

*The Water &  
The Wilderness*

**21 DAY**  
DEVOTIONAL

*Prayer & Fasting 2022*

*- Jan. 3rd-23rd -*

**MORNING PRAYER:**

MON-FRI 6-7AM

SAT 9-10AM

**NIGHT OF PRAYER:**

WED. JAN. 5TH | 6:30PM

SUN. JAN. 23RD | 6:00PM

*Join us in the sanctuary or on  
livestream*

# *The Water & The Wilderness*

- Written by Gabriel Hughes -

## ABOUT THIS DEVOTIONAL

This journal encourages you to respond to the Spirit's personal and daily claim on your life. Focused on the events surrounding the launch of Jesus' ministry from Luke's Gospel, this journal aims to magnify Christ's faithfulness in a way that exposes our own faithlessness. Scripture tells how the people of God failed to produce a man who could pass through the waters, endure the wilderness, and serve God's mission in unbroken union with His Holy Spirit. Christianity is united around the claim that God became this man.

In Christ, our faithlessness is overcome by his remarkable faithfulness, and then we are re-gifted the call to pass through the waters, endure the wilderness, and serve God's mission in unbroken union with His Holy Spirit. As you meditate and pray, lean into the "today" of the Spirit's voice (Hb. 3:7-8) which urges us, between every sunrise and sunset, not to harden our hearts.

Father, soften the hearts that are hard, and protect the hearts that are soft.

