



KEYS TO VIBRANT CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

WEEK 9

DAY 1

SCRIPTURE : Read Acts 2:42-47, Romans 12:9-13

"And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers." - Acts 2:42

"Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor." - Romans 12:9-10

OBSERVATION : What do you notice about the verses? What do you think the main message is? What verses, words or ideas jump out to you?

- The Early Church had just received the Holy Spirit, and 3,000 were added to their number on one day.
- The Early Church practiced devotion to teachings about God's Word, spent time in fellowship with other believers, ate together, and prayed. They demonstrated generosity and giving to help others.
- In Romans, Paul encouraged the Church to have a love that is genuine or sincere. This means that our love needs to be tangible. Others should be able to observe the actions we take to love each other.
- The Early Church shared their possessions to help meet needs. They made time to eat and spend time with each other. By living life in this way, they were able to carry each other's burdens.
- What else do you see?

APPLICATION : Ask God how He wants you to apply the verses to your own life.

- Sometimes it is helpful to identify simple, intentional things that we can do to walk out our faith. Of the actions observed in the Early Church noted above, which one are you strongest in? Which one could you improve in the most?
- In a world full of social media, virtual meetings, and superficial busyness, how can you reclaim or strengthen the relationship with your local body of believers at church?
- What might you have to sacrifice in time, energy, activities, or resources to grow here?
- How else might God want you to apply this to your life?

PRAYER :

Lord, thank You for the example of the Early Church. Help me to grow in my devotion to teachings about Your Word, in time spent in fellowship with other believers, in sharing meals with others, and in prayer. Help me to grow in my generosity and how I give to help others. Surround me with and help me to build Christian community as I grow closer to You and my brothers and sisters in Christ!



ARMOR UP, FIGHT STRONG

WEEK 9

DAY 2

SCRIPTURE : Read Ephesians 6:10-20

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil." - Ephesians 6: 10-11

OBSERVATION : What do you notice about the verses? What do you think the main message is? What verses, words or ideas jump out to you?

- Our spiritual battle is not against people (flesh and blood) but against spiritual forces of evil and systems of brokenness in our sin-impacted world.
- There is encouragement to stand firm. Standing in the strength of God not only helps us endure, but it also can help us to be positioned to help others as well.
- These verses describe truth, righteousness, readiness in applying the gospel of peace to our lives, faith, salvation, the Word of God, and prayer as pieces of armor for a secure and immovable follower of God.
- Wearing God's armor gives His followers boldness.
- What else do you see?

APPLICATION : Ask God how He wants you to apply the verses to your own life.

- Soldiers put their armor on before battle. How can you prepare more thoroughly for your daily spiritual warfare? How can you be strategic in responding when faced with attacks?
- We all fall sometimes. When we do, we need to think about where our armor failed. We need to reinforce those parts of our spiritual armor and remember our source of strength!
- Prayer is a key to standing firm in our faith in God and drawing closer to Him. What can you do to build out your prayer life?
- How else might God want you to apply this to your life?

PRAYER :

Lord, help me to be defined by actively sharing the gospel of peace, standing for truth, being faithful, living righteously, and recognizing my salvation comes from You. I want to know Your Word and be able to use its promises to fight off temptation and the evil one. Help me to prepare for battle daily and be defined as a person of peace in a world of chaos and brokenness.



REJOICING AND THANKSGIVING LEAD TO PEACE

WEEK 9

DAY 3

SCRIPTURE: Read Philippians 4:4-9

"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." – Philippians 4:4-7

OBSERVATION: What do you notice about the verses? What do you think the main message is? What verses, words or ideas jump out to you?

- Rejoicing is a command that is so important that Paul said it twice for emphasis.
- We can take confidence in God being near to us, which helps to battle our anxiety.
- We can choose to pray and seek God for direction and provision, while seasoning our prayers with thanksgiving.
- When we do these things and focus in this way, God's peace will guard our hearts and minds.
- What else do you see?

APPLICATION: Ask God how He wants you to apply the verses to your own life.

