

Through the Bible in 24 Months



WEEK 65 OF 104

The Right Fear

Week 65 of 104 • 62% of the way through the Bible

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

General Old Testament	Isaiah 6–10
Wisdom Literature	Psalms 77
Gospels	Luke 12:22–59
General New Testament	Colossians 2:6–4:18

THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

Everyone is afraid of something; the only question is what. King Uzziah dies, and a young man walks into the temple and sees the real King, high and lifted up, and comes apart. A few chapters later King Ahaz is shaking over two smoldering sticks of kings and is told that the only thing worth fearing is the Lord of hosts Himself. Asaph lies awake with his hand stretched out in the dark, asking whether God has forgotten to be gracious, and then decides to remember the Red Sea instead. Jesus points at ravens and wildflowers and says, “Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” And Paul tells a nervous congregation that nobody gets to bully them with rules, because they were buried with Christ and raised with Him.

How to use this guide: Read all four passages during the week. Your teacher will take up two of them in class, one in each session. For the other two, work through the “Extended Class Discussion or Self-Study” questions on your own and write your answers in the space provided.

GENERAL OLD TESTAMENT Isaiah 6–10

The Throne and the Child

WHAT YOU WILL FIND HERE

In the year King Uzziah died, Isaiah sees the Lord on a throne with seraphim calling to one another, “Holy, holy, holy,” and he cries that he is ruined. A coal from the altar touches his mouth, and he volunteers for a message most hearers will refuse. Then King Ahaz, panicking over two enemy kings, refuses a sign and is given one anyway: a virgin shall conceive, and His name is Immanuel. Assyria advances as God’s hired razor, and a Child is born whose government will never end.

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Isaiah sees the Lord and his first words are, “Woe is me, for I am undone.” Why is that the reaction, and what does it say about how casually most of us talk about God?
2. Matthew 1:22–23 quotes Isaiah 7:14 about the birth of Jesus. Discuss what that sign meant to Ahaz in his own crisis and how Matthew is using it, and what both uses have in common.

3. Read the four names of Isaiah 9:6 and the promise about David's throne in 9:7. Which of those names does this class most need this year, and what would it change?

EXTENDED CLASS DISCUSSION OR SELF-STUDY

1. Walk through Isaiah 6:1–8 and list what happens step by step. Note the order of seeing, confessing, being cleansed, and being sent, and why that order cannot be rearranged.
2. Isaiah 6:9–10 is quoted repeatedly in the New Testament. Read Matthew 13:14–15, John 12:39–41, and Acts 28:25–27, then describe carefully what hardening means and who does it.
3. Ahaz is told, "If you will not believe, surely you shall not be established" (7:9). Read 2 Kings 16:7–9 and trace what Ahaz did instead. What did his fear end up costing his nation?
4. Isaiah 10:5–15 shows an axe boasting against the man swinging it. Explain in your own words how Assyria can be God's instrument and still be guilty.
5. Isaiah 8:12–13 tells frightened people to stop calling everything a conspiracy and to let the Lord of hosts be their fear. Name what has actually frightened you this month, and say one sentence from these chapters out loud in answer to it.

WISDOM LITERATURE Psalm 77

When the Night Will Not End

WHAT YOU WILL FIND HERE

This is a psalm written at three in the morning. Asaph cries out to God and keeps crying; his hand is stretched out in the night and will not grow slack; his soul refuses to be comforted. He is too troubled to speak and too awake to rest. Then he asks the six questions every suffering believer eventually asks, whether God has forgotten to be gracious. And then he makes a decision that turns the whole psalm around, and it ends in the middle of the Red Sea.

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Asaph says plainly that his soul refused to be comforted (77:2). Is there a place in faithful Christian living for a night like that, and what makes it dangerous to set up camp there?

2. Read the six questions of 77:7–9 out loud. Which of them have you asked, and what do you make of the fact that God put questions like these into the songbook of His people?
3. The turn in 77:10–12 is a decision rather than a feeling: “I will remember.” Talk about what remembering actually looks like on a night when you do not feel like doing it.

