

The New Testament Every Day

New Covenant Promises for Life



Home Group Members Notes

February – June 2023

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OVERVIEW

The New Testament Every Day Home Group Series

SERIES PASSAGE

Jeremiah 31:31-34 (ESV)

“Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

A. About the series: The New Testament Every Day

We are taking this year to look at the WHOLE NEW TESTAMENT and we are aiming for every person at FGAM to take the time to read all of it. This is not aimed at turning us into Bible scholars, but we want to take the time to re-establish the foundations of our faith and reading and understanding the new Testament will help us to apply it to our lives. This series will complement our Bible reading as we look in greater depth at seven major themes of the New Testament: Gospel, Forgiveness, Cross, Faith, Salvation, Love and Witness.

As we read and go through this series, let’s keep in mind that the goal of the writers was not to eloquently detail issues of “theology,” but it was to prepare Christians, even new believers, to live well in the real world. That’s why we have termed this series, the New Testament for Every Day because we will see how each of the themes can transform our every day lives.

*The series aims to demonstrate how relevant, powerful
and practical the word of God is for life today.*

B. Introduction to the Series

FGAM is on a multi-year transition to become a church that supports the healthy growth of the whole household spiritual walk. Instead of the church being a place where you buy pre-prepared food (e.g. Coles), we are gradually transitioning to being a place that helps you grow your own food (e.g. Bunnings). Part of this transition is equipping the church to be active and personally invested in their own spiritual development, instead of just blindly following traditions, culture or even expectations from others.

In 2023, our FIRM FOUNDATION year, we will go through some key books of the New Testament, and look to see how they give us insight into how we can build Christ-like life today. Life is still evolving post pandemic, so we can expect many significant changes and developments this year, but first among them will be the rebuilding of the foundations of our Faith.

Coinciding with the launch of this series will be the launch of FGAM's Bible reading plan aimed at helping us to read through the whole of the New Testament. Starting 5th February and going for the year, we are including space in each home group session to encourage one another in this journey.

*The New Testament Every Day aims to build a firm
foundation for our faith*

A. Overview of the Sessions

This is an extended Home Group series of 8 sessions, covering 7 major concepts of the New Testament. A video delivered by Ps. Chris Ong accompanies each of the home group sessions.

SESSION	TITLE	BOOK	KEY APPLICATION POINTS
Session 1	New Testament in You		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The New Testament is a new covenant with new promises • Not like the Old Covenant of outward observances, the new covenant is written on our hearts • NT Bible Reading Plan aims and purpose
Session 2	Gospel	Mark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The gospel is good news • It's not just a message of salvation and promise of afterlife • It's also an ethos to live by and a task to be done
Session 3	Forgiveness	Acts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background to acts • Forgiveness is essential in spreading of the gospel and establishing the church • Forgiveness is also a commandment
Session 4	Cross	Romans 1 Corinthians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cross was a cruel punishment • We can experience God's power through the cross • Cruciformity is how the cross changes us • Communion as a home group
Session 5	Faith	Galatians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faith is about trusting in someone reliable and dependable • Faith is not just about gaining, it's about dying to our own life • Faith is about recognising that we are children of God and heirs of his promises
Session 6	Salvation	1 Timothy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salvation means rescue • Salvation is not just promise of an afterlife • We are saved FROM something and FOR something
Session 7	Love	1 John	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is love • Love's fingerprints are all through the Bible • Jesus gave two commandments on love that summed up all other laws • The book of John explains the outworking of love in a believer's life.
Session 8	Witness	Revelation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revelation is a book written to encourage believers to be confident and bold in their witness of Christ • There are many different ways we can witness • Witnessing is something we do with great reward

C. Resources

The "The New Testament Every Day" Leader's Guide and Member's Notes are available for download at <http://fgam.org.au/media/homegroup-materials>.

Recommended Reading: *"15 New Testament Words of Life"* by N. K. Gupta (Zondervan Academic, 2022). This provides a new testament theology for real life and forms the basis for this series.

This Home Group series will complement our Sunday preaching series called "15 Words the Change Everything" starting in January and continuing until 16th April 2023. Messages are available at <https://fgam.org.au/media>.

BIBLE READING PLAN

FGAM's Bible Reading Plan is to read through the New Testament in the year. It has been designed for the adult home groups, with additional options for youth and primary aged kids. The plans are available at church or you can get an electronic copy by signing up to our mailing list at <https://fgam.org.au/brp>.

Keywords: *New Testament • Foundations • Christian Faith • Every Day living*
F.A.I.T.H. emphasis: T – Teachable in Discipleship

Session 1

The New Testament in You

Key Verse: *“This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds.”*

Hebrews 10:16 (NIV)

A. Introduction

When the Bible was written it was intended to help us get to know God and to be an essential element of our faith journey. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says “All scripture is breathed out by God ... so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work”. It’s profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness. Jesus himself said that “Man shall not live on bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God” ([Matt 4:4](#)). This means that the Word of God is like food for us, life even.

