

Trinity Vision Bible Study

Fall 2009

The pastors and elders of Trinity Fellowship would like to thank you for participating in a Trinity Vision Small Group. This investment of your time has two simple purposes:



To help you become familiar with Trinity's vision as a church, especially with the Scriptures that lead us to this vision. We believe that by studying the Bible passages for yourself you will develop a greater enthusiasm for the core values of our church.



To give you the experience of studying God's Word in a small group, an environment that models all the elements of building Christian community. We are praying that after you've been in a Trinity Vision Small Group you will want to continue meeting with small groups as a highlight of your participation at Trinity.

The Basic Plan:

This fall you will get to know people in three different small groups, each lasting three weeks. The first week will be spent getting to know each other, and the last two weeks will be spent studying two of the lessons in this booklet. Each study gives you five days of material, and we anticipate that you will need about twenty minutes to complete each day's work.

After you have studied the Scriptures on your own, you will meet with the small group. Part of your time will be spent sharing what you saw and learned in the Scriptures. The rest of your time will be spent in sharing, prayer and fellowship. We hope that your small group will be able to meet during the week for some of these activities and for some social time together.

Here is the way this plan maps out on the fall calendar:

September 13	Introductory meeting with first group
September 20	'Becoming Disciples' study with first group
September 27	'The Word' study with first group
October 4	Introductory meeting with second group
October 11	'Prayer' study with second group
October 18	'Worship' study with second group
October 25	Church campout / fellowship time
November 1	Introductory meeting with third group
November 8	'Fellowship' study with third group
November 15	'Outreach' study with third group

Table of Contents

Introduction and Overview	3
Becoming Disciples	9
Day 1	9
Day 2	13
Day 3	15
Day 4	17
Day 5	19
Learn and Obey His Word	21
Day 1	21
Day 2	23
Day 3	25
Day 4	27
Day 5	29
Depend on Him in Prayer	31
Day 1	31
Day 2	33
Day 3	35
Day 4	37
Day 5	39
Exalt Him Through Worship	43
Day 1	43
Day 2	45
Day 3	47
Day 4	49
Day 5	51
To Love and Care for One Another	53
Day 1:	53
Day 2	56
Day 3	59
Day 4:	62
Day 5	64
Share His Love with Others	67
Day 1:	67
Day 2	70
Day 3:	73
Day 4:	75
Day 5:	77

Trinity Vision Bible Study

Introduction and Overview

Trinity Fellowship
is a body of believers whose goal is to glorify God
by growing toward maturity as disciples
of the Lord Jesus Christ - through faith.

We commit ourselves:
to learn and obey His word,
to depend on Him in prayer,
to exalt Him through worship,
to love and care for one another
and to share His love with others
in order to make new disciples
in our community and around the world.

This is Trinity's vision statement. The first sentence identifies our goal as a church – and the short hand summary of that is 'to make disciples'. The second, longer sentence identifies our commitments – the things that we believe help people to become sold out disciples of Jesus.

Let's take a brief look at a few Scriptures that support this vision. During the first week of this study you will look at Matthew 28:18-20

Matthew 28:18-20 (NIV) Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

These are Jesus' final words to his disciples in the Gospel of Matthew. The main verb in this quote is make disciples. The other parts of the command (go, baptize, teach) are subordinated to this main verb, so that you could translate this:

While going, make disciples, baptizing and teaching them.

Where do you see 'making disciples' in the Vision Statement (look for it twice).

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The rest of the words in the first sentence of the vision statement are intended to clarify what we mean by making disciples. You'll study these in the next lesson.

