(v34) Mary asked the angel, “But how can this happen? I am a virgin.”

(v35-37) The angel replied, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the baby to be born will be holy, and he will be called the Son of God. What’s more, your relative Elizabeth has become pregnant in her old age! People used to say she was barren, but she has conceived a son and is now in her sixth month. For the word of God will never fail.”

(v38) Mary responded, “I am the Lord’s servant. May everything you have said about me come true.” And then the angel left her.

Genesis 1:1 (NLT)

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

2 Corinthians 1:20 (NLT)

For all of God’s promises have been fulfilled in Christ with a resounding “Yes!” And through Christ, our “Amen” (which means “Yes”) ascends to God for his glory.



Week 1

God Gave a Promise

God gave first.  
Faith follows favor.

Write down what you hear God saying to you:

What to Remember:

Every promise God gives invites us to trust that God’s Word is true.

A promise delayed is not a promise denied

We don’t need to understand the plan to trust the promise-maker.

Where do you need to trust God’s promise instead of your performance?

Further Conversation

- 1. What is one thing you are really looking forward to this Christmas season? Why does the promise of this one thing matter to you?
- 2. **God gave a promise.** What was the promise? How is being invited to trust a promise from God also a gift from God?
- 3. **Read Isaiah 7:14** This promise was made 700 years before Jesus. What was the promise? Why was it a big deal?
- 4. Have you ever had to wait a long time for a promise? How did you keep faith that the promised would be fulfilled?
- 5. **Read Luke 1:26-38** Why is Mary called “favored”? How did Mary respond to this invitation from the angel?
- 6. Why is trusting God’s Word so challenging? In what areas of life are you being asked to trust the promise-maker without knowing the plan?
- 7. **Read 2 Corinthians 1:20** What promises Christ has fulfilled? What promises are we still waiting on? How can you say Amen as you wait?

This Week’s Prayer Partner

God works in so many ways in our community and across the globe. Every month, Tabernacle commits to pray for our ministry partners. Please consider sending a note, a donation, or joining their team.

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Live Generously

Generosity is a step of faith. If you are visiting, we welcome you and hope you enjoy your experience. If you call Tabernacle your church home, we encourage you to support the ministry with your tithes & gifts. Offering baskets are placed at each entrance door during our 9AM Service. Offering plates are passed at our 11AM Service. You can also give online with this **QR code**.

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