While this is true, how many of us have ever read the whole Bible or even the entire New Testament? Maybe we have, but how long ago? 2023 is a year to re-establish firm foundations, and towards this goal we will all be reading the New Testament together.

Remember that, the New Testament contains teachings and principles that can be applied to a wide range of situations. It includes practical wisdom on topics such as relationships, work, parenting, and personal growth, as well as guidance on how to deal with difficult emotions and situations. It can also be a source of comfort and encouragement in times of trouble or challenge.

This Home Group series on “The New Testament Every Day” will complement our Bible reading as it looks at seven foundational concepts of the New Testament, unpacking God’s promises to his people to help them live positive, hope-filled lives for the benefit of humanity and to the glory of God.

The whole New Testament builds the foundation for understanding this new covenant promises and Jesus Christ

B. Watch Session Video

C. Read Scripture: [Jeremiah 31:31-34](#)

D. Main Point

This series looks at foundational concepts in the New Testament for application in our Every Day life.

The word “Testament” comes from the concept of the “will” (*testāmentum*), which is linked to the promise of something. This word was chosen because it represents the promises, or covenants, that God has made with humanity.

The Old Testament (a compilation of 39 books written by different authors) describes a time where God made a series of agreements, or covenant promises, with mankind. The most famous of which is the Ten Commandments (including do not steal, do not murder etc.), which form the basis of our legal system today. However, despite our best intentions, these religious and societal laws resulted in a repeating cycle of broken promises that no one was able to keep.

In Jeremiah 31:31-34, through this prophet, God promised a new covenant. This was not one made on tablets of stone or in the regulations of religion, but rather one that would come from the inside as it would be written on our hearts. The New Testament gives us a picture of this New Promise, as conceived of by God the Father, brought to fruition by Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

This year, as we read the New Testament (27 books) and explore some of its major concepts, keep in mind that it’s not to learn a set of religious rules or practices, or become skilled at understanding and explaining theology. Rather, it is to grow in our understanding and application of this new covenant relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

E. Discussion Questions

1. Let’s start with a poll. What is the most challenging issue when reading the Bible (choose two most relevant answers)?

- Language or style – how the Bible is written
- Don’t feel that reading the Bible personally is essential
- Struggle to understand what it means
- Lack of relevance or application to my life
- Not enough time in the day
- Lack motivation, it’s boring and a chore
- Poor discipline (you want to but can’t)

- No challenge at all, I love it and read it (almost) every day!
- Other (please elaborate)

What is something that would help you to read the Bible this year?

- 2. Read Hebrews 9:14-15 and 9:28. What are the two new covenant promises bought by Jesus' death and how does that impact our life today?**
- 3. As a Christian, how do we get to "Know the Lord" and have a living relationship with Him in the context of this New Covenant? (It can't be just head knowledge, or another set of rules that we are to follow).**

F. Bible Reading Plan

Bible Reading plans for adults, youth and kids are available for download at fgam.org.au/brp.

You don't need to follow the plan to have the New Covenant in your heart, but you do need to do something as a Christian that will help you know it in your Heart.

G. Prayer

H. Looking Forward

In Session 2, we will look the first of the major concepts: The Gospel as it is seen in the book of Mark.

Session 2

Gospel

Key Verse: *"The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God."*

Mark 1:1 (ESV)

A. Introduction

In this series we are covering foundational concepts for the Christian faith. Session 2 is the "Gospel". Today we often think of the "gospel" to refer only to the message of Jesus Christ and the salvation that he offers with the promise of an afterlife. We will discover in this session that it's not just a message for personal or even global salvation, it's also an ethos to live by and a task to complete.

The New Testament begins with the four gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) in the New Testament are called the "Gospels" because they contain the real-world story of Jesus' life, teachings, and the events of his death and resurrection which changed the whole world. These are the central aspects of the salvation message as well as being tools for Christian living.

The Gospel of Mark emphasises that the story of Jesus was the start of the gospel that was to set into motion the next stage in God's plan to transform the world to be more like the Kingdom of Heaven, using human agents.

The gospel is the central message of the faith and is based on the belief that Jesus is the Son of God and the saviour of humanity. It is the message that Christians are called to share with others and to live out in their own lives.

B. Watch Session Video

C. Read Scripture: [Mark 1:1, 14-18](#)

D. Main Point

These days we may think of the gospel as a theological formula for personal salvation and promise of an afterlife. However, the word “gospel” is a far more comprehensive. The word Gospel comes is a translation of the Greek word "εὐαγγέλιον" or *euangelion*, which is a compound word of "εὖ-" (eu), which means "good," and "-αγγέλιον" (-angelion), which means "message" or "tidings". Together, the gospel means "good message" or "good tidings."