EXTENDED CLASS DISCUSSION OR SELF-STUDY

1. Trace the pronouns in 77:1–6 and then in 77:13–20. Who is the subject of the first half of the psalm, who is the subject of the second, and what does that shift accomplish?
2. List the six questions asked in 77:7–9 and answer each one from somewhere else in Scripture, naming the passage you used.
3. Psalm 77:19 says, “Your way was in the sea, Your path in the great waters, and Your footsteps were not known.” Read Exodus 14:21–31 and describe what that last phrase adds to the account.
4. Compare Psalm 77:20 with Psalm 23:1 and John 10:11. What kind of leadership is being described, and who is doing the leading in each passage?
5. Write your own short list of the years of the right hand of the Most High in your life: five things God has actually done. Keep the list where you can find it at three in the morning.

GOSPELS Luke 12:22–59

Fear Not, Little Flock

WHAT YOU WILL FIND HERE

Jesus tells worried disciples to look at ravens that do not plant and lilies that do not spin, and to notice that anxiety has never added an hour to a life. Seek the kingdom, He says, because your Father delights to give it to you. Then the subject turns to readiness: servants with belts fastened and lamps lit, a master who returns at an unexpected hour, a steward who decided the master was delayed. He speaks of fire and division, and asks a weather-wise crowd why they cannot read the hour.

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Jesus answers anxiety by pointing at birds and wildflowers (12:22–31). Why is that argument actually persuasive, and where does it seem to break down when your own bills are on the table?

2. “Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom” (12:32). What changes in a person who really believes that sentence, and what does its opposite look like?
3. In 12:42–48 the two stewards differ mainly in what they expected about the master’s return. How does expectation shape behavior, and what would a stranger conclude about our expectations from watching our week?

EXTENDED CLASS DISCUSSION OR SELF-STUDY

1. List every argument Jesus makes against worry in 12:22–31. Which of them speaks most directly to the thing you actually lie awake about?
2. Jesus says, “Sell what you have and give alms” (12:33). Compare Acts 2:44–45, Acts 5:4, and 1 Timothy 6:17–19, then explain whether this is a universal command to poverty and how you know.
3. Trace the pictures in 12:35–48: servants waiting with lamps, a householder and a thief, a wise steward and a foolish one. Identify the single attitude that ties all of them together.
4. Read 12:49–53, where the Prince of Peace says He came to bring division. Explain how that fits with Isaiah 9:6 and with the peace Jesus gives in John 14:27.
5. Jesus says that from everyone to whom much is given, much will be required (12:48). Write down what you have actually been given, then name one thing you will do this week because of it.

GENERAL NEW TESTAMENT Colossians 2:6–4:18

Buried and Raised with Him

WHAT YOU WILL FIND HERE

Paul tells the Colossians to keep walking in the Christ they received, rooted and built up, and to watch for anyone who would carry them off with hollow philosophy. In Christ all the fullness of the Godhead lives bodily. They were circumcised without hands, buried with Him in baptism, raised, forgiven, and the handwriting of requirements against them was nailed to His cross. So nobody gets to judge them about food or festivals or sabbaths. Then he shows what the raised life looks like at home and at work.

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Colossians 2:11–13 describes what happens in baptism: a burial, a raising, a forgiving. Walk through exactly what the text says takes place, and talk about why God chose a burial as the picture.
2. Colossians 2:14–17 says the handwriting of requirements was wiped out and nailed to the cross, and that sabbaths were a shadow of things to come. What does that settle about which law binds Christians today, and what does it not mean?
3. Colossians 2:20–23 warns about rules like “do not touch, do not taste, do not handle” that have an appearance of wisdom. Where do we still manufacture rules God never gave, and why are they so attractive to religious people?

EXTENDED CLASS DISCUSSION OR SELF-STUDY

1. Trace what Colossians 2:11–13 says God did: a circumcision made without hands, a burial, a raising, a making alive, a forgiving. Compare Romans 6:3–4 and Acts 2:38, and list what baptism is connected with in each passage.
2. Colossians 2:16 names food, drink, festivals, new moons, and sabbaths. Read Hebrews 8:6–13 and Galatians 5:1–4, then write down what happened to the Law of Moses and what happens to someone who goes back to it.
3. Colossians 3:16 and Ephesians 5:19 describe the singing of the church. List what the text says we do, to whom we do it, with what, and from where.
4. List the things to put off in 3:5–9 and the things to put on in 3:12–17. Match them into pairs where you can, and mark the pair you most need to work on.
5. Colossians 4:5–6 says to walk in wisdom toward those outside, with speech seasoned with salt. Name one person outside Christ whom you see every week, and plan one specific conversation before next Sunday.

NEXT WEEK'S READING: Isaiah 11–17 • Psalm 78 • Luke 13 • 1 Thessalonians 1:1–2:16

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