



my grandma time

...doing simple things together!

Week 51, Day 1 --- Ephesians 1-6

Week 51, Day 2 --- Philippians 1-4

Week 51, Day 3 --- 1 Timothy 1-6

Week 51, Day 4 --- Titus 1-3

Week 51, Day 5 --- 1 Peter 1-5

Week 51, Day 6 --- Hebrews 1-6

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Week 51, Day 1 --- Ephesians 1-6

Paul spent several years in Ephesus and knew the church well. He has a great affection for them. There doesn't appear to be any specific problem in the church that Paul addresses. Instead, this letter is a great one for understanding what it looks like to mature in our relationship with Jesus and with each other as believers.

Chapter 1 is full of promises. Take some time after you have read through the entire book and underline or circle every promise that you have as a believer in Jesus. When you've finished read the book again with those things in mind.

Week 51, Day 2 --- Philippians 1-4

The believers in Philippi were discouraged. They knew Paul was in prison and they were worried that he was going to be executed. Paul writes this letter to thank them and encourage them. He tells them over and over again to rejoice, to be filled with joy. Whenever you are feeling discouraged this is a great book to read.

This book also contains Paul's summary of the life of Jesus. It was probably an early hymn. Philippians 2:6-11 are some of the most beautiful words in the New Testament. They are as meaningful as they are beautiful. In a few short verses Paul shows us that Jesus was 100% human and 100% God. We may never understand how this was possible. What we do now is that God came to us so that we could be with Him.

Week 51, Day 3 --- 1 Timothy 1-6

Timothy was a young man who Paul met on one of his early missionary journeys. It was typical in those days for young men to go with a teacher and learn from him. This is what Timothy did. He traveled with Paul and learned from Paul. When Paul is put in prison Timothy becomes Paul's agent in continuing to carry on the work they have started. As Paul writes this letter Timothy is in Ephesus and teaching the church there. Timothy becomes kind of a church trouble shooter. He goes from church to church addressing whatever issues have come up.

As you read through Timothy what issues do you think the church in Ephesus is struggling with? What is Paul's solution to these issues?

If you want to be a godly man Paul provides an excellent description in 1 Timothy 3. The responsibility of the overseer or elder was to guide and protect the congregation. The closest comparison I've been able to come up with is to think of the church as a family and the overseers as the fathers of the family. The deacons are the servants. They must have spiritual maturity, but their role is to ensure that the practical matters in the family get taken care of.

You are a young man. How would you feel if you received this letter from your mentor?

Week 51, Day 4 --- Titus 1-3

This is a similar letter written to a different young man in a different place, but with a similar purpose. Paul realizes that he can no longer go from church to church teaching and correcting. It is time for the churches to grow up. The church will need leaders in every congregation and those leaders will need to bring up the next generation of leaders. Paul is modeling for us how to do that. After reading several of Paul's letters what is most important to Paul? What concerns Paul the most?

Week 51, Day 5 --- 1 Peter 1-5

Most of Paul's letters were written to a specific church to deal with specific issues. They were distributed beyond that church, but the original destination was clear. Peter's letter is to all the churches of an entire region. It was probably carried to one church, read and copied there, and then carried on to the next church. The theme of the book is clear. Peter is in Rome where he will die on a cross. The church is being persecuted and people are suffering. It is not easy being a Christian at this time. Peter writes to encourage everyone to remain faithful through their suffering.

What do you find most encouraging in what Peter writes? What do you find most difficult or challenging in what Peter writes?

Week 51, Day 6 --- Hebrews 1-6

Over the next couple of days you will understand why you read all the way through the Old Testament. The book of Hebrews was written to Jewish believers and assumes a very strong understanding of the Old Testament. The author often quotes from the Old Testament, but this isn't a book that is primarily about looking back. The intent of this book is to get us to understand and look at Jesus.

You might want to go back and read Genesis 14. One of the comparisons that is made in these chapters is a comparison of Jesus and Melchizedek. In most of the Old Testament there were priests and kings. Priests came from the tribe of Levite and spoke to God on behalf of the people. Kings came from the tribe of Judah and spoke to the people on behalf of God. There are two exceptions to this in the Bible: Jesus and Melchizedek. They are both priests and in fact they are high priests. At the same time they are kings. Melchizedek is a purely human priest and king, but Jesus is the ultimate priest and king.

We don't know who the author of Hebrews was. Some argue that it was Paul, but others that it might have been Apollos. It really doesn't matter. In the book you'll find great encouragement to focus on Jesus and endure to the end that inevitably comes to the follower of Jesus in this life.

Week 51, Day 7 --- Hebrews 7-10

I hope you took the time to read Genesis 14. Today's reading goes into great detail to establish Jesus as the new high priest. It may not be true of everything, but it was certainly true that the tabernacle and all the rituals associated with it were symbols of something greater to come in the future. Things like the arrangement of the rooms in the tabernacle are a shadow of what heaven will look like. We see this especially if we look at the holy of holies. If you go back to the Old Testament and read the description you'll find that the holy of holies was a room in the shape of a cube. It was the place where the high priest came into the presence of God. When you get to Revelation you'll find that the New Jerusalem is also in the shape of a cube and is filled with the presence of God. God wants us to be able to understand things that are infinitely wonderful and He uses physical things to give us at least a shadowy view of the future.

The author of Hebrews wants us to understand the present reality. Believers are suffering and he encourages us to be persistent in our faith. Our persistence should come from the realization that we can already dwell in God's presence. We no longer need a priest to go into the presence of God for us. Jesus has made it possible by His sacrifice for us to go to God anytime we want to.