- Have you ever thought of rejoicing, prayer, and thanksgiving as the cure for anxiety? How does knowing that God is near help to dispel your fears?
- Many people seek peace. How is the peace of God better than the peace the world gives?
- Sometimes, it can feel as if we are almost always under attack. With God's peace guarding your heart and mind, you can withstand any attacks of the evil one. By prayer with thanksgiving and rejoicing, you can seek and receive God's peace.
- How else might God want you to apply this to your life?

PRAYER:

God, thank You for Your peace, which surpasses all understanding. I need this peace in my life today. Teach me to become a person defined by joy, rejoicing in You always and giving thanks while praying to You on all occasions. I desire to be at peace with You and in You so that I can help guide others to the safe harbor of Your peace in the storms of their lives as well.



BUILT TOGETHER IN CHRIST

WEEK 9

DAY 4

SCRIPTURE : Read I Peter 2:4-10, I Corinthians 3:16-17

"As you come to Him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." - I Peter 2:4-5

OBSERVATION : What do you notice about the verses? What do you think the main message is? What verses, words or ideas jump out to you?

- Jesus is the cornerstone of God's spiritual house.
- We are each temples of the living God. We are also being built as stones into God's spiritual house. We are to be set apart for Him.
- Every follower of Christ is called to live and serve like a priest in God's temple.
- We are worthy of the priesthood because of Jesus' sacrifice.
- We are to offer spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to Him.
- What else do you see?

APPLICATION : Ask God how He wants you to apply the verses to your own life.

- What would your week look like if you decided to live life in the reality that as a child of God, you are His temple (He dwells within you)?
- What an amazing concept to be built into a house with Jesus and other believers! Stones in a building support each other and make each other stronger. How can you continue to support the Christian brothers and sisters God has put in your path?
- It all starts with coming to Him. How can you come to God with more focus, more intentionality, more time, and more passion this week?
- What spiritual sacrifice can you make to God this week?
- How else might God want you to apply this to your life?

PRAYER :

Lord, thank You for making me part of Your holy temple. I sometimes don't see myself as that important or valuable, but Your Word says that You have important plans for me. Help me to live life this week with a "Temple Mindset." Teach me to see the spiritual significance of my encounters with others and seek to bring them into Your family to be built alongside of me.



HOPE PROPELS US TO SEE GOD IN EVERYTHING

WEEK 9

DAY 5

SCRIPTURE : Read Revelation 21:9-27, I Corinthians 13:9-12

"And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there." - Revelation 21:22-25

OBSERVATION : What do you notice about the verses? What do you think the main message is? What verses, words or ideas jump out to you?

- Our hope is in the one and only mighty God who loves us and is building a new city for those made righteous and redeemed through Christ and who have followed Jesus faithfully in this life.
- God has planned everything out so that we are blessed beyond imagination with His presence.
- His presence is all the light we will need. Jesus will be like a lamp to light our way in Heaven.
- We get to experience and know God in part here, but in heaven we will see him face to face and we will fully know Him!
- What else do you see?

APPLICATION : Ask God how He wants you to apply the verse to your own life.

- Hope is a compelling force in this life. It drives us to see God's handiwork in the most challenging situations. Corrie Ten Boom, stuck in a concentration camp during World War II, saw the lice as God's provision to keep the evil guards away.
- You can be comforted knowing that God, who calls you to some seemingly impossible situations and tasks, is also preparing for you, as His child, an amazingly luxurious home in heaven. Your future hope is a life together with Him and in the absence of evil, pain, brokenness, all other consequences of sin.
- What would it look like for you to live life in anticipation of heaven each day, as if heaven were just around the corner?
- How else might God want you to apply this to your life?

PRAYER :

Lord, thank You for the hope of heaven. You let us get glimpses of Your goodness here, but I believe a great future awaits me when I come home to You. I place my confidence in the hope of heaven that stems from my faith in Jesus. Help me to live boldly in honor of Your calling for me. Help me to take comfort in promise of the eternal home You are preparing for me even as I walk through challenges in this life. It is a tremendous blessing to live a life for You, and it will be even better to be in Your presence.