



# Week 3

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## **FAITHFUL, NOT FORGETFUL**

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**Looking Back:** What did God teach you this past week as you read the daily devotions? What opportunities did you have to apply what you learned?

**Looking Up:** Play the video and work through the discussion questions.

Other than Jesus, who is someone in the Bible whose sacrifice in following God stands out to you as especially meaningful? Explain.

In the video teaching, we heard some things Joseph learned through his struggles. What is something you have learned about God during a difficult situation?

Read Luke 9:23-24. In what sense does following Jesus always involve risk and sacrifice?

Why is the risk and sacrifice you make in following Jesus always worth it?

Read Psalm 91:1-13. Put verse 1 in your own words.

The video teaching pointed out the difficulty of this passage for those who are in the middle of hard circumstances. Is there any difficulty for you in these verses? Why?

Read Psalm 91:14-16. Here the voice changes from the psalmist to God. What promises does God give those who come to Him for refuge?

Verse 14 says God will give us refuge “because he knows my name.” Who do you know God to be? How does focusing on who God is give you courage to remain faithful to Him in difficult circumstances?

**Looking Forward:** How will you take what you learned today and apply it to your life this week? Take a few minutes to plan your next meeting and spend some time in prayer together.

## WEEK 3: FAITHFUL, NOT FORGETFUL

### DAY 1—READ LUKE 9:23-24

*<sup>23</sup> And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. <sup>24</sup> For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.*

Deny yourself. Take up your cross. Lose your life.

To follow Jesus is to draw a shocking line of decision in the sand. The path is more extreme than any other in one sense, but it's also more secure than any other path in another sense.

There is no cost too high to pay in pursuit of this goal. The reward is greater than we could ever risk. This means there is no possession or relationship on earth that holds more value than our relationship with Jesus. Admittedly, this is a scary proposition. In considering how we are called to love Jesus and follow Him, we are called to count everything else in our lives as loss in comparison.

However, the pursuit of Jesus is also the most secure pursuit in life. As we seek to follow Jesus with our whole lives, we acknowledge that He is over all things, and we can trust Him, even in the most difficult moments.

Following Jesus is a daily choice. Even as we do, we are continually tempted to return to self-preservation. We are tempted toward forgetfulness about who He is, what He has done, and what He will do. But He is faithful even in our temptation, and He calls us to deny ourselves and pursue true life in Christ alone.

**Why do you think Jesus used the word “daily” in Luke 9:23?**

**Since Jesus forgives our sins, why is it essential for Christ followers to deny themselves of sinful temptations daily?**

**Practically speaking, what would it look like to deny yourself, take up your cross daily, and follow Jesus this week?**

**Thank God that He is faithful in your forgetfulness. Confess your struggle to deny yourself daily and ask Him to keep drawing you near in every circumstance.**

### DAY 2—READ PSALM 91:1-8

*<sup>1</sup> He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. <sup>2</sup> I will say to the Lord, "My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust." <sup>3</sup> For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence. <sup>4</sup> He will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness is a shield and buckler. <sup>5</sup> You will not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day, <sup>6</sup> nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness, nor the destruction that wastes at noonday. <sup>7</sup> A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you. <sup>8</sup> You will only look with your eyes and see the recompense of the wicked.*

Our fears hold influence on our thoughts and behavior. They cause us to forget what we know and obsess about what we imagine. There's good news, though—the gospel offers us freedom from our deepest fears. We can look to Jesus and find refuge.

Smack dab in the middle of a rising whirlwind of potential fears, the psalmist confidently declared, "He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty." He didn't know how his circumstance would turn out, but he knew who God was in his circumstance—a fortress of strength and hope.

We will face fears in life feel overwhelming. God is not overwhelmed. He is not caught off guard. He is not afraid. In His unmatched power, He is already at work.

Whatever you're facing in life, turn to God. Rest in His shadow. You can trust Him to deliver you.