If we are honest the world today is not often filled with good news. One reading of today's news exposes us to the nearness of evil and corruption, and we are confronted constantly by brokenness, in our own lives of that of those around us. These are the problems Jesus came to fix. That's why the gospel message is good. It tells about what God has done, is doing, and will do in fulfilment of his promises to bring a glorious, beautiful, just, and unifying kingdom, a kingdom with Jesus as Lord and Messiah.

The book of Mark begins by announcing the arrival of Jesus and the "beginning of the gospel," signalling that the period that followed was the start of a new era. The Gospel is not a simple formula for personal salvation and a way to heaven, it's a bigger message of what Jesus has done, is doing, and will do in the fulfilment of his promise to usher in a kingdom that is unified (3:24), prosperous (4:32), glorious and full of power (9:1), generous and humble, caring for and attentive to all (10:14, 23–25).

As we look at the Scripture we see that the gospel isn't just a message of something to look forward to, but it's an ethos to live by and a task to share with others.

*If Mark is right, the gospel is good news to a people
who see and experience a world devastated by sin, evil,
and corruption.*

E. Discussion Questions

1. **The Gospel message is transformative. What is the message? How can it transform our lives?**
2. **Discuss the different ways the word Gospel is used in scripture (Refer to [Matt 4:23](#); [24:14](#); [Mark 1:14-15](#), [38](#); [2:17](#), [8:35](#); [13:9-10](#), [16:15](#); [Acts 20:24](#); [Phil 1:27](#)) in relation to the following:**
 - a. **The Gospel as a message**

- b. The Gospel an ethos for us to live by
- c. The Gospel as our mission

3. In light of the use of the word Gospel, what do you think Jesus means when he said “for those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake and for the sake of the gospel will save it” (Mark 8:35).
Ask each member: Why is the Gospel good news for you PERSONALLY

F. Bible Reading Plan

Plans can be accessed at fgam.org.au/brp.

G. Prayer

H. Looking Forward

In Session 3, we look closer at the message of the New Testament as we study Acts and the Forgiveness.

Session 3

Forgiveness

Key Passage: *“And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.””*

Acts 2:38 (ESV)

A. Introduction

In this session we expand on the message of the gospel as we look at the book of Acts. We will see that the response to the gospel message is repentance and forgiveness. The New Testament teaches a lot about forgiveness and how it impacts covenantal relationships, between us and God as well as with each other. Seeking forgiveness is to recognise our mistakes and acknowledge our wrongs and ask the other party to forgive us. These actions show humility, respect and honour to the other party and brings us personal freedom.

Forgiveness is also something that followers of Christ are commanded to give to others. This is irrespective of whether the other party seeks it. It is a part of reflecting the heart of God in forgiving our sins and for us to be generous in relationships.

Forgiveness can bring a most powerful transformation to our lives.

B. Watch Session Video

C. Read Scripture: [Acts 2:36-39](#); [Luke 11:4](#), [17:3-4](#)

D. Main Point

Acts continues on from Luke and tells of the acts of the apostles as they established the church. At the heart of the story of Acts is forgiveness, everywhere people hear the story of Jesus Christ and are invited to be reconciled to God through the forgiveness of sins.

The scripture is very clear that the Gospel of the New Covenant, is not just God giving a free pass to everyone. Our forgiveness came at a great cost and we are expected to acknowledge some level of responsibility for our own brokenness and turn away from

it... for all have sinned (Rom 6:23a). This is called repentance and opens up the door to experiencing the power of forgiveness.

The New Testament speaks of “covenantal forgiveness”. This forgiveness exists in the bounds of an existing relationship. We know where we stand with the other person (or with God), and we seek to acknowledge our wrongs, ask for forgiveness and aim to live differently. **We are motivated because we love the other party and value the relationship.** This is the type of repentance that God is seeking. One that is based not on fear or avoidance of punishment, but one that seeks to have the barriers removed and love restored.

Did you realise that forgiveness is also something that followers of Christ are commanded to give to others? In [Luke 11:4](#) forgiveness is an essential part of a foundational prayer Jesus taught his disciples. We are also commanded to release forgiveness to others ([Luke 17:3-4](#)) and to prevent bitterness from imprisoning our soul ([Matt 18:21-35](#)). This is irrespective of whether the other party seeks it. Jesus forgave the people while he was on the cross and they had not repented. They did not know what they were doing. Until they repented there could be no remission of sin and no relationship, but what forgiveness does is release the other person from me. It turns the problem over to God to see justice. The decision we make is to no longer hold it in our power to judge. It reflects the heart of God in forgiving our sins, and shows us how to be generous in relationships and keep our hearts pure.

