

**LIFE GROUP NOTES:**



*"As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?"*  
Psalm 42:1-2

Centerpointe Church  
4104 Legato Rd  
Fairfax, VA 22033

[www.centerpointechurch.com](http://www.centerpointechurch.com)

**CENTERPOINTE CHURCH**

**2019**

**40 DAY DEVOTIONAL**

**WEEK 2**

## JANUARY 7 – EXPERIENCE GOD’S REST

### Scripture:

Psalm 63:10 "God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you, in a dry and weary land where there is no water."

Matthew 11:28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

### Thought:

Our granddaughter, Caroline Grace, brings so much joy to Esther and I. Thanks to technology; we get to Facetime with her almost every day. When she hears our voice, she gives us a big smile, and our hearts melt as we witness her growth and learning. Whoever invented Facetime will get a hug from me in heaven, because they also allowed me to talk to Stephanie the year she spent in Pakistan.

On the other hand, the advancement of technology over the last few decades has also served to speed up the pace of life and fill us with new demands and stresses. The more we have, the more we want. The more we can do online, the less time we spend with others. What should give us more time to relax and enjoy life also sucks us dry and leaves us empty inside. If we are not careful, the pace of life can dry up our spiritual lives, and we will miss the precious moments of God’s presence. In the chaos, Jesus steps in and says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

The New Testament word "rest" comes from the Old Testament word, "Sabbath," which is an intentional time set aside to celebrate God, to experience His peace, and remember that He is in control. Many people neglect this sacred area of life because it seems counterproductive, but in fact, those who take time for spiritual renewal on a regular basis have more energy and durability than those who do not.

There are two simple suggestions for addressing spiritual dryness. The first is communion with God daily, creating space to meditate on Scripture and pray. The second is to take a Sabbath weekly through church attendance, allowing God to speak to you through others. What may not be the most convenient thing to practice could be the one thing you need to experience God’s abundant life.

## REFLECTION JAN 7

When you find yourself in a spiritual dry time, what do you do? Why? What happens when you do this?

What other ways can you experience God’s rest?

### Prayer:

### Decision:

Based on your reading, what decision do you need to make?

## JANUARY 8 – EXPERIENCE GOD’S HEALING

### Scripture:

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

Matthew 9:35, “Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness.”

1 Peter 2:24, “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.”

### Thought:

It is odd that followers of Jesus are not quicker to pray for healing or pray for others to be healed. Nearly one-fifth of the Gospel are reports of Jesus’ miracles, and Jesus commissioned His disciples to continue His basic ministry, including healing. It should be a natural thing for us to ask God to do the miraculous.

Faith constitutes the first step in praying for healing. This faith stands on solid evidence that healing is provided for us through the work of Jesus. We not only have the word of God, but we know Jesus still heals today based on stories we have heard or experienced ourselves.

We are also encouraged to boldly present our requests to God, not out of arrogance, but out of a relationship. In a healthy relationship, there is no intimidation. We are just like children who ask parents for what they want without fear.

Finally, we often do not feel we are worthy enough to ask for healing. The good news is that God wants to use us whether we feel worthy or not. “No matter how weak you may feel as a Christian, no matter how lacking in the ability to create a beautiful prayer, it makes no difference. God hears the prayer of the little ones.” (Francis McNutt).

Although we cannot answer all the questions that come up when we speak of physical healing, we do know that God heals. He cares for us and is intimately involved with the details of our lives. We know that he has power over sickness; we can approach Him confidently.

## REFLECTION JAN 8

How have you experienced healing?

In what areas do you need healing right now?

Who do you know that also needs to experience God’s healing?

### Prayer:

Spend time thanking God for his healing.

Spend time praying for others that need healing.

### Decision:

Based on what you read and learned, what decision do you need to make?

Great resource on Healing: *The Prayer that Heals, Praying for Healing in the Family* by Francis McNutt

## **JANUARY 9 – EXPERIENCE GOD’S PROVISION**

### **Scripture:**

Philippians 4:19, "And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus."

### **Thought:**

On December 9, 2018, a dear friend of Centerpointe Church left this earth to be with Jesus. He was a man filled with joy, love, and wisdom. I can distinctly remember a conversation I had with him concerning provision. He asked me to pray with him about the issue. After I prayed, I said, "You have too much history with God's provision to think He will let you down now." I have repeated that sentence hundreds of times since then. It is a statement of thanksgiving and recognition of God's provision.

To say that God is our provider is to say that God is our ultimate source in life. We like to project the impression that we are self-made people, but the reality is: no matter how strong, self-secure, or self-sufficient we pretend to be, we are completely dependent on God.

It was Abraham that first identified God as a provider when he was about to sacrifice his son Isaac on an altar. In that moment, an angel intervened. Abraham instead found a ram in the thickets, which he offered as the sacrifice. Afterwards, he called the place, "The Lord Will Provide" or "Jehovah-Jireh." This story looks forward to Jesus as the sacrificial Lamb of God, providing our salvation.

In addition to our salvation, scripture shows the Lord's provision in many other ways. He provides strength, resources, daily bread, water, hope, restoration, wisdom, and more.

When we gain a deeper understanding of his provision, we gain a fuller sense of gratitude. We begin to recognize God's provision in small ways as well as obvious ways. Furthermore, we develop a sense of humility and trust, which keeps us dependent on God's help.

If you are running low on your own resources, remember and repeat: "We have so much history with God's provision, we have no reason to doubt him now."

## **REFLECTION JAN 9**

In what other ways does understanding God's provision change us?

What are some small ways God has provided for you?

What are the large ways God has provided for you?

Take some time to thank God for his provision.