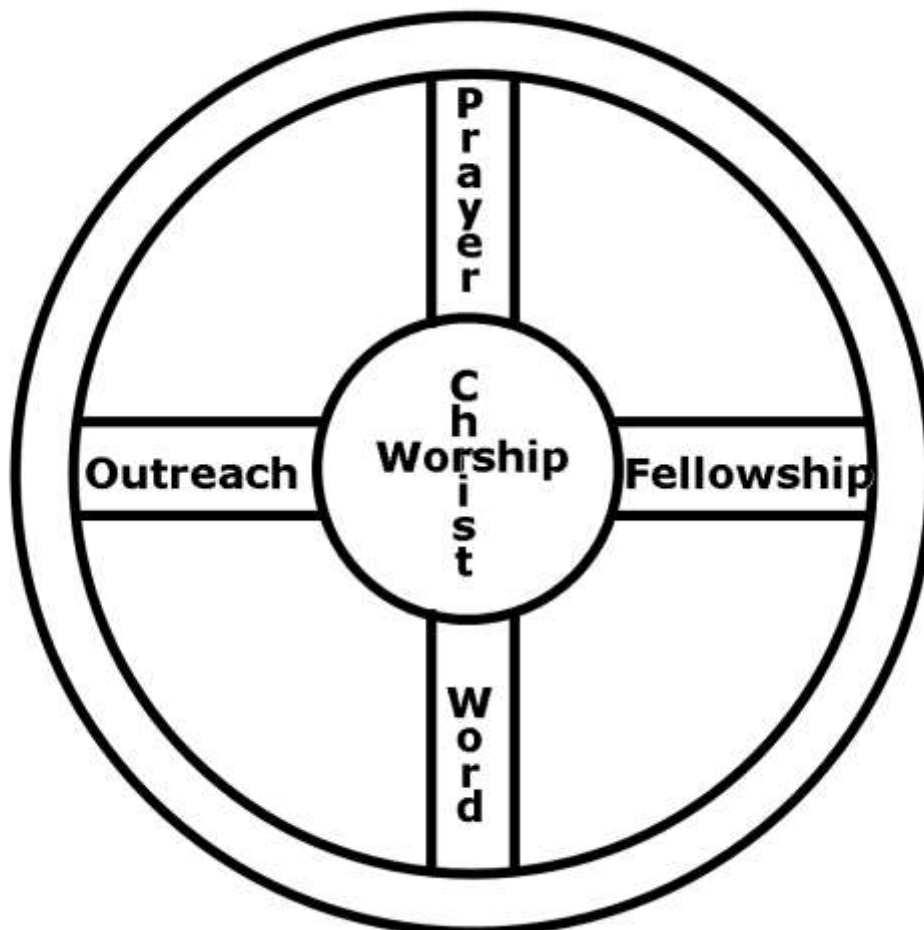
What do are some of the things that churches can do to obey this command?

Do you consider yourself to be a disciple of Jesus Christ? Why or why not?

WE COMMIT OURSELVES

The Bible teaches that people will grow as believers when they live out certain simple key commitments. While others could be added, the second sentence in Trinity's vision statement calls us to five of these. We will study each of these commitments for a week.

We represent this vision using 'the wheel'. Our vertical relationship with God is represented by the vertical spokes of the wheel, prayer and study of the Bible. Our horizontal relationships with others are represented by the horizontal spokes of the wheel, fellowship and outreach. In the center of the wheel, and of our lives as maturing disciples, is Jesus Christ, and there also is our commitment to worship him.



Key Verses:

Each of these five commitments is firmly based in Scripture. You might want to memorize the following key verses (along with Matthew 28:18-20 on page 3):

“We commit ourselves to learn and obey His word.”

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NIV) All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Those wanting to become mature will be thwarted without the input of God’s word. It needs to be taken in and lived out.

“ . . . to depend on God in prayer.”

Philippians 4:6-7 (NIV) Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

As we depend on God in prayer, he is able to provide us all that we need, beginning, according to this text, with peace, but including all the blessings of the Christian life.

“ . . . to exalt him in worship.”

Psalms 103:1-4 (NIV) Praise the Lord, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. ²Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits-- ³who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, ⁴who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion.

God is worthy of our praise and thanksgiving, for who he is, for all his perfections, for what he has done, for his loving kindness to us.

“ . . . to love and care for one another.”

John 13:34-35 (NIV) "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

When we are cared for in godly ways, and when we love and care for others, we grow as believers.

“ . . . and to share his love with others, in order to make new disciples both in our community and around the world.”

1 Peter 3:15 But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.

One of the great Scripture texts that shows all these elements of the Christian life in action is Luke’s account of the early church in Acts 2:42-47. As you read the text, look for these things; underline them and then draw a line to the corresponding commitment in the Vision Statement. (They’re all there, just not in the same order! Some verses have more than one vision component, others may not have any obvious ones)

Acts 2:42-47 (NIV)

⁴²They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

We commit ourselves:

to learn and obey His word,

⁴³Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles.

to depend on Him in prayer,

⁴⁴All the believers were together and had everything in common.

to exalt Him through worship,

⁴⁵Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need.

⁴⁶Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,

to love and care for one another

⁴⁷praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

and to share His love with others in order to make new disciples in our community and around the world.

Now it's time to dive into the Scriptures for yourself. Our prayer is that you will catch Trinity's vision for discipleship and that the Lord will help you to grow as a disciple while you minister to others the same way.