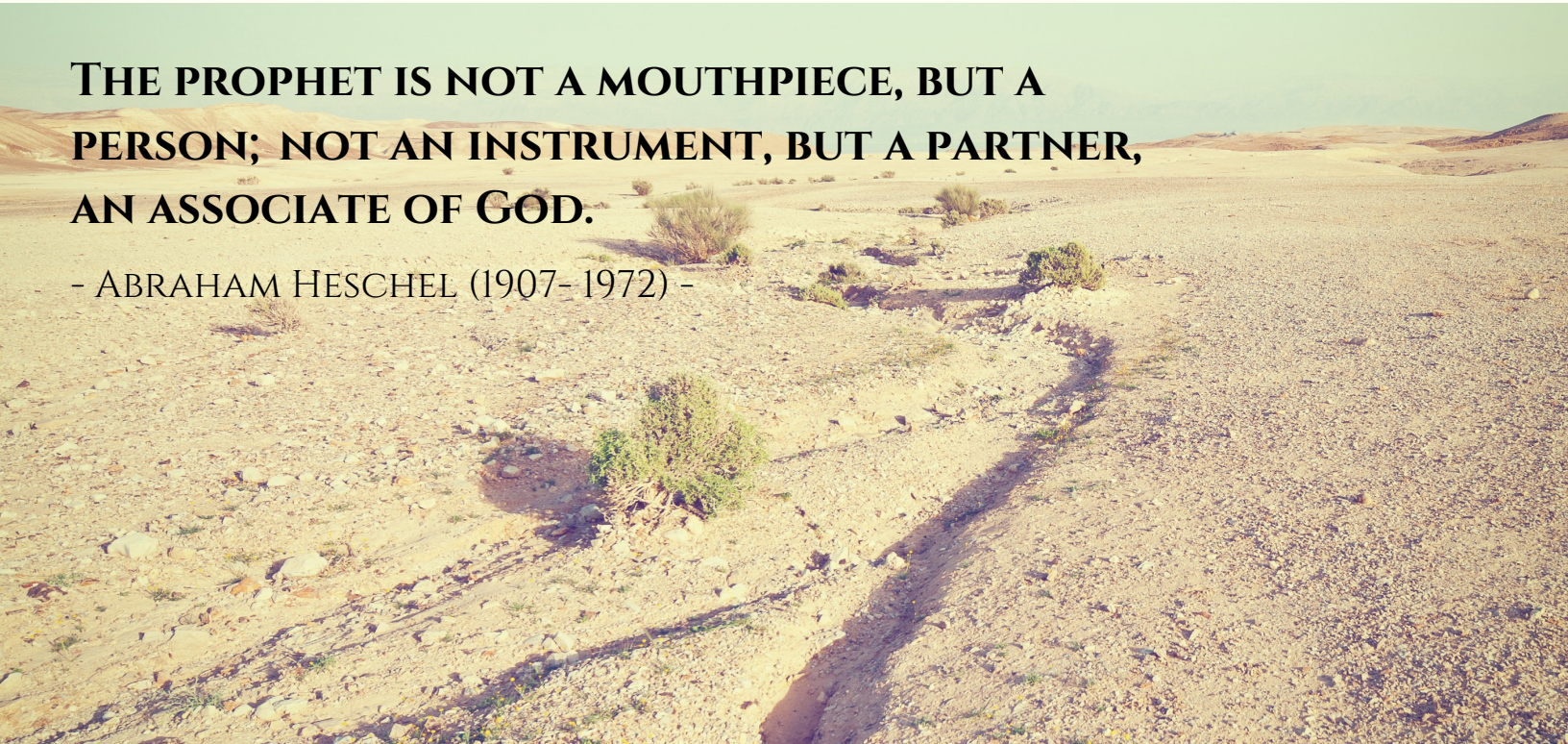


WEEK 1

B A P T I S M

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*Immersion into God's Spirit*



**THE PROPHET IS NOT A MOUTHPIECE, BUT A PERSON; NOT AN INSTRUMENT, BUT A PARTNER, AN ASSOCIATE OF GOD.**

- ABRAHAM HESCHEL (1907- 1972) -

## A VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS

**READ: LUKE 3:1-6**

John came to enact that great vision of Isaiah, to level the playing field. Children of Abraham, the rich, the poor, tax collectors, and Roman soldiers...each received *a clear line of sight* through repentance and baptism. There is no vantage point better than this from which to see the salvation of God.

**PRAYER & REFLECTION:**

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**WEEK 1 THEME:**

Baptism

**WEEK 1 OBSERVATION:**

Notice the difference between the way the rest of humanity must enter and exit baptism and the way Jesus enters and exits baptism.

A PERSON HAS TO GET FED UP WITH THE WAYS OF THE WORLD BEFORE HE, BEFORE SHE, ACQUIRES AN APPETITE FOR THE WORLD OF GRACE.

- EUGENE PETERSON (1932-2018) -

## REPENTING INTO THE WATER

**READ: LUKE 3:7-14**

They came to be baptized and forgiven their sins. It's not clear these crowds came to turn away from their sins. John identifies two prevailing sins among the crowds: spiritual pride and greed. We are reminded that many social sins relate to money in some form or fashion, whether money extorted or money hoarded.

**PRAYER & REFLECTION:**

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**WEEK 1 THEME:**

Baptism

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Notice the difference between the way the rest of humanity must enter and exit baptism and the way Jesus enters and exits baptism.



JESUS IS THE ONLY HUMAN TO HAVE EVER LIVED THAT  
RECIEVED THE HOLY SPIRIT AS A DOVE.  
EVERYONE ELSE GETS FIRE.

- ALLEN HOOD

## HOLY SPIRIT AND FIRE

**READ: LUKE 3:15-17**

Water can wash away filth and remove a foul stench, but some things need to be purged. Jesus is too committed to our holiness to spare us fire. This is the Messiah's baptism, and through it he welcomes us into a life immersed in the Spirit.

**PRAYER & REFLECTION:**

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**WEEK 1 THEME:**

Baptism

**WEEK 1  
OBSERVATION:**

Notice the difference between the way the rest of humanity must enter and exit baptism and the way Jesus enters and exits baptism.