**How did the psalmist describe the Lord in verses 1-2?  
Why might this be important to remember when we are  
tempted to give in to our fears?**

**How do the psalmist's words here challenge you? In your  
fears, do you run to the Lord for protection and strength  
or trust in your own strength and strategies?**

**What do you need to admit about yourself to find true  
peace and security in Christ?**

**Pray that you would find comfort and hope in the Lord.**

### DAY 3—READ READ PSALM 91:9-16

*<sup>9</sup> Because you have made the Lord your dwelling place—the Most High, who is my refuge— <sup>10</sup> no evil shall be allowed to befall you, no plague come near your tent. <sup>11</sup> For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. <sup>12</sup> On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone. <sup>13</sup> You will tread on the lion and the adder; the young lion and the serpent you will trample underfoot. <sup>14</sup> “Because he holds fast to me in love, I will deliver him; I will protect him, because he knows my name. <sup>15</sup> When he calls to me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him and honor him. <sup>16</sup> With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation.”*

When you realize that the One who supports you is stronger and better than all that is against you, confidence grows. The confidence we have is secured in the blessings of God's promises. God will always act in accordance with who the Scriptures have revealed Him to be.

Faithfulness in the most difficult circumstances is only possible because God is powerful, merciful, and good. To experience His power, mercy, and goodness, we must believe it. We must admit our weakness and pride and look to God for what only He can provide—salvation.

God promises wonderful things to those who put their trust in Him. He promises to protect us (v. 14), to be with us (v. 15), and to save us (v. 16). These promises find their ultimate fulfillment in Christ, who died and rose again so that we live for His glory and kingdom. That's true in any circumstance you will ever face in life. Refuge can only be found in Jesus.

**What does it look like, in practical terms, to “[make] the Lord your dwelling place” (v. 9)?**

**Psalm 91 closes with God speaking directly to the psalmist (vv. 14-16). How did God describe the person who looks to Him for strength and security?**

**In what situation do you need to remember who God is and trust Him to be faithful?**

**Pray Psalm 91 to God today as you take these promises to heart.**

## DAILY READINGS

### DAY 4—READ PSALM 46:10

*"Be still, and know that I am God.*

*I will be exalted among the nations,*

*I will be exalted in the earth!"*

We live in a busy time. Not only are our schedules busy, our minds are busy too. We have become accustomed to busyness of life and mind to the degree that we feel anxious when separated from the source of our busyness, like our phones. Without realizing it, many of us have become very uncomfortable with stillness on a day-to-day basis.

This is problematic for many reasons, but mostly busyness is often an obstacle to awareness of and thought toward God. In Psalm 46, God instructed His people to be still and know that He is God.

If we are continually surrounded by noise, we have no opportunity to stop and reflect on truths about God and about ourselves. We forget His character and promises. And when troubles come, we choose to lean into our own strategies instead of trusting Him.

Your whole life, you will be tempted to seek comfort in the distractions of busyness. The way to battle that temptation? Be still and know that He is God. He is your only true refuge, strength, and security through all the difficulties of life.

**What command is there in Psalm 46:10? What promise?**

**In what situation do you need to be still before God right now? How does the promise of Psalm 46:10 speak to you about that situation?**

**How have you sought to use entertainment or distractions to drown out the parts of life that make you uncomfortable? Why will this never truly work?**

**Find time to be silent and still before God, and reflect on His goodness and His promises as our refuge, strength, and security.**

### DAY 5—READ ROMANS 8:28

*And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.*

How many times have you said you knew something, only to forget it a short time after? For example, you confidently raise your hand in class to answer a question only to forget the answer as soon as the teacher calls on you. Our memories can hold onto an insignificant detail from the past, but we often forget the things we say we know as soon as we are called to live them out. Paul said we know these things to be true, and we would probably all agree with the statement he made in this passage. But when we are faced with trials, temptation, and heartache, the truth feels foreign.

When you read a book or watch a movie, it is often portrayed from “God’s eye view.” This is where you see the world from the perspective of someone who is not physically there interacting with the characters but observing the interactions. We see the whole story play out, with the conflict and ultimate resolution often coming together with a neat bow. This is not a perspective we are privileged with in life. We see the world from our lens, with our feelings, baggage, and context. God is all-knowing and outside of time. He sees all things, how every moment comes together for His purpose. Part of knowing today’s verse to be true means trusting God when it doesn’t make sense in the moment. God knows our limits. He hears our cries when life does not make sense or seem to have any purpose. Will we take Him at His Word today? Will we dare to have faith in He who holds our future? Will we share our hurts and struggles and trust Him to do a restoring work once again?

What is a movie you can think of that has a “God’s eye view” perspective? How does it feel when you see all the conflicts resolved? How is this different from life?

How can you remind yourselves of this hope that you have? What would it look like to trust that these words of Scripture are true?

Read Romans 8:18-39. What encouragement does the rest of this passage give you in times of difficulty?

Pray and talk to God about the areas in your life where it is difficult to see how He is working all things out. Ask Him to give you hope and a deeper trust in His truth today.

