

Through the Bible in 24 Months



WEEK 74 OF 104

Preach the Word

Week 74 of 104 • 71% of the way through the Bible

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

General Old Testament	Jeremiah 1-5
Wisdom Literature	Psalms 95-97
Gospels	Luke 20:9-47
General New Testament	2 Timothy 3-4

THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

God keeps sending messengers, and people keep deciding what to do with them. This week a young man in the priestly village of Anathoth learns that God knew him before he was formed and has now put words in his mouth, and that the assignment will cost him every comfortable thing he owns. A psalm pleads with worshipers to hear God's voice today, while hearts are still soft enough to be moved. Jesus tells a story about a landowner who sent servant after servant to a vineyard and finally sent his son. And Paul, nearly out of days and writing by lamplight in a cell, tells a young preacher to preach the word whether or not anyone wants it. Four readings, one question: what will you do with the voice you have already heard?

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 Jeremiah 1-5

A Prophet to the Nations

WHAT YOU WILL FIND HERE

A priest's son from a village outside Jerusalem is told that God knew him before he was formed and appointed him to speak to nations. He protests that he is only a youth. God touches his mouth, shows him an almond branch and a boiling pot tipped from the north, and promises to make him a fortified city. Then the charges begin: Judah has committed two evils, forsaking the fountain of living waters and cutting out broken cisterns that hold no water.

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Jeremiah 1:5 says God knew him, sanctified him, and ordained him a prophet before he was born. Discuss carefully what God is claiming there, and how you would answer a friend who quoted it to prove that God decides before birth who will be saved and who will be lost.

2. Jeremiah 2:13 names two evils: they forsook the fountain of living waters, and they hewed out cisterns that hold no water. Talk about what makes a leaky cistern attractive enough that a person would leave a spring for it.
3. God tells Jeremiah in 1:8 and 1:17 not to be afraid of their faces. Where does fear of somebody's face still silence Christians who know exactly what ought to be said?

EXTENDED CLASS DISCUSSION OR SELF-STUDY

1. List everything God promises to do for Jeremiah in 1:7–10 and 1:17–19. How many of those promises are about protection, and how many are about the message itself?
2. Read Jeremiah 2:1–3, where God remembers the kindness of Israel's youth and her love as a bride. Compare that with what the Lord says to Ephesus in Revelation 2:4. What has been lost in both cases?
3. Trace the pictures God uses for Judah in chapters 2 and 3: a spring abandoned, a wild donkey, a faithless wife, a treacherous sister. Which one lands hardest on you, and why?
4. Jeremiah 5:1 tells the prophet to run through Jerusalem and see whether he can find one man who does justly and seeks truth. Read Genesis 18:22–33 alongside it. What do the two passages together say about how much God values a single righteous person?
5. Name one broken cistern you are still digging: a place where you go for what only God actually gives. What is one concrete thing you will do this week to go back to the fountain instead?

WISDOM LITERATURE Psalm 95–97

Today If You Hear

WHAT YOU WILL FIND HERE

Psalm 95 begins as a happy call to worship, come let us sing, come let us kneel before the Lord our Maker, and then turns without warning into a warning: do not harden your hearts as at Meribah, where a whole generation lost a rest they had been promised. Psalm 96 sends the song outward, telling the nations that the Lord reigns and the earth will be judged in righteousness. Psalm 97 shows Him coming in cloud and fire, and ends with light sown for the righteous.

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Psalm 95 moves from singing to kneeling to a hard warning in fifteen verses. Why would a call to worship end with the failure of the wilderness generation, and how should that shape the way we enter the assembly on Sunday?
2. Hebrews 3:7–4:11 quotes Psalm 95 and applies it directly to Christians. Read both passages side by side and discuss what the writer of Hebrews means by the rest that still remains.
3. Psalm 96 tells the singer to declare God's glory among the nations and His wonders among all people. Name the specific places in your ordinary week where that declaring would actually have to happen.

EXTENDED CLASS DISCUSSION OR SELF-STUDY

1. Mark where Psalm 95 turns. List everything in verses 1 through 7a that worshipers are invited to do, and everything in 7b through 11 they are warned not to do.
2. Read Exodus 17:1–7 and Numbers 14:20–23, the two events behind Meribah and Massah. What exactly did that generation refuse to believe about God?
3. Count the commands in Psalm 96:1–10. Which of them are aimed at the congregation, and which are aimed at the whole earth?
4. Psalm 97:7 says worship Him, all you gods. Compare Hebrews 1:6, where the same kind of language is applied to the Son. What is the writer of Hebrews arguing about Jesus?
5. Psalm 97:10 says you who love the Lord, hate evil. Name one thing you have been tolerating that a person who loved God would refuse to keep in the house. What will you do about it before Sunday?