**IF GOD IS A CHRISTLIKE GOD,  
THEN IT FOLLOWS THAT THE  
SPIRIT IS A CHRISTLIKE SPIRIT.**

- E. STANLEY JONES (1884-1973) -

## LIKE A DOVE

**READ: LUKE 3:21-22; JOHN 1:29-34**

Verse 21 positions Christ's extraordinary baptism next to everyone else's ordinary baptism: "Now when all the people were being baptized"(ESV). The was nothing in Jesus that needed to be burned away, and so, the Spirit came to rest on this man totally undisturbed and never to be chased off.

### PRAYER & REFLECTION:

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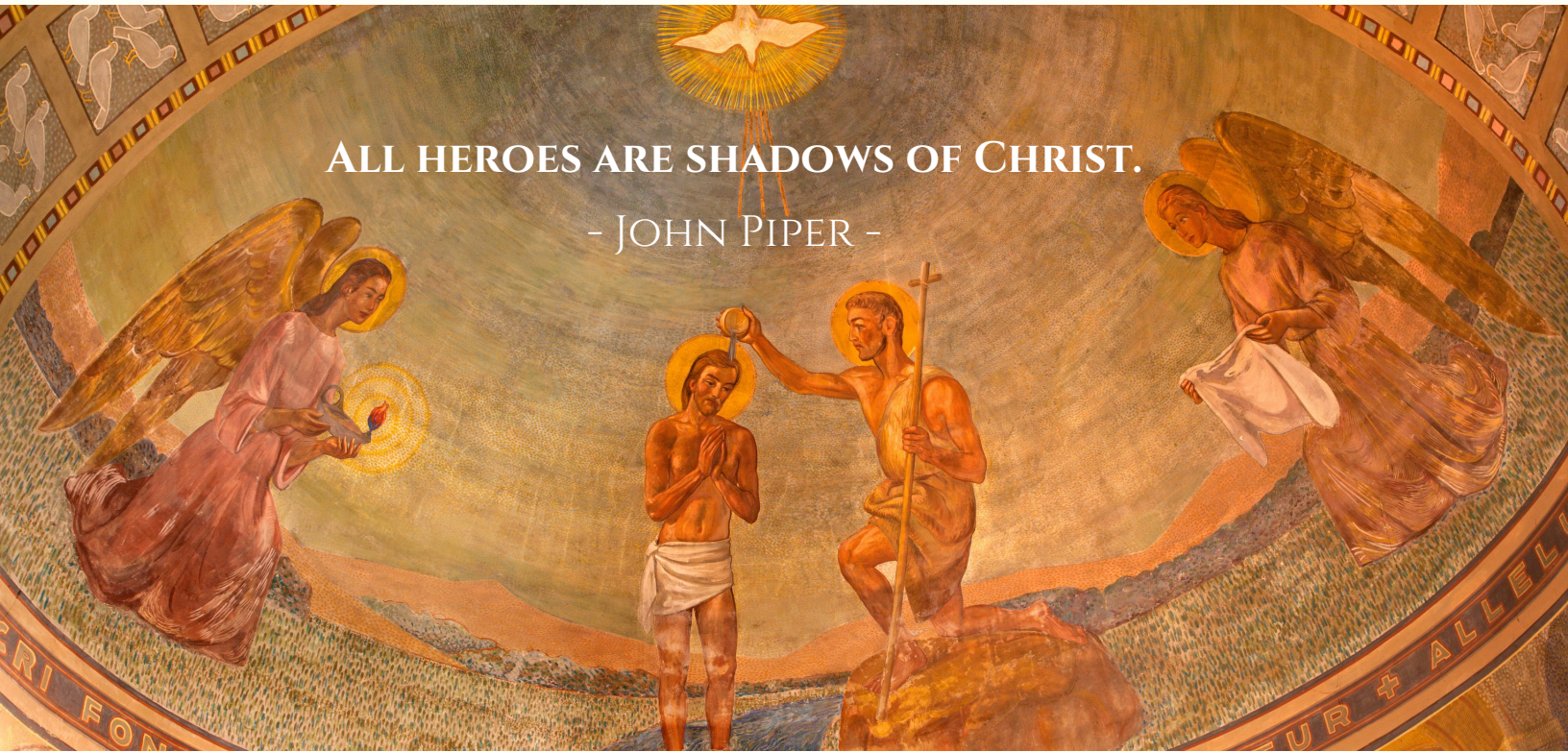
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### WEEK 1 THEME:

Baptism

### WEEK 1 OBSERVATION:

Notice the difference between the way the rest of humanity must enter and exit baptism and the way Jesus enters and exits baptism.



ALL HEROES ARE SHADOWS OF CHRIST.

- JOHN PIPER -

## PLEASING TO GOD

**READ: 1 CORINTHIANS 10:1-5; LUKE 3:22**

God takes no pleasure in wickedness—we get that. The story of scripture is, in many ways, an expression of God's commitment not just to have people he can show love to, but also a people he can take immense pleasure in. He found that person in Jesus.

**PRAYER & REFLECTION:**

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**WEEK 1 THEME:**

Baptism

**WEEK 1  
OBSERVATION:**

Notice the difference between the way the rest of humanity must enter and exit baptism and the way Jesus enters and exits baptism.



**THE HISTORY OF JESUS CHRIST IS DEEPLY ROOTED IN THE HISTORY OF ISRAEL, YET IT SOARS HIGH ABOVE ISRAEL'S HISTORY.**

- KARL BARTH (1886-1968) -



## GOD JOINED HUMAN HISTORY

**READ: LUKE 3:23-38**

The Son of God did not drop down from heaven as a fully formed human. Instead, he was born into the history of fallen humanity in order to *redeem* fallen humanity. Joseph's heritage became Jesus' heritage. As incredible as it sounds, the Son of God became a descendent of Adam, the son of God.

**PRAYER & REFLECTION:**

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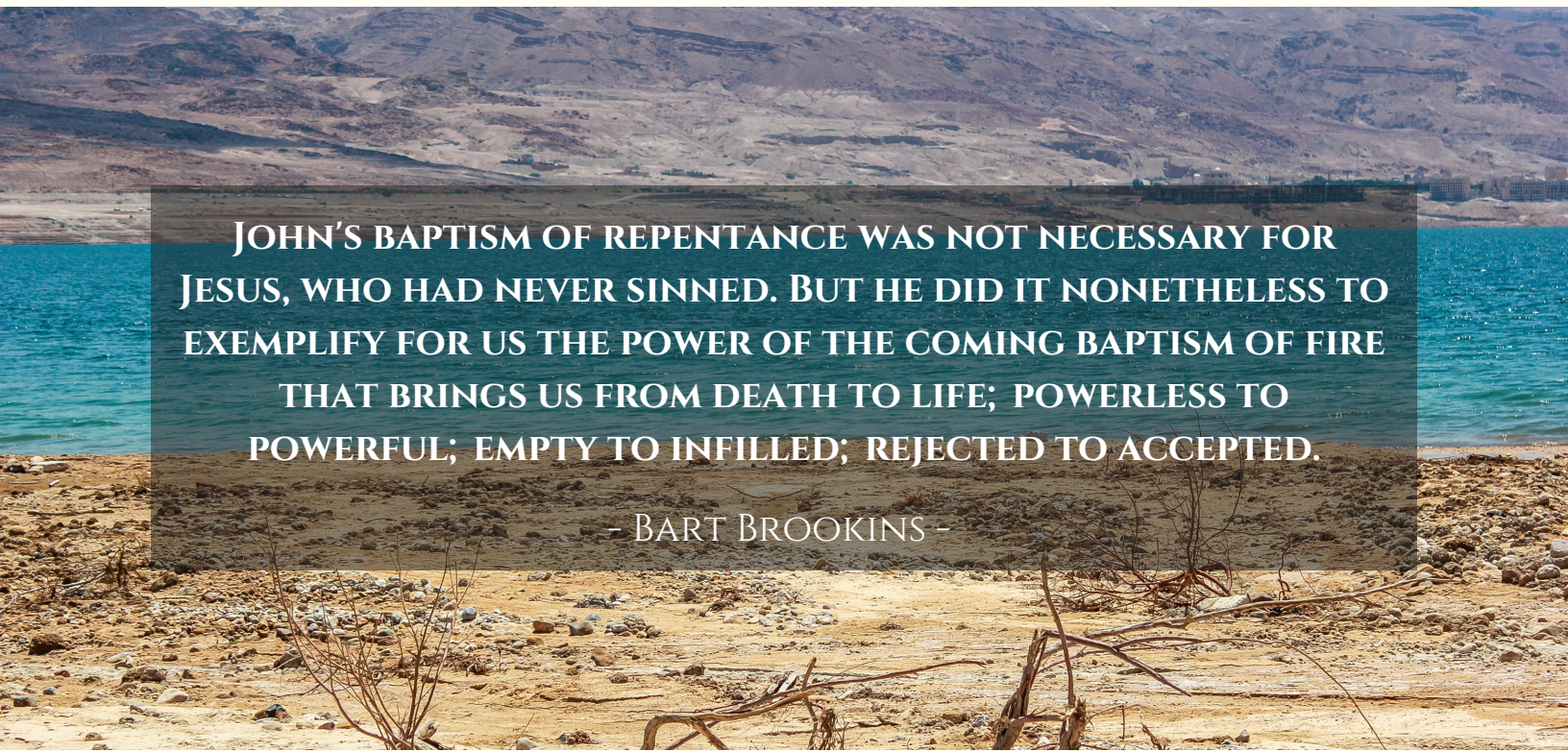
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**WEEK 1 THEME:**