E. Discussion Questions

1. What do you think Acts 2:38 means: *“And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”*”? What sins are we repenting from?

2. What are some of the principles of covenantal forgiveness?

3. How should we then forgive others? What do we do with forgiveness when it is all one sided?

F. Bible Reading Plan

Plans can be accessed at fgam.org.au/brp.

G. Prayer

H. Looking Forward

In Session 4, we look deeper at the message of both the gospel and forgiveness as it forms the basis for understanding the Cross.

Select someone to lead communion in the next session.

Session 4

Cross

Key Passage: *“The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.”*

1 Corinthians 1:23 (NIV)

A. Introduction

In our series on major themes in the New Testament, we have covered the Gospel and Forgiveness. This session we will look at the Cross which is at the crux of our faith. We know that according to the New Testament, the wages of sin is death ([Rom 6:23](#)), however, God loves us and has provided a way for us to be reconciled to Him through the death of his son Jesus on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins. The resurrection of Jesus back to life showed that the Father accepted the sacrifice and conquered death. Jesus died on the cross as it was the ultimate form of punishment that could be imposed on a human in those days. Jesus His death on the cross is seen as a sacrifice that satisfied God's wrath towards the sin that separated us from himself, and to make a way for eternal life for all who believe in Him ([Is 53:4-12](#)). Jesus abolished death and bought life and immortality to light, but this came at a high price. Christ had to sacrifice his own life. There is no greater gift and no other has achieved what Christ has done.

The outworking of the cross is practical. It's something that intended to shape our thoughts and our actions. As we explore the concept of Cruciformity in this session, we discover how the cross can shapes our thoughts and actions.

*Cruciformity is becoming more like Jesus through
embracing the message of the cross*

B. Watch Session Video

C. Read Scripture: [Isaiah 53:4-12](#); [Romans 6:6-11](#)

D. Main Point

The Cross is a very familiar term (and symbol) in Christian circles, but do we really understand its meaning? Jesus was crucified on a cross as it was the ultimate form of punishment that could be imposed on a human in those times, far crueller than hanging or beheading. It was not for his own sins Jesus willingly endured this punishment, it was for ours. Isaiah 53:5 says *“He was pieced for our rebellion and crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be made whole. He was whipped so we could be healed.”* The cross not only enables forgiveness of sin, it shapes us into a different person. This is called Cruciformity (i.e. the cross-forms). As part of our relationship with Christ, we are exhorted and challenged to take up our cross daily ([Matt 10:38](#), [Luke 9:23](#)), or be continually re-formed) as we journey with him.

Here are four major areas Cruciformity challenges the way we live.

1. It's an attitude of surrendering our own rights and prioritising obedience to God's will, whatever the cost.
2. It's a worldview where believers see reality in a new light: where leading is serving ([Mar 10:44](#)), losing is winning ([Matt 19:30](#)), weakness is strength ([2 Cor 12:9](#)), and foolishness is wisdom ([1 Cor 1:24-25](#); [2:3-5](#)).
3. It's an attitude of love towards others. Others are of such worth and value that we ought to be willing to accept others who have little or nothing.
4. It's so we can live in hope. Ultimately, the cross signals and affirms to a broken world that God will make all things right one day.

The summary of our rights, social standing and love, is that we would willingly give up any of these to better another's welfare, position, or to demonstrate generous love.

E. Discussion Questions

1. Why did Jesus have to die such a cruel death on a cross?
2. To understand the term Cruciformity, take some time to discuss in small groups, each of the ways the message and application of the Cross shapes the life of a believer:
 1. How does wholeness and healing reshape our life?
 2. How does the cross challenge us to rethink our rights?
 3. How does the cross inform our view of social standings?
 4. How can the cross enable us to be generous in love?

3. We remember Jesus' death and resurrection every time we take communion. What are some of the ways we can remind ourselves to be formed by the cross during communion?

F. Bible Reading Plan

Plans can be accessed at fgam.org.au/brp.

G. Prayer

H. Looking Forward

In Session 5, we look closer at core concept of Faith, how we live a life of faith and trust in God.

Session 5

Faith

Key Passage: *“But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.”*

Galatians 4:4-7 (ESV)

A. Introduction

This session we discuss the important concept of Faith. Faith is not something that can be intellectually or rationally proven, it is not just an opinion, or a feeling. It's not about holding some strange beliefs. Faith is a reasonable, personal conviction that is rooted in historical events and in the revelation of who God is. Christian Faith means to put your trust in God and in his plan for your life, even when you may not understand or agree with what is happening.

It means trusting that God is good, loving and in control even when things are difficult or don't make sense. It is something that is nurtured and grown over time. It can be developed through reading the Bible, prayer, fellowship with other believers, and through personal experiences with God. It is a journey that requires a persistent effort to draw near to God, listen to his word, and obey his will.

