

**Deep Roots**  
**“Rooted In The Bible”**

For week beginning July 15, 2013

Raise your hand if you have struggled with reading the Bible. Reading the Bible can be tricky, especially with the busy lifestyles so many of us lead. Then, with numerous distractions and social media, reading the Bible with any regularity becomes even trickier. Why not use the advances in technology to deepen your roots in the Bible?

Brian Hardin was a successful music producer, graphic artist and photographer, with more than 150 Christian music albums to his name. However, God wanted something different for Brian. Through a financial crisis, he realized that he had strayed a long way from God. At that moment, Brian told God he was prepared to do anything for Him. God said, “Read the Bible.” Brian had been working with podcasts and he decided to start recording himself reading the Bible. God rewarded Brian’s trust and the listeners came in droves, following his podcast and sharing it with friends. Now, there are over 26 million downloads of Brian’s daily Bible reading! Brian incorporates different translations into the podcast in an effort to balance out your experience. The podcasts are free and transportable; it’s an easy and effective way to read the Word on a daily basis! Lives are changing and hearing the Bible spoken every day is transforming people (David Wraight).

***The Bible was not  
given to increase our  
knowledge, but to  
change our lives.***

***—Dwight L. Moody***

The Word of God is powerful. So many people struggle with trusting in God’s Word. We spend endless hours waiting for God to speak to us, wondering when He will help us solve important issues, but the truth is, He already has. The Bible is God’s Word to us. In fact, the Bible is the only book that claims to be the actual words of God. God inspired the writers to transcribe His actual words.

Is it still a struggle for you to trust in the Bible as God’s words for you? Do you think the Bible is a collection of stories and folklore? Here are a few facts about the Bible, taken from the website What Christians Want to Know, to help alleviate your doubt. The Bible was written over a 1,600 year period by approximately forty Spirit-inspired men, from 1500 BC to AD 100. The Bible is historically accurate. Several secular historians have written about the events of the New Testament, around the same time the Bible was being written, including Josephus, a Jewish historian, and Tacitus, a Roman historian, who had nothing to gain by not telling the truth. There are more than 168,000 Bibles either sold or given away per day in the United States and it is the most sold book of all time. The Bible never contradicts itself. Finally, there are more than 3,200 verses with fulfilled prophecy either within the Bible itself or since the Bible was written. And, there are still more than 3,100 verses with unfulfilled prophecies.

Reading the Bible does not make us holy, the words have no magical power, but believing, consuming and applying the Word of God will lead us to an all powerful God who does make us holy. From Genesis to Revelation, the Bible reveals the story of God. Reading it and applying it means finding our place in the universe—finding our place in God’s cosmic story.

**IN THIS WEEK’S STUDY, WE WILL FOCUS ON THE  
IMPORTANCE OF BEING ROOTED IN THE SCRIPTURES**

## **MONDAY – Believe the Bible is God Speaking**

**Big Point:** *God has already spoken to you; it's your choice to listen.*

*Many Christians claim to believe the Bible but their actions do not always show it. In some cases, the Bible appears to work better as a coaster. It gathers dust until truly tragic or difficult circumstances arise. Some people treat the Bible like fancy clothing or expensive china. It comes out when others are looking, perhaps in Life Group or at church, but it's rarely read or used for themselves.*

*If you woke up one morning and noticed a text which said, "God will call at 4pm", would you take the call? Of course you would! Your Creator, God, wants to speak to you personally and you'd want to hear what He had to tell you. However, God has already spoken to you. The Bible is His Word to you and if you have not prearranged time to listen to Him daily, it's likely because of a lack of belief.*

*When you allow doubts to choke out your faith, you read the Bible with a critical eye, always looking for contradiction, judging the miraculous. You choose not to read the Bible because you doubt that God is speaking to you; you're not convinced. This attitude will keep your roots from growing down deep.*

*This weekend Lee shared a story about two friends, Billy Graham and Charles Templeton. Templeton renounced his faith while Graham changed the world by spreading the gospel message. Graham said this about the Bible, "When I take the Bible literally, when I proclaim it as the Word of God, my preaching has power. When I stand on the platform and say, 'God says,' or 'The Bible says,' the Holy Spirit uses me. There are results. Wiser men than you or I have been arguing questions like this for centuries. I don't have the time or the intellect to examine all sides of the theological dispute, so I've decided once and for all to stop questioning and accept the Bible as God's word." What is your decision?*

*Inaction breeds doubt and fear.  
Action breeds confidence and courage. If you want to conquer fear, do not sit home and think about it. Go out and get busy.*

**-Dale Carnegie**

### **READ and THINK....What does the Bible say?**

1. Paul uses the metaphors of being rooted in and built on Christ to illustrate the happy state of believers who depend on Christ as they should.