How are you still trusting God to provide for you?

### **Decision:**

Based on what you have read and what God is saying to you, what decisions do you need to make?

### **Prayer:**

**Scripture:**

Philippians 4:4-9, "Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice! Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do. Remember, the Lord is coming soon. Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. Keep putting into practice all you learned and received from me—everything you heard from me and saw me doing. Then the God of peace will be with you."

Isaiah 26:3-4, "You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you. Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord is the Rock eternal"

**Thought:**

The Old Testament word for peace is the word "shalom". Its basic meaning is "wholeness" or "well-being". Shalom is a harmonious state of soul and mind, both externally and internally. It is often used as a greeting and farewell to express blessing.

Circumstances in our lives do not always feel peaceful, especially when storms of life surround us. At some point, all of us experience storms in life. We are going into a storm, are currently in a storm, or are coming out of a storm. Thankfully, Biblical peace is unrelated to circumstances; it is a goodness of life that is not touched by what happens on the outside.

A brief look at our passages tells us the way to experience peace, even in the storm. In the Isaiah passage, the word "steadfast" is also translated "stayed" or "fixed." We move in and take up residence in Him. When our mind is continually residing in a place of God's presence, we may be in the midst of great trials yet still having biblical peace. The condition is staying our minds, resting our minds on God, and keeping Him first.

The Philippians passage suggests the same concerning our thought life. We are to fix our thoughts on God, His word, His works, and His love. Then, we can experience His peace, which surpasses our ability to understand how it all works.

In what ways have you experienced God's peace?

What are the areas do you need to experience God's peace?

**Decision:**

Based on what you have read and what God is saying to you, what decision do you need to make?

**Prayer:**

## JANUARY 11 – EXPERIENCE GOD’S WISDOM

### Scripture:

Proverbs 2:1–5, “My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding, and if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.”

James 1:5, “If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.”

### Thought:

I have several diplomas on my office wall from different universities: a bachelor’s degree, a master’s degree, a doctorate degree, and a minister’s ordination certificate. In my drawer are several other certificates of training and education. These are pieces of paper that indicate a deposit of knowledge. However, knowledge in no way is an indication of wisdom. Wisdom is a matter of how you process information and apply it to daily life.

The way to wisdom is laid out in the above passages. We are to “Accept and store God’s word in our heart,” “Turn our ear” (or pay close attention), “Apply our heart,” “Call and cry out,” and “Look and search for it.” This is not a passive pursuit, rather daily disciplines that take effort, time, energy, work, concentration, and focus. However, the rewards are understanding the fear of the Lord and finding the knowledge of God. This is the beginning of wisdom (Proverbs 9:10).

Wayne Grudem, in his book *Systematic Theology*, writes, “God’s wisdom means that God always chooses the best goals and the best means to those goals. This definition goes beyond the idea of God knowing all things and specifies that God’s decisions about what He will do are always wise decisions: that is, they always will bring about the best results (from God’s ultimate perspective), and they will bring about those results through the best possible means.”

Feeling guilty of past failures often keeps us from asking God for more wisdom. However, God promises in James 1:5 that if we do seek wisdom, He is more than willing to continually give us wisdom without finding fault.

## REFLECTION JAN 11

Think about the last major decision you made. How did you reach that decision? How did you involve God in making the decision? Is there anything you could have done differently?

In what ways do you need God’s wisdom in your life now?

### Decision:

Based on what you have read and what God is saying to you, what decision do you need to make?

### Prayer:

## JANUARY 12 – EXPERIENCE GOD’S POWER

### Scripture:

Exodus 15:6, "Your right hand, O LORD, was majestic in power. Your right hand, O LORD, shattered the enemy."

Psalms 89:13, "Your arm is endued with power; your hand is strong, your right hand exalted."

Ephesians 3:20, "Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us." (NASB)

### Thought:

"Just leave it in God's hands."

How many times have we heard this statement? How many times have we said this? Don't we wish it were that easy? When we are under pressure, we are driven by the need to do something, to demand changes and results. We do everything we can at a great emotional price, and still nothing changes. Then, someone says to you, "Leave it in God's hands." This advice seems so simple; however, it may just be the perfect advice. What does it mean to leave something in God's hands, and what kind of place is God's hand, anyway?

When the Bible speaks of God's hand, it is what we call an "anthropomorphism," the attribution of human characteristics or behavior to God. Although God is not limited like we are in our senses, this language serves a positive purpose of understanding who God is. In this case, He is a God of power and might.

Consider your hands. They are strong enough to crush a can and yet gentle enough to hold a newborn baby. Our hands feed, provide, protect, and comfort. When the psalmist speaks of God's hands, we understand that he is recognizing God's power and strength. This connection is especially the case when he speaks of God's *right* hand (which he does 35 times) because the right hand was considered the strongest hand. The right hand held the sword while the left hand held the shield.

Now, when you hear someone say, "Leave it in God's hands" you can rest assured. In His hands, you will find a strength that is beyond all we can ask or imagine.

## REFLECTION JAN 12

In what ways have you seen God's power working in your life?

How do you need to experience God's power in this season?

### Decision:

Based on what you have learned about God's power, what decision do you need to make?

### Prayer:

For further study on God's healing, read:  
Matt. 10:5-10; Mark 6:7-13; Luke 9:1-6

**JANUARY 13 – SUNDAY MESSAGE NOTES**

Scripture(s):

Key Thought:

Notes:

**REFLECTION JAN 13**

What parts of the message were particularly significant to you?

**Thanksgiving:**

**Prayer:**

**Decision:**

Based on what you have heard, and what God is saying to you, what decision do you need to make?