*Faith is knowing and becoming one with God
through Jesus Christ*

B. Watch Session Video

C. Read Scripture: [Galatians 2:20](#); [3:8-9](#); [3:23-29](#)

D. Main Point

The essence of Faith is to put your trust in something or someone. Christian faith is based on scripture which is grounded in reality that God exists as the creator of the world. It's anchored on Christ who's an actual person, who was born into this world,

lived a sinless life, died a cruel death in our place and was raised from the dead so that those who believe, turn and receive the forgiveness of sins may experience eternal life.

We learn from the example of Abraham in Genesis and other patriarchs of the Old Testament, that faith was all about being in relationship with a God in the context of a covenant promise. Trusting him with their whole being (mind, heart and body). In Israel's experience this was mostly lived out in day-to-day relationships, observances, work and service to God. Occasionally God commanded them to rise up as their faith was tested. Did they really trust God knows what's best for them?

Faith in the New Testament is about entering into a new covenant relationship with our Father God. We live by faith daily by dying to our own wants and wishes ([Gal 2:20](#)) and experience the blessings of God ([Gal 3:8-9](#)). Through faith we can know his provision and have hope for the future as heirs of his promises ([Gal 3:23-29](#)).

Practically speaking, it's not only security in the afterlife, but faith means to put your trust in God and in his plan for your life, even when you may not understand or agree with what is happening, right here right now. It means trusting that God is good, loving and in control especially when things are difficult or don't make sense. That's why it's important for us to encourage each another in our Faith, especially in times of testing.

E. Discussion Questions

- 1. How would you personally define faith? How has your faith developed over time?**
- 2. How does your faith shape your daily life and decisions? When do you struggle with Faith?**
- 3. When does Faith become legalistic? How do we balance out obedience to God through faith and works?**

F. Bible Reading Plan

Plans can be accessed at fgam.org.au/brp.

G. Prayer

H. Looking Forward

In Session 6, we look at the major Christian concept termed Salvation.

Session 6

Salvation

Key Passage: *“For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come. This is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance. That is why we labor and strive, because we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all people, and especially of those who believe.”*

1 Timothy 4:8-10 (ESV)

A. Introduction

This session we will talk about Salvation. It builds upon the previous sessions of the gospel (message of hope), forgiveness, the cross and faith. Christian salvation refers to the experience we can enter into through faith in Jesus Christ and trusting in the sacrifice he made on the cross so that humanity can be forgiven of sin and reconciled to God eternally.

Salvation in the New Testament is not the end in itself. Rather, it is the foundation from which we gain access to a new life (renewal through the Holy Spirit) and an opportunity to fulfil our calling in life ([1 Tim 1:15-16](#), [2 Tim 1:9](#)).

Salvation is a gift. We are saved from something and for something.

B. Watch Session Video

C. Read Scripture: [1 Timothy 4:8-10](#), [Luke 1:67-79](#), [2 Tim 1:9](#)

D. Main Point

Salvation is a term widely used in scripture and is not just restricted to the New Testament. It was used in any kind of situation where people needed to be rescued from a dire predicament. For example, the Old Testament is full of stories where God saved the Israelites in conflict (e.g. [Ex 14:13](#) & [2 Chron 20:17](#)); personally, God rescued Hannah from the humiliation and taunts related to her childlessness ([1 Sam](#)

[2:1](#)). Even [Psalm 42:5](#) was a song written to remind people not to lose hope in life, for God is a God who rescues and saves.

In the New Testament, Mary was instructed by the angel to name her child Jesus (meaning Saviour; [Luke 1:31](#)) as he was destined to be the saviour of the world ([1 Tim 4:10](#), [Acts 4:12](#), [Tit 2:11](#)). At that time, in ancient Greece, the concept of salvation was viewed as *“protective guardianship, sheltering the vulnerable from harm, and also promoting their welfare and increasing their quality of life”* (Nijay Gupta). This statement reflects the fact that salvation is viewed in the context of a close relationship. We are also invited to have an intimate experience of salvation from Jesus, where we are forgiven our deepest sins and every secret action and intention of our hearts can be touched and cleansed by Jesus. We are saved from sin and its consequences, including death and separation from God, and gain the promise of a meaningful life on earth and hope of an eternal life in heaven.

E. Discussion Questions

1. What does it mean to be saved and what is the ultimate goal of salvation?
Try to use your own words to describe salvation

2. What is salvation according to Galatians 2:20?

3. How does salvation impact the way we live and treat others?

F. Bible Reading

Plans can be accessed at fgam.org.au/brp.

G. Prayer

H. Looking Forward

In Session 7, we look at biblical Love through the lens of John’s writings in the New Testament.