**Question:** With our roots grown down deeply into Christ, what can you expect to happen based on God's promise in this verse?

**Colossians 2:7 (New Living Translation)**

***Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.***

**Answer:**

2. In his letter to Timothy, Paul wrote to remind Timothy that all scripture is not merely written by men; it is the Word of God, written by the Spirit, inspired and breathed onto men to record.

**Question:** After reading the following verse, in what ways can you describe scripture? How does realizing this encourage trust in the Word of God?

**2 Timothy 3:16a (New Living Translation)**

***All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true...***

**Answer:**

3. In Matthew 4, Jesus is wandering in the desert for 40 days. Verse 4 is Jesus' response to Satan's first temptation, in which he entices Jesus to turn stones into bread to eat.

**Question:** What is the Bible compared to in Matthew 4:4? How does this comparison emphasize the importance of daily scripture reading?

**Matthew 4:4 (New Living Translation)**

***But Jesus told him, "No! The Scriptures say, 'People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"***

**Answer:**

**LIVE...What will you do now?**

How do you treat the Bible? Does your Bible gather dust in a corner, only to make a rare appearance when crises arise? Is your Bible a decoration, like expensive china, that you only pull out in order to impress others? How can treating the Bible as it is, the spoken Word of God, written to help you know and connect with your Creator, help you to grow deeper roots in Christ Jesus?

Reread the quote at the end of the intro from Billy Graham. Have you ever experienced the power of proclaiming the truth of the gospel message? Have you seen the results of trusting in the validity of God's spoken word? What might happen if you decided to stop questioning that the Bible is God's literal word?

**PRAY...God, what do you want me to know and do?**

Praise God for blessing you with His words and breathing life into the scripture. Ask Him to help you rearrange your schedule to spend time listening to and absorbing His words, so that you might better live out the message. Ask God to solidify the truth for you. Thank Him for the gift of truth in the Bible and the access it gives you to Him.

## **TUESDAY – Believe the Bible is a Transformational Life Guide**

**Big Point: Get into the Word of God and get the Word of God in you!**

*In his book, Bible Study Methods, Pastor Rick Warren outlines the typical Christian experience when it comes to reading the Bible. He says, “On a typical evening an average Christian may sit and watch TV for three hours, but only read his Bible for three minutes before bedtime. Is it any wonder many lack spiritual maturity? Many Christians are more faithful to the Dear Abby column or the sports pages than they are to the Word of God. Some people will not leave their homes in the morning until they have read their horoscopes. What would happen if Christians committed themselves with equal vigor to reading their Bibles each morning before they left for work, school or shopping? It would change their lives and the lives of those around them.”*

We fail in our duty to study God's Word not so much because it is difficult to understand, not so much because it is dull and boring, but because it is work. Our problem is not a lack of intelligence or a lack of passion. Our problem is that we are lazy.

—R.C. Sproul

*Why do we spend more time on fluff than on something so important that it could change our lives? For many of us, it's because we equate reading the Bible with work. Reading the book of Romans is so much more difficult than watching Downton Abbey. It takes discipline and commitment to glean the Word of God on a regular basis. If we fail to do so, however, we are missing out on so much. Failing to read the Bible means missing out on daily conversations with the Creator of the universe. It means missing His eternal wisdom for your life. It also means failing to let deep roots of faith grow down in Him.*

*Almost every situation and circumstance in your life can be seen through the lens of scripture. If you have not made it a practice to read God's Word daily, try it. It just might change your life! Within those pages lie the warmth, security and truth of an all knowing God who loves you more than you can even imagine.*

### **READ and THINK....What does the Bible say?**

1. In 2 Timothy 3, the apostle Paul is talking about how people have turned away from God and what they can do to return to Him.

**Question:** How are the two main functions of Scripture revealed in the following passage similar/different?

**2 Timothy 3:16b (New Living Translation)... [Scripture] corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right.**

**Answer:**

2. Paul goes on, in 2 Timothy 3, to talk about the other uses of Scripture.

**Question:** How do you think God uses the Bible to prepare and equip us?

**2 Timothy 3:17 (New Living Translation)**

**God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.**

**Answer:**

3. In this verse from Hebrews, the writer talks of how the Israelites disobeyed the Word of God. This is the second time the New Testament compares the Word of God to a sword, the other being in Ephesians 6:17.