A Note on Versions: These studies were prepared by the elders of Trinity in 2009. Each elder selected the version of Scripture that best translated the passages they were studying. Therefore we have marked all Scripture passages with a version abbreviation, in parentheses:

(NIV)	New International Version
(NASB)	New American Standard Version
(ESV)	English Standard Version
(KJV)	King James Version
(NKJV)	New King James Version

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Becoming Disciples

***"Christianity without discipleship
is always Christianity without Christ."
Dietrich Bonhoeffer***

Day 1

Making Disciples

Begin your study each day with prayer, asking God to impact your heart and your life with the truths of Scripture.

*Trinity Fellowship
is a body of believers whose goal is to glorify God
by growing toward maturity as disciples
of the Lord Jesus Christ - through faith.*

In the introduction you already looked briefly at one of the key verses about making disciples:

Matthew 28:16-20 (NASB) But the eleven disciples proceeded to Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had designated. ¹⁷When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some were doubtful. ¹⁸And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

What two phrases in our vision statement are directly supported by this passage?

Does this passage support any of our vision commitments (see pages 5-7. Flip through the rest of the study booklet for more insights)

A recent definition of a disciple is ‘a fully devoted follower of Jesus.’ This phrase fits well with the following Scriptures:

Matthew 16:24-25 (NASB) Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. ²⁵"For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

Luke 9:23-25 (NASB) And He was saying to *them* all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. ²⁴"For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it. ²⁵"For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself?

In what way does the phrase “come after Me” relate to being a disciple?

What must happen if we are to be fully devoted followers?

The next two passages are accounts of Jesus’ calling of the disciples.

Luke 5:1-11 (NASB) Now it happened that while the crowd was pressing around Him and listening to the word of God, He was standing by the lake of Gennesaret; ²and He saw two boats lying at the edge of the lake; but the fishermen had gotten out of them and were washing their nets. ³And He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little way from the land. And He sat down and *began* teaching the people from the boat. ⁴When He had finished speaking, He said to Simon, "Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch." ⁵Simon answered and said, "Master, we worked hard all night and caught nothing, but I will do as You say *and* let down the nets."s

⁶When they had done this, they enclosed a great quantity of fish, and their nets *began* to break; ⁷so they signaled to their partners in the other boat for them to come and help them. And they came and filled both of the boats, so that they began to sink. ⁸But when Simon Peter saw *that*, he fell down at Jesus' feet, saying, "Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man!" ⁹For amazement had seized him and all his companions because of the catch of fish which they had taken; ¹⁰and so also *were* James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not fear, from now on you will be catching men." ¹¹When they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed Him.

Luke 5:27-28 (NASB) After that He went out and noticed a tax collector named Levi sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, "Follow Me." ²⁸ And he left everything behind, and got up and *began* to follow Him.

In these passages, what characterizes disciples?

How do these characteristics apply to you?

Day 2

Growing Toward Maturity

All of the New Testament writers encourage us to grow and mature:

2 Peter 3:17-18 (NASB) You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness, ¹⁸but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

If grace is God's undeserved favor, what does it mean to grow in grace?

Titus 2:11-12 (NASB) For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, ¹²instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age,

What does growth in grace "instruct" us to do?

Why does growing in grace result in growing in holiness?

In what ways are you growing in your personal knowledge of Christ? In what areas of your life are you not growing?

Next let's look at a key passage on maturity:

Ephesians 4:11-16 (NASB) And He gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers, ¹²for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; ¹³until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. ¹⁴As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; ¹⁵but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him who is the head, *even* Christ, ¹⁶from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

Who will we be like when we are fully mature? Write verse 13 in your own words to show this truth more clearly.

When we are mature, what characteristics of infants and children will no longer trouble us?

What are the benefits of individual maturity to the church at large? Is maturity as disciples a reasonable goal for Trinity Fellowship?

Day 3

Levels of Maturity

Look at the following passages and describe how they affirm different levels of maturity.

Mark 4:28 (NIV) All by itself the soil produces grain--first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head.

John 21:15-16 (NIV) When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."
¹⁶Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep."

Romans 14:1 (NIV) Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters.

Romans 15:1 (NIV) We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves.

In the following passage John addresses those who are at various chronological ages, but also those who may be at different levels of maturity:

1 John 2:12-14 (NASB) I am writing to you, little children, because your sins have been forgiven you for His name's sake. ¹³I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I have written to you, children, because you know the Father. ¹⁴I have written to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

The Greek word translated “little children” in verse 12 is the word ‘teknon’. It refers to a child of no certain age. However the other words in the passage refer to specific stages of spiritual growth. What are the three stages mentioned in this passage?

The term for children in verse 13 is different from the one in verse 12, and refers specifically to an infant. In Eph. 4:14 (previous study) how are children characterized?

How does what “children” and what “fathers” know differ, and how does this reflect a different level of maturity?