Session 7

Love

Key Passage: *“By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.”*

1 John 3:16-18 (ESV)

A. Introduction

This series we have been looking at core themes presented in the New Testament. This session we look at Love. The new commandment which Jesus gave to his followers was about Love: love God and love our neighbour. This session we will be looking at covenantal love through studying the book of John. John highlights Jesus' commandment by saying that commands us to love those in God's family and those in need. This is so important, that John writes if we fail to love then it brings into question the genuineness of our relationship with God.

God is love and love comes from God

B. Watch Session Video

C. Read Scripture: [1 John 3:16-18](#)

D. Main Point

There's so much to say about love! Love comes from God. Jesus came because of God's love for us ([John 3:16](#)). We love God as he first loved us. We grow in love as we live according to God's ways. God's love compels us to serve God and love others.

Jesus, in his preaching, summed up the entire 613 religious laws found in the Old Testament in just two commands. First, to love “Love God” and the second to “Love your neighbour as yourself”. It's fundamentally important to understand the concept of love for our lives.

In the book of 1 John, we see that loving our neighbour is more than “good Christian behaviour”. It is evidence of life transformed by Christ and true Christian wisdom ([4:7](#)).

First John teaches a theology of communion with God through Jesus Christ which, in turn, connects believers to each other.

Ultimately, to learn about true love we are look to scripture for how to love (e.g. [Matt 22:37-40](#); [1 Cor 13:4-7](#); [John 13:34-35](#); [Gal 5:14](#); [1 John 2:16-17](#)). Jesus is also our model of love, a noble, sacrificial love that transforms. This love is not a fleeting “here today and gone tomorrow” feeling or spur of the moment action, it is world changing and never fading. How does our love measure up?

E. Discussion Questions

1. 1 John provides several key passages on the theme of love which can apply in our every day life. Discuss in small groups insights about love from the following passages.

- [1 John 4:7-12](#)
- [1 John 2:1-11](#)
- [1 John 3:11-24](#)
- [1 John 4:16-21](#)

2. How does Biblical love inform and guide our relationships with others, including those who are difficult to love? What are some practical things we can do to show love in challenging situations?

3. Discuss and compare the covenantal love with counterfeit love given the types of experiences we face today where love can be repelling or let loose in unbridled and self- and other-destructive passion.

F. Bible Reading Plan

Plans can be accessed at fgam.org.au/brp.

G. Prayer

H. Looking Forward

In Session 8, our final session, we look at the major concept termed Witness through the book of Revelation.

Session 8

Witness

Key Passage: *“And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”*

Revelation 1:1-2 (ESV)

A. Introduction

In this series, we are covering seven major concepts of the New Testament, the final of which is the term Witness.

1. Gospel
2. Forgiveness
3. Cross
4. Faith
5. Salvation
6. Love
7. Witness

“Witness” may not be a popular term in modern Christianity so much so, that we may struggle to talk about it. We hope that this session will break down some of our stereotypes and mis-conceptions on how to witnessing.

In this final session we will look at witness through the eyes of the book of Revelation so we can gain a better understanding of the importance of remaining faithful in our witness for God, even in the face of persecution and opposition.

We need to be public advocates for Jesus (and his Way) no matter what!

B. Watch Session Video

C. Read Scripture: [Revelation 1:1-2](#); [2:10](#); [12:11](#)

D. Main Point

The whole of the New Testament is a witness to God, his goodness, forgiveness, power and love in the face of evil, self-seeking and the corruption we see in the world. Revelation as a literary genre is unequalled. It is filled with intense imagery of both good and evil.

One of the purposes of the book of Revelation is not so much about rapture and the end times, but to help Christians see the world through God's eyes so that they will know that their public witness is valuable, honourable and effective. This truth stands, irrespective of how the message is received or how the messenger is treated.

There are many ways we can be a witness to God as we live out our lives, here are some examples:

- We can demonstrate by a genuine lifestyle showing authenticity through accountability and integrity. Being faithful in relationships, treating others fairly. Not living a double life.
- Demonstrate respect and seek justice. Christians have pioneered many social justices causes over millennia. In our age, we must take a stand against laziness, apathy and prejudice.
- Generosity – willingly sharing with others testifies to God's generous character
- Recognise our gifts and use our resources – we can be a witness when we use our talents and resources to advance God's kingdom, rather than being content with doing only the minimum required of us or just doing what benefits ourselves.
- Abundant Life – those who live in a way that is vitally connected to Jesus have life flowing through them ([John 15:4-5](#)). This is not intangible but it is one that has outcomes flavoured with love and generosity, peace and faith.
- Personal fulfilment through serving others often comes with happiness as well as achieving goals we would not otherwise attempt on our own.
- Living life with in obedience to the holy Spirit. Following his lead will certainly create opportunity for sharing his truth and the story of the gospel with others.