**Question:** Why do think the writer uses a sword for his analogy here?

**Hebrews 4:12 (New Living Translation)**

***For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.***

**Answer:**

**LIVE ... What will you do now?**

Can you think of a time that Scripture has helped to correct, teach, prepare or equip you? Write down a particular verse that has been instrumental in making you the person you are today.

What stops you from spending more time in God's Word? What wrong thinking has contributed to a lack of Bible reading in your past?

What steps will you take to incorporate more of God's Word into your daily life?

**PRAY... God, what do you want me to know and do?**

Thank our Heavenly Father for giving us the Bible to help us navigate our lives. Praise Him for His divine instruction. Ask forgiveness for the many times you have chosen something else instead of spending time with God in His Word. Ask His help in creating space to study His Word and an increased knowledge for wisdom.

## **WEDNESDAY— Don't Just Read the Bible, Study It!**

**Big Idea:** *Studying God's Word will change your life!*

Have you ever played Bible bingo—asked God to speak to you, opened the Bible to a random page and started reading? Classic example of Bible bingo: A guy opens his Bible at random and picks a verse: "And Judas went out and hung himself." No, that won't do. Let's try again. He flips to a different portion of Scripture: "Go, thou, and do likewise." Better. An extreme example, meant to be taken with some humor, but which also makes the point. God's Word is amazing in that it can sometimes speak to you this way, but that is not how God intended to speak truth into your life.

Instead, if you are looking for guidance from Scripture on some issue, check a concordance and read the Scripture suggested in context. God's Word works best in context. The Bible is composed of 66 smaller books comprised of several different genres. If you pull out a random verse in Jeremiah, which is heavy with prophecy, you are probably going to find yourself incredibly confused.

Studying the scriptures can yield much spiritual fruit in your life. Even though God's Word never changes, you do. Perhaps you've read a particular verse 50 times before, but on the 51<sup>st</sup> reading you see that verse in a new light. No other book has the depth, wisdom and scope of the Bible. You can spend your entire life studying the Bible and God will continue to reveal new things to you each year.

Have you ever been tripped up by a teaching that seemed contrary to Scripture? Knowing God's Word is the primary way we protect ourselves against a counterfeit message. Jesus and the New Testament authors warned continuously about false teachers. In order to spot a fake, you've got to know the genuine article really well!

***The more you continue to read Scripture, the more you begin to think as He thinks and act as He acts. And that's how, over time, you gain the wisdom of the ages.***

— Wayne Cordeiro  
The Divine Mentor

### **READ and THINK...What does the Bible say?**

1. This verse is the apostle Paul writing to his disciple, Timothy. In order for Timothy to explain the truth correctly, he had to know it!

**Question:** How does this verse explain a good worker?

**2 Timothy 2:15 (New Living Translation)**

***Work hard so you can present yourself to God and receive his approval. Be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly explains the word of truth.***

**Answer:**

2. Jesus said the following to the Pharisees who prided themselves on knowing the Law better than anyone else.

**Question:** Was the Pharisees' assumption completely wrong? Why?

**John 5:39 (New Living Translation)**

***You search the Scriptures because you think they give you eternal life. But the Scriptures point to me!***

**Answer:**

3. Paul wrote to the Ephesians because he knew that false teachers would try to influence the new Christian church that was forming then, but these words still apply to us today.

**Question:** What does Paul characterize as a sign of spiritual immaturity?

***Ephesians 4:14 (New Living Translation)***

***Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth.***

**Answer:**

### **LIVE...What will you do now?**

Make a commitment to start studying the Bible if you're not already. Below, list some ways you can better study the Bible. (We started the list for you.)

1. Commit to doing the LivingItOut study daily through 2013.
2. Join a group that is studying the Bible.
3. Invest in a good study Bible.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

As mentioned before, false teachers will try to influence you with lies that sound like the truth. What can you do to ensure you are not tricked by false teachings?

### **PRAY...God, what do you want me to know and do?**

Ask God to give you wisdom as you seek to study His Word daily. Ask Him to help you be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly explains the word of truth. Pray, too, that you will not be influenced when people try to trick you with lies so clever they sound like the truth.

## THURSDAY— Meditate on the Bible and Memorize It

**Big Point:** *The Word of God fertilizes the life of a Christian; knowing it allows us new insight in times of trial.*

Because Jesus is God, sometimes it is easy to discount the fact that, while on earth, he did not sin. It is easy to overlook the fact that he was tempted and tried by Satan and his demons, as much as anyone is today. Matthew 4:1–11 records the time when Jesus came up against three temptations. Satan promised him food, fame and power if Jesus bowed to him, but Jesus resisted. The way that he resisted was just as important as the fact that he did. Jesus quoted Scripture back at his tempter, using the promises of the Word of God to smite Satan and take away any power that he had.