GOSPELS Luke 20:9–47

The Son They Killed

WHAT YOU WILL FIND HERE

Jesus tells a story to people who are about to live it out: a man plants a vineyard, leases it, and sends servant after servant for his fruit, each one beaten or shamed, until he sends his beloved son. The tenants kill the heir. Then the trap questions start. Should we pay tribute to Caesar? Whose wife will she be in the resurrection?

Jesus answers each, asks one of His own about David's Lord, and warns the crowd about scribes who devour widows' houses.

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

1. In the parable of the vinedressers the owner keeps sending servants long after any reasonable man would have sent soldiers. What is Jesus saying about God's patience, and what does it mean when He says the vineyard will be given to others?
2. Jesus answers the question about tribute by asking whose image is on the coin (20:24–25). If the coin belongs to Caesar because it bears his image, work out carefully what belongs to God and why.
3. The Sadducees denied the resurrection, and Jesus answered them from a single phrase in Exodus about the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Discuss how He argues, and what His method says about how carefully we ought to read Scripture.

EXTENDED CLASS DISCUSSION OR SELF-STUDY

1. Trace the sending in 20:10–13. How many servants are sent, what happens to each, and what does the owner say to himself before he sends his son?
2. Jesus quotes Psalm 118:22–23 about the rejected stone. Read that psalm, then read Acts 4:11 and 1 Peter 2:4–8. How do the apostles use the same verse?
3. Acts 23:8 tells you what the Sadducees denied. List those denials, and explain why the question in Luke 20:28–33 was designed as a trap rather than as an honest inquiry.
4. Read Psalm 110:1, which Jesus quotes in 20:42–43. If David calls the Messiah his Lord, what is Jesus claiming about Himself, and how does Peter use the same psalm in Acts 2:34–36?
5. Luke 20:46–47 describes men who loved long robes, greetings in the markets, the best seats, and long prayers, and who devoured widows' houses. Name one place where you have let appearance stand in for substance, and one specific step you will take this week to close the gap.

WHAT YOU WILL FIND HERE

Paul warns that perilous times will come, filled with people who love themselves, love pleasure, and keep a form of godliness while denying its power. He reminds Timothy that everyone who wants to live godly will be persecuted, and that he has known the holy Scriptures from childhood. Then comes the charge: preach the word, in season and out, for a time is coming when people will not endure sound doctrine. Paul finishes with the calmest paragraph in the New Testament about dying, and asks for his cloak.

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Second Timothy 3:16–17 says all Scripture is inspired and makes the man of God complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. Discuss what that claim rules out, and what it means for how we settle a disagreement in this congregation.
2. Paul says a time will come when people will not endure sound doctrine but will heap up teachers to suit their own desires (4:3–4). Describe how that actually happens in a church, step by step, before anyone notices.
3. Read 4:6–8 aloud. Paul says he has finished the course and kept the faith, and that a crown waits for him and for all who love Christ's appearing. What kind of life, lived over decades, arrives at that paragraph?

EXTENDED CLASS DISCUSSION OR SELF-STUDY

1. List the traits of people in the perilous times of 3:2–5. How many of them are about love, and what are those loves attached to?
 2. Paul tells Timothy that from childhood he has known the holy Scriptures (3:14–15). Read Acts 16:1 and 2 Timothy 1:5 and write out who taught him and what that cost them.
 3. Count the commands packed into 4:2 and 4:5. Which one is hardest for a preacher, and which one is hardest for an ordinary member?
 4. Demas forsook Paul, having loved this present world (4:10). Read 1 John 2:15–17 and Colossians 4:14, where Demas is still a fellow worker. What does the pairing of those verses teach about how a fall usually happens?
 5. Somebody handed you the Scriptures the way Lois and Eunice handed them to Timothy. Name that person, and name one person you will deliberately teach something to this week. Put the day on your calendar before you close this page.
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NEXT WEEK'S READING: Jeremiah 6-9 · Psalm 98-101 · Luke 21 · Titus 1-3

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