How are “young men” characterized? In what sense have “young men ... overcome the evil one”? By what in the passage did they overcome the evil one?

Where would you rate yourself on the scale of spiritual maturity?

Day 4

How to Grow

1 Peter 2:1-2 (NIV) Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, ²like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation,

The main verb in this passage is the verb “long”. What should we long for?

Why should we long for it?

What in verse 1 does the passage say should precede this longing? List each thing we should “put aside” and how you personally “put aside” each one.

James 1:21-22 (NIV) Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and *all* that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. ²²But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.

What is the main verb of this passage?

Notice how this verse says the same thing as the I Peter passage. Both suggest a preparation before coming to the Word. How do you take such precautions as you come to the word each day and for Sunday?

In Psalm 119 the Psalmist lists several ways in which God's word brings maturity. Circle or highlight the verses below which show this, and write a one or two word summary of the nature of the maturity in the space to the left:

Psalms 119:97-104 (NASB)

⁹⁷O how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day.

⁹⁸Your commandments make me wiser than my enemies, For they are ever mine.

⁹⁹I have more insight than all my teachers, For Your testimonies are my meditation.

¹⁰⁰I understand more than the aged, Because I have observed Your precepts.

¹⁰¹I have restrained my feet from every evil way, That I may keep Your word.

¹⁰²I have not turned aside from Your ordinances, For You Yourself have taught me.

¹⁰³How sweet are Your words to my taste! *Yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth!*

¹⁰⁴From Your precepts I get understanding; Therefore I hate every false way.

Day 5

Through Faith

Our statement says that we want to be growing “as disciples” and that we want to be growing “through faith”. We have already seen that growth happens through the word of God. Faith is God’s provision for our salvation, for our growth, and that we might glorify him.

We commonly use Ephesians 2:8-9 to show that our salvation is through faith and by grace. However this passage also implies that we grow in the same way:

Ephesians 2:8-10 (NASB) For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; ⁹not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

What do the words ‘his workmanship’ and ‘prepared beforehand’ imply about our role in living the Christian life?

What does the placement of verse 10 imply about how we ‘walk’ in good works.

Paul is explicit about this in Galatians:

Galatians 3:1-5 (NIV) You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. ²I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard? ³Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort? ⁴Have you suffered so much for nothing—if it really was for nothing? ⁵Does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you because you observe the law, or because you believe what you heard?

What goal were the Galatians trying to obtain by human effort?

How did the Galatians receive the Spirit (a metonym for salvation)

How then are we supposed to pursue the goal of becoming disciples?

In your life, how do you distinguish between striving for maturity by faith and striving for maturity by your own efforts? What is the practical difference?

What do the following verses imply about the outcome of faith on a day to day basis?

1 Thessalonians 1:2-3 (NASB) We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention *of you* in our prayers; ³constantly bearing in mind your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father.

Hebrews 11:6 (NASB) And without faith it is impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and *that* He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

2 Corinthians 5:6-7 (NASB) Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord— ⁷for we walk by faith, not by sight.

Learn and Obey His Word

***"Bible Study has torn apart my life and remade it.
That is to say that God through His Word has done so."
John White***

Day 1

Each day, begin by asking the Lord Jesus to speak to you as you study His Word. Ask Him to prepare your heart to hear, understand and apply His truths to your life.

In Isaiah 55 God issued an invitation for the people to come to Him, forsaking lesser things in order to receive His greatest blessings:

Isaiah 55:6-11 (NIV) Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near. ⁷Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon. ⁸"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. ⁹"As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. ¹⁰As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, ¹¹so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

In verses 7 and 8 there is a strong contrast between God and man. What things specifically are contrasted?

How does God describe His thoughts and ways?

What does this mean for you as a reader of God's words?

Consider this thought further by meditating on Psalm 1:

Psalm 1:1-6 Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. ²But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. ³He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers. ⁴Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away. ⁵Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. ⁶For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

What behaviors are characteristic of the man who is blessed by the Lord? (verses 1&2)

God uses contrasting images to describe the righteous man and the wicked man. What is each man like? List the outcomes for each man.

How does this passage expand your ability to apply Isaiah 55?

If the Scriptures have the ability to show us God's thoughts and ways, in what specific areas of your life do you need to seek God's direction?

Day 2

Begin your time in the Word with prayer, asking God to teach you and help you to be ready to learn.

Today we will read a powerful segment from the history of Israel. Imagine yourself among the Israelites gathered in Jerusalem following their return from the Babylonian Captivity. Listen intently as the people did on the first day the Word of God was read aloud once again:

Nehemiah 7:73–8:12 (NIV) The priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers and the temple servants, along with certain of the people and the rest of the Israelites, settled in their own towns. When the seventh month came and the Israelites had settled in their towns, ¹all the people assembled as one man in the square before the Water Gate. They told Ezra the scribe to bring out the Book of the Law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded for Israel.