Quoting the Scripture is a very powerful tool against powers of the enemy. Jesus knew the Old Testament very well. When he came face-to-face with Satan, Jesus did not use force or even speak new words against him, but quoted the Scripture. The words of the Bible have power that is non-existent elsewhere. As we learned on Tuesday, scripture is “alive and powerful... sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword,” —Hebrews 4:12 (NLT).

Even Satan and his demons know the power of the Scripture, though. In his second attempt to tempt Jesus, Satan rebuts with a Scripture. He takes it out of context and changes the meaning. We must know the Word of God, in context, so that we can defend ourselves against false teachings. Otherwise, Satan and his false witnesses can twist Scripture to make their point. By reading and studying the Scriptures, we can prepare ourselves for spiritual attacks of any kind and invite God into our lives every day.

*I know of no other single practice in the Christian life more rewarding, practically speaking, than memorizing Scripture.*

**-Chuck Swindoll**

### READ and THINK...What does the Bible say?

1. In Psalm 1, the psalmist contrasts the righteous person with the wicked person. The righteous is the one that will prosper, while the wicked falls into destruction.

**Question:** In the verse below, what made these people bear fruit?

**Psalm 1:2–3 (New Living Translation)**

**<sup>2</sup>But they delight in the law of the Lord, meditating on it day and night.**

**<sup>3</sup>They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season. Their leaves never wither, and they prosper in all they do.**

**Answer:**

2. In 1 Peter 2, Peter directs his readers to put away sinful desires and to grow in Christ. He instructs them on how to do this and reflects upon the privileges that we have as God’s chosen people.

**Question:** In 1 Peter 2:2, to what does Peter compare a newborn’s cry for milk?

**1 Peter 2:2 (New Living Translation)**

**Like newborn babies, you must crave pure spiritual milk so that you**



***will grow into a full experience of salvation. Cry out for this nourishment.***

**Answer:**

3. In Proverbs 7:3, the author talks about the importance of wisdom and where to find it. He also shows how to hold onto wisdom for years to come.

**Question:** What connection do you see between memorizing an instruction from God and allowing it to go deep within your heart?

***Proverbs 7:3 (New Living Translation)***

***Tie [my instructions] on your finger as a reminder. Write them deep within your heart.***

**Answer:**

### **LIVE ...What will you do now?**

What verses have stuck in your memory lately? Have you made a purposeful attempt to memorize any Scripture in the past?

What troubles have you found in trying to memorize scripture in the past? Can you think of a way to overcome those difficulties?

### **PRAY...God, what do you want me to know and do?**

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Pick up one of CedarCreek's monthly memory verses and post it at your desk, on your fridge or on your bathroom mirror. There are great benefits in memorizing even just one verse a month!

 Ask God lead your time

in His Word today. Give it your full attention and ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you read and study. Ask God to bless your efforts and give you the dedication to avoid distraction. Thank Him for what He is about to reveal to you.

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## **FRIDAY— Knowing God's Word is Not Enough, You Must Obey It!**

***Big Point: Talk is cheap...action follows belief.***

*Isn't it frustrating how you can read newly-published exercise books and record the latest "how to eat healthy and live to be 150" dietary manual recipes, yet, if you don't do what those guides indicate, they're worthless sheets of paper? Think about your favorite person...what would they believe if you told them repeatedly that you loved them, yet never invested time in getting to know them, never changed the empty toilet paper roll, or rarely treated them with kindness or respect?*

*For centuries, God has told us how to be wildly successful in His kingdom, in our earthly relationships, in financial matters—in every area of life. The Almighty God, who created the universe and everything in it, gives us the answers to all of life's basic questions...how amazing is that?! Is it enough to know He provides all the answers (in the Bible) or would a lifetime of the application of those answers be more effective?*

*Within the context of applying obedience principles, what is the next step after crossing the "line of faith"? Baptism? Missional membership? If God is prompting you to these acts of obedience, what's preventing your compliance? For more information about either of these, stop by the Welcome Center this weekend.*

### **READ, THINK, and LIVE. Read the Bible and apply it to your life.**

1. Paul, in his letter to the church in Corinth, addresses the "hot button" issue of the day in Corinth, whether or not eating meat sacrificed to idols was sinful behavior.

**Question:** In this verse, Paul goes to the heart of the matter. Why do you believe love is more important than knowledge?