In summary, our lives witness as we live a life that is characterised by right living: honesty, transparency, personal integrity, faithfulness in relationships, justice-seeking in the world, as well as compassion and mercy towards others, especially those who are marginalised in society. These traits are a testimony to God's character in contrast to much of what goes on around us in the world today.

D. Discussion Questions

- 1. What ways do you witness for God? From the list above, which ways do you find easiest and which are the most challenging?**

2. How do you balance the call to share your faith with the need for respect for others' beliefs?

3. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in helping us to be a witness for God? Also, talk about what your Home Group can do to be a witness

E. Bible Reading Plan

Go to fgam.org.au/brp to receive the links to the plans for adults, youth and kids.

F. Prayer

If you have any feedback on this series, don't hesitate to write to any of our pastoral staff or to Ps Chris Ong, at chris.ong@fgam.org.au.

FGAM NEW TESTAMENT READING PLAN



Week 1 (Feb)
Day 1 Matt 1-2 ☐
Day 2 Matt 3-4 ☐
Day 3 Matt 5 ☐
Day 4 Matt 6 ☐
Day 5 Matt 7 ☐

Week 2
Day 1 Matt 8-9 ☐
Day 2 Matt 10-11 ☐
Day 3 Matt 12 ☐
Day 4 Matt 13 ☐
Day 5 Matt 14 ☐

Week 3
Day 1 Matt 15-16 ☐
Day 2 Matt 17-18 ☐
Day 3 Matt 19 ☐
Day 4 Matt 20 ☐
Day 5 Matt 21 ☐

Week 4
Day 1 Matt 22-23 ☐
Day 2 Matt 24-25 ☐
Day 3 Matt 26 ☐
Day 4 Matt 27 ☐
Day 5 Matt 28 ☐

Week 5
Day 1 Mark 1 ☐
Day 2 Mark 2 ☐
Day 3 Mark 3 ☐
Day 4 Mark 4 ☐
Day 5 Mark 5 ☐

Week 6
Day 1 Mark 6 ☐
Day 2 Mark 7 ☐
Day 3 Mark 8 ☐
Day 4 Mark 9 ☐
Day 5 Mark 10 ☐

Week 7
Day 1 Mark 11-12 ☐
Day 2 Mark 13 ☐
Day 3 Mark 14 ☐
Day 4 Mark 15 ☐
Day 5 Mark 16 ☐

Week 8
Day 1 Luke 1-2 ☐
Day 2 Luke 3 ☐
Day 3 Luke 4 ☐
Day 4 Luke 5 ☐
Day 5 Luke 6 ☐

Week 9
Day 1 Luke 7-8 ☐
Day 2 Luke 9 ☐
Day 3 Luke 10 ☐
Day 4 Luke 11 ☐
Day 5 Luke 12 ☐

Week 10
Day 1 Luke 13-14 ☐
Day 2 Luke 15 ☐
Day 3 Luke 16 ☐
Day 4 Luke 17 ☐
Day 5 Luke 18 ☐

Week 11
Day 1 Luke 19-20 ☐
Day 2 Luke 21 ☐
Day 3 Luke 22 ☐
Day 4 Luke 23 ☐
Day 5 Luke 24 ☐

Week 12
Day 1 John 1-2 ☐
Day 2 John 3 ☐
Day 3 John 4 ☐
Day 4 John 5 ☐
Day 5 John 6 ☐

Week 13
Day 1 John 7-8 ☐
Day 2 John 9-10 ☐
Day 3 John 11 ☐
Day 4 John 12 ☐
Day 5 John 13 ☐

Week 14
Day 1 John 14-15 ☐
Day 2 John 16-17 ☐
Day 3 John 18-19 ☐
Day 4 John 20 ☐
Day 5 John 21 ☐

Week 15
Day 1 Acts 1-2 ☐
Day 2 Acts 3-4 ☐
Day 3 Acts 5 ☐
Day 4 Acts 6 ☐
Day 5 Acts 7 ☐

Week 16
Day 1 Acts 8-9 ☐
Day 2 Acts 10-11 ☐
Day 3 Acts 12 ☐
Day 4 Acts 13 ☐
Day 5 Acts 14 ☐

Week 17
Day 1 Acts 15-16 ☐
Day 2 Acts 17-18 ☐
Day 3 Acts 19 ☐
Day 4 Acts 20 ☐
Day 5 Acts 21 ☐

Week 18
Day 1 Acts 22-23 ☐
Day 2 Acts 24-25 ☐
Day 3 Acts 26 ☐
Day 4 Acts 27 ☐
Day 5 Acts 28 ☐

Week 19
Day 1 Romans 1-2 ☐
Day 2 Romans 3 ☐
Day 3 Romans 4 ☐
Day 4 Romans 5 ☐
Day 5 Romans 6 ☐