²So on the first day of the seventh month Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, which was made up of men and women and all who were able to understand. ³He read it aloud from daybreak till noon as he faced the square before the Water Gate in the presence of the men, women and others who could understand. And all the people listened attentively to the Book of the Law.

⁴Ezra the scribe stood on a high wooden platform built for the occasion. Beside him on his right stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah and Maaseiah; and on his left were Pedaiah, Mishael, Malkijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah and Meshullam. ⁵Ezra opened the book. All the people could see him because he was standing above them; and as he opened it, the people all stood up. ⁶Ezra praised the Lord, the great God; and all the people lifted their hands and responded, "Amen! Amen!" Then they bowed down and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground.

⁷The Levites--Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan and Pelaiah--instructed the people in the Law while the people were standing there. ⁸They read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people could understand what was being read.

⁹Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who were instructing the people said to them all, "This day is sacred to the Lord your God. Do not mourn or weep." For all the people had been weeping as they listened to the words of the Law.

¹⁰Nehemiah said, "Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is sacred to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength."

¹¹The Levites calmed all the people, saying, "Be still, for this is a sacred day. Do not grieve." ¹²Then all the people went away to eat and drink, to send portions of food and to celebrate with great joy, because they now understood the words that had been made known to them.

What stands out to you from this narrative? Is there anything that particularly grabs your attention and your heart?

What do you learn about the leaders of the people? What did they do? What did they say? What do you learn about the condition of their hearts?

How do the people respond to the reading of the Word? Make a collection of the adjective and verb phrases that are used to describe their attitudes and actions.

What is your attitude toward the Word of God? In what ways do your attitudes and actions reflect those of the people of Israel?

Since we have the Scriptures so readily available to us in our own language and in our own homes, what are some specific ways that you can pursue reading, understanding, and responding to God's Word?

Day 3

Ask the Lord God to feed you from His word today.

After extolling and describing God's revelation of Himself through creation, David demonstrates with great delight how God has also revealed Himself through His word.

Psalms 19:7-14 (NIV) The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. ⁸The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes. ⁹The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever. The ordinances of the LORD are sure and altogether righteous. ¹⁰They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb. ¹¹By them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward. ¹²Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults. ¹³Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me. Then will I be blameless, innocent of great transgression. ¹⁴May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.

In the columns below, list of some of the words that David uses to describe God's word and its impact on man.

Characteristic of God's Word

How God's word impacts Man

Beginning in verse 12, David addresses what specific area of need?

What promises are made regarding the effectiveness of God's word when it is heeded?

As you consider your own life, how do you think God's word needs to be applied to your personal struggles with sin? Be specific.

Consider the following verses. What additional counsel do they offer as help in your daily walk with Jesus?

Psalms 119:11 (NIV) I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.

Matthew 7:24-27 (NIV) "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.²⁵ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.²⁶ But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand.²⁷ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

Day 4

Paul reminds Timothy that the Word has been and should be powerfully at work in our lives:

2 Timothy 3:14-17 (NIV) But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, ¹⁵and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Before considering this passage in detail, learn about the context of Paul's comments by reading verses 1-13. What topic is Paul addressing in this chapter?

What is the purpose of Paul's instruction to Timothy, his son in the faith?

List four ways the Word of God addresses the needs of those who engage with it. Write a short definition of each word using either an English or Greek dictionary.

What important things does God's word accomplish in the lives of those who respond to it?

Can you remember times in your own life where God has used His word to teach, rebuke, correct, or train you? Write a short description of those circumstances.

The Scriptures are a tool in God's hand intended to change our lives. Can you name a specific area that you would like to pursue transformation through God's application of His word?

Day 5

God's word not only impacts us as individuals, it impacts us as a community of believers. Consider the following passages one at a time. Make a record of the different ways God intends for us to allow His word to work through us.

Colossians 3:16 (NIV) Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.

Heb 10:23-25 (NIV) Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. ²⁵ Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Acts 17:11 (NIV) Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.

1 Thess 1:5-8 (NIV) You know how we lived among you for your sake. ⁶ You became imitators of us and of the Lord; in spite of severe suffering, you welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. ⁷ And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. ⁸ The Lord's message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia--your faith in God has become known everywhere.

List any additional Scriptures that you can think of or locate that talk about the way Believers are intended to utilize the word in their own lives and in the lives of others.

What other aspects of Trinity's Vision Statement are impacted by our faithfulness to the word?

