



October 14, 2026

Theme

Theme: Faith, Relationship, and growing in spiritual maturity in Him

Focus: Prayers for our neighbors and neighborhood, building a stronger relationship with God, and asking how we can serve Him in new ways.

Scripture

Ezekiel 48:5

Mark 14:60-62

Acts 27:14-15

Romans 1:16-17

Luke 17:5

Philippians 3:7-11

Revelation 7:14-17

Tonight we were given several scriptures to guide us for this week. Our Word begins with Ezekiel's vision of Israel's restoration. His vision was that each of the tribes had a portion of land and the sanctuary would be located in the middle. Verse 48:4-5 describes Manasseh's allotted territory and the neighboring portion assigned to Ephraim.

Manasseh was Joseph's son and was born in Egypt. His name is associated with "making forget." Joseph connected it with bringing relief from his hardship. This can remind us that our past suffering doesn't need to define our future. It is like moving on and not looking back.

Joseph's father, Jacob, received Manasseh and Ephraim as his sons. This meant that Joseph's descendants would have two tribal portions. Jacob promised Manasseh that he would become a great people (Genesis 48:13-20). Of his descendants were the daughter's of Zelophehad. Their father died without any sons. The daughters asked to claim his

rightful share of land allotment and their case established an inheritance provision for daughters of men with no sons (Numbers 27:1-11). Manasseh had territory on both sides of the Jordan and later was displaced. In Ezekiel's restoration vision, Manasseh receives one continuous allotment which points to restored belonging.

I wasn't familiar with Manasseh so I shared what I learned. This small verse, once researched, proved to be full of messages. These examples invite us to think about God's provision and belonging.

We can see that our message here is that God is promising a place in His kingdom for all of His people. It is a place of unity. In Mark 14:60-62 Jesus is affirming being the Messiah. He answers with "I am" when asked. Here we are given an image of Jesus seated at the right hand of power and coming with the clouds of heaven.

Acts 27:14-15 Paul was traveling on a boat as a prisoner to Rome. A powerful wind/nor'easter/Euroclydon struck his boat so it could not stay on course against the wind. They had to let the fierce wind carry them. Later, Paul received a vision from an angel assuring that everyone would survive. They reached land safely but the ship was destroyed and the cargo had to be thrown over board.

This reminds us that despite the circumstances, no matter how dire they may seem, we should practice "steady faith." Faith does not necessarily mean to simply sit back and trust. It means looking to God for answers and then being active in faithful response. Although, sometimes it can mean to simply sit back. Faith also does not mean that nothing challenging will happen.

While on the topic of faith, Romans 1:16-17 reminds us that God's power brings salvation to everyone who believes. The gospel reveals God's righteousness, His justice, faithfulness, and saving work through Jesus, through whom we receive right standing with God by faith. Salvation through Jesus as rescue from sin but also from judgment. As in Paul's time speaking the gospel could cause conflict or hardship for the one speaking about it. "The righteousness of God revealed" shows us His character attribute. He is just and He keeps His promises. He has done this for us through Jesus.

Paul quotes Habakkuk 2:4 - "The righteous shall live by faith." We are called to be faithful even when we face challenges or things we can not fully understand or know. Everyone who trusts in Him is welcomed into the life He gives. This goes back to the Ezekiel passage, God has a place for all who believe.

Our last Word from Him was instructing each of us to individually explore how Scripture defines righteousness and what faithful living means in our daily lives. Here He is telling us "The righteous shall live by faith." So, if you weren't able to explore what it meant to you, try to do that. It seems He is building on prior knowledge, which He often does. He is building a foundation to teach us.

Continuing on with the theme of faith, Luke 17:5 we hear the apostles asking "Increase our faith." They asked this after Jesus taught them about repeated forgiveness. I think this is what He is telling us to pray for. Maybe something like the following: "Lord, please help me to deepen my faith and to act from a place that comes from Your Word and what You have taught me." (I think I may put this on my phone lock screen.)

In Philippians 3:7-11 Paul is giving us an account of what he previously thought was good in the eyes of the Lord. Paul was expressing that his right standing before God comes through faith in Jesus rather than his own religious achievements. He realized that the righteous way is to not just know about Jesus but to have a relationship with Him, trust and participate in His life. It is not about knowing God's Word and that's that. It is about the relationship we share with Him. If you don't know relational prayer, abiding, or how to build a stronger relationship with Him, time is of the essence to do so. In challenging times, we need to deepen our relationship with Jesus, remain grounded in Scripture, and test the teachings and spiritual claims we encounter. We are facing some very very challenging times where we must know His voice and feel His presence otherwise we may be fooled by false and twisted people trying

to lead us. The relationship is the key to our faith and our bond with Him. Let me know if you need help in this area. I can help you.

Paul demonstrates that he wants to know Jesus in three ways; the power of His resurrection, participation in His sufferings (being faithful and united when faith brings hardship), and becoming like Him in His death (modeling His life after Christ's self-giving obedience). We can question; "What am I relying on for my standing before God, and how does knowing Jesus reshape what we value?"

Revelation 7:14-17 This passage is about people who have come through extreme suffering and now are standing before God. They are sheltered by His presence and cared for by the Lamb, Jesus. The imagery of The Lamb becoming their Shepherd guiding them to water and restores them is symbolic to Psalm 23. He is our healer and restores our broken soul. It is in Him we find everlasting life, we are cleansed, renewed, and loved.

Our Word for this week is about God's promise to us all. He is reminding us that He is the power, He has a place for us, He restores and heals and has a forever home for us. A connection I noticed is the meaning of Manasseh - which is forgetting (like to forget sorrow or suffering) and our Word ends with our place with Him in heaven where we no longer suffer and we start a new beginning.

Our faith is important and we should be building and strengthening and practicing it as well. We will have challenges and sufferings and this is where our relationship with Him is a must. We need to know His voice, feel His presence, and follow His guidance now more than ever. We need to grow in knowing Jesus, stay grounded in Scripture, and practice discernment, testing spiritual claims rather than relying on feeling alone (1 John 4:1). Our job is to remain faithful, build our relationship with Him and to live as He is teaching us to live.

Prayer

Lord, I thank you. Thank you for this Word. We praise You for all that You have done for us. Thank you for Your guidance and teachings, Lord. We ask that this week You help us to deepen our faith and to act from a place that comes from Your Word and what You have taught us. Lord, we ask that You show us the ways we rely on anything outside of You for our confidence before coming to You first. We ask that You help us each to build a stronger relationship with You and to gain understanding in how knowing Jesus reshapes what we value. Lord, If there are any areas You determine that we each need to grow please press in on us and help us to do so. Teach us, guide us, and reshape us. I ask all these things in Jesus' mighty and glorious name Amen.

Practice for the Week

1. Explore how Scripture defines righteousness and what that means for your daily life.
2. Ask God to deepen your faith, and take one practical step of trust.
3. Practice relational prayer through honest conversation with God.
4. Examine where you place your confidence and consider what needs to change.
5. Practice applying 1 John 4:1 grow in knowing Jesus, stay grounded in Scripture, and practice discernment, and testing spiritual claims.