Week 20
Day 1 Romans 7 ☐
Day 2 Romans 8 ☐
Day 3 Romans 9 ☐
Day 4 Romans 10 ☐
Day 5 Romans 11 ☐

Week 21
Day 1 Romans 12 ☐
Day 2 Romans 13 ☐
Day 3 Romans 14 ☐
Day 4 Romans 15 ☐
Day 5 Romans 16 ☐

Week 22
Day 1 1 Cor 1-2 ☐
Day 2 1 Cor 3 ☐
Day 3 1 Cor 4 ☐
Day 4 1 Cor 5 ☐
Day 5 1 Cor 6 ☐

Week 23
Day 1 1 Cor 7 ☐
Day 2 1 Cor 8 ☐
Day 3 1 Cor 9 ☐
Day 4 1 Cor 10 ☐
Day 5 1 Cor 11 ☐

Week 24
Day 1 1 Cor 12 ☐
Day 2 1 Cor 13 ☐
Day 3 1 Cor 14 ☐
Day 4 1 Cor 15 ☐
Day 5 1 Cor 16 ☐

Week 25
Day 1 2 Cor 1-2 ☐
Day 2 2 Cor 3 ☐
Day 3 2 Cor 4 ☐
Day 4 2 Cor 5 ☐
Day 5 2 Cor 6 ☐

Week 26
Day 1 2 Cor 7-8 ☐
Day 2 2 Cor 9-10 ☐
Day 3 2 Cor 11 ☐
Day 4 2 Cor 12 ☐
Day 5 2 Cor 13 ☐

Week 27
Day 1 Gal 1-2 ☐
Day 2 Gal 3 ☐
Day 3 Gal 4 ☐
Day 4 Gal 5 ☐
Day 5 Gal 6 ☐

Week 28
Day 1 Eph 1-2 ☐
Day 2 Eph 3 ☐
Day 3 Eph 4 ☐
Day 4 Eph 5 ☐
Day 5 Eph 6 ☐

Week 29
Day 1 Phil 1 ☐
Day 2 Phil 2 ☐
Day 3 Phil 3 ☐
Day 4 Phil 4 ☐

Week 30
Day 1 Col 1 ☐
Day 2 Col 2 ☐
Day 3 Col 3 ☐
Day 4 Col 4 ☐

Week 31
Day 1 1 Thess 1 ☐
Day 2 1 Thess 2 ☐
Day 3 1 Thess 3 ☐
Day 4 1 Thess 4 ☐
Day 5 1 Thess 5 ☐

Week 32
Day 1 2 Thess 1 ☐
Day 2 2 Thess 2 ☐
Day 3 2 Thess 3 ☐

Week 33
Day 1 1 Tim 1-2 ☐
Day 2 1 Tim 3 ☐
Day 3 1 Tim 4 ☐
Day 4 1 Tim 5 ☐
Day 5 1 Tim 6 ☐

Week 34
Day 1 2 Tim 1 ☐
Day 2 2 Tim 2 ☐
Day 3 2 Tim 3 ☐
Day 4 2 Tim 4 ☐

Week 35
Day 1 Titus 1 ☐
Day 2 Titus 2 ☐
Day 3 Titus 3 ☐
Day 4 Philemon ☐

Week 36
Day 1 Heb 1-2 ☐
Day 2 Heb 3 ☐
Day 3 Heb 4 ☐
Day 4 Heb 5 ☐
Day 5 Heb 6 ☐

Week 37
Day 1 Heb 7-8 ☐
Day 2 Heb 9-10 ☐
Day 3 Heb 11 ☐
Day 4 Heb 12 ☐
Day 5 Heb 13 ☐

Week 38
Day 1 James 1 ☐
Day 2 James 2 ☐
Day 3 James 3 ☐
Day 4 James 4 ☐
Day 5 James 5 ☐

Week 39
Day 1 1 Peter 1-2 ☐
Day 2 1 Peter 3 ☐
Day 3 1 Peter 4-5 ☐
Day 4 2 Peter 1-2 ☐
Day 5 2 Peter 3 ☐

Week 40
Day 1 1 John 1-3 ☐
Day 2 1 John 4-5 ☐
Day 3 2 John ☐
Day 4 3 John ☐
Day 5 Jude ☐

Week 41
Day 1 Rev 1-2 ☐
Day 2 Rev 3-4 ☐
Day 3 Rev 5 ☐
Day 4 Rev 6 ☐
Day 5 Rev 7 ☐

Week 42
Day 1 Rev 8-9 ☐
Day 2 Rev 10-11 ☐
Day 3 Rev 12 ☐
Day 4 Rev 13 ☐
Day 5 Rev 14 ☐

Week 43
Day 1 Rev 15-16 ☐
Day 2 Rev 17-18 ☐
Day 3 Rev 19-20 ☐
Day 4 Rev 21 ☐
Day 5 Rev 22 ☐