***1 Corinthians 8:1 (New Living Translation)***

***Now regarding your question about food that has been offered to idols. Yes, we know that "we all have knowledge" about this issue. But while knowledge makes us feel important, it is love that strengthens the church.***

**Answer:**

2. In healthy relationships, continual cultivation is key. Our relationship with Jesus is the same way.

**Question:** What results when we only listen to God's Word? How are we to appropriately prepare to apply/accept God's Word into our lives?

***James 1:21-22 (New Living Translation)***

***<sup>21</sup> So get rid of all the filth and evil in your lives, and humbly accept the word God has planted in your hearts, for it has the power to save your souls. <sup>22</sup> But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves.***

**Answer:**

**Questions for Discussion— Try these in a group, with friends or at the dinner table.**

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1. Describe the Bible you use most often. Is it a slimmed down paperback, a hardbound study Bible, an e-reader tablet or an app on your phone? What do you feel your Bible choice says about you?
2. Pull out your Bible and find the July memory verse, Colossians 2:7. How do believing, reading and studying the Bible help accomplish this verse?
3. What is your favorite part about reading the Bible? In your mind, what sets it apart from reading other books? (Look up Hebrews 4:12 to help with your answer.)
4. In what ways would your life change if your Bible was taken away? When it comes to your Bible, what do you find most difficult—believing it, reading it on a regular basis or obeying it?
5. Is there an area in your life where God is calling you to obey? Is He calling you to stop doubting, get baptized, become a CedarCreek Missional Member, or take another step of faith? Explain.

### ***Weekend Updates!***

- **Saturday Daily Bible Reading**—July 20: Psalms 25:1–27:14/  
1 Corinthians 8:1-13
- **Attend the Global Leadership Summit:** Be sure to mark your calendar for the Global Leadership Summit, August 8-9th. [www.cedarcreek.tv/summit](http://www.cedarcreek.tv/summit). The cost is just \$109 for this world class event!
- **Our Biggest Baptism of the Year on July 21!** If you haven't been baptized, stop by your campus' welcome center this weekend for more info on getting baptized OR sign-up for baptism online at [www.cedarcreek.tv/baptism](http://www.cedarcreek.tv/baptism).
- **Next Week's Sermon:** Join us this weekend as Senior Pastor Lee Powell will continue on with the Deep Roots series with a message entitled "Rooted in Prayer." Hope to see you at the Creek! Watch us on the iCampus if you're going to be on vacation! Check us out at [www.cedarcreek.tv/live](http://www.cedarcreek.tv/live).

## Living It Out: July 2013

***Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.***

*-Colossians 2:7 (New Living Translation)*

### Living It Out

*It is the dream of CedarCreek that everyone who calls this their church home will be reading and studying the same topics, both individually and in groups. Each week, join with thousands of others at CedarCreek Church in applying God's Word, the Bible, into your daily life. Our hope is that while we learn and grow together, as individuals and as a church, we will collectively live out the weekend message.*

*Living It Out resources, such as the Daily Bible Study, Daily Bible Reading Plan, Discussion Questions and Scripture Memory Verses, are designed to help us embrace a missional mindset...a mindset that compels us to love Jesus, serve others and tell the world about Christ.*

**Living It Out: Daily Bible Study...**Daily Bible study activities to reflect on the weekend message.

**Living It Out: Daily Bible Reading Plan...**Read through the Bible in a year

**Living It Out: Discussion Questions...**Weekly questions to discuss with others

**Living It Out: Scripture Memory...**Memorize one Bible verse per month

*All of these resources are also available electronically at **www.livingitout.tv**, where you can subscribe to have any or all of them emailed to you as they are updated and you can **listen** to the audio study by subscribing to the podcasts.*

#### We Want Your Feedback!

**Tell us about any questions or comments you have about this week's Living It Out: Daily Bible Study. Forward them to [dianap@cedarcreek.tv](mailto:dianap@cedarcreek.tv).**

<b>CedarCreek Church</b> 29129 Lime City Road Perrysburg, Oh 43551 Phone: 419.661.8661 Fax: 419.661.8665  <b>www.cedarcreek.tv</b> <b>www.livingitout.tv</b>	<b>RESOURCES:</b> Bible Study Methods by Rick Warren  <i>What-  crhistianswanttokn  ow.com</i>  <i>"The Power of God's  Word"</i> By David Wraight	<b>Living It Out: Daily Bible Reading Plan scriptures are listed for each day. By completing each of the daily readings, you will read the entire Bible in 1 year. These readings are separate from the Daily Bible Study.</b>	<i>This week's  Living It Out:  Daily Bible Study  written by:  Stephanie Coil  Katelyn Irons  Becky Miller  Kelda Strasbourg  Penny Taylor</i>
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