Baptism

**WEEK 1 OBSERVATION:**

Notice the difference between the way the rest of humanity must enter and exit baptism and the way Jesus enters and exits baptism.



JOHN'S BAPTISM OF REPENTANCE WAS NOT NECESSARY FOR JESUS, WHO HAD NEVER SINNED. BUT HE DID IT NONETHELESS TO EXEMPLIFY FOR US THE POWER OF THE COMING BAPTISM OF FIRE THAT BRINGS US FROM DEATH TO LIFE; POWERLESS TO POWERFUL; EMPTY TO INFILLED; REJECTED TO ACCEPTED.

- BART BROOKINS -

## BAPTISM

**LUKE 3:21-38**

**SERMON NOTES:**

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# WEEK 2

## T E M P T A T I O N

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*Identity and calling challenged*

MY DEFICIENCY WAS THE STRONGEST THING ABOUT ME  
BECAUSE GOD WAS FULLY PRESENT IN MY LACK.

- ALIA JOY -



## PROVISION

**READ: DEUTERONOMY 8:1-10**

If only we didn't need wilderness-forged humility or wandering-tested hearts. For some reason, God's provision is more believable in a barren land than in a land flowing with milk and honey. We'll take it for granted almost as quickly as we receive the blessing, unless we have learned to lean into grace.

**PRAYER & REFLECTION:**

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**WEEK 2 THEME:**

Temptation

**WEEK 2  
OBSERVATION:**

Notice the interplay between Israel's 40 years in the wilderness and the way Jesus uses those scriptures during his 40 days in the wilderness.



PRIDE IS THE COMPLETE ANTI-GOD STATE OF MIND.

- C.S. LEWIS (1898-1963) -

## TEMPTATION: SELF-SUFFICIENCY

**READ: LUKE 4:1-4**

Full of the Holy Spirit, Jesus leaves the water and goes into the wilderness where he will be met by the day's heat, the night's chill, hunger, and Satan. The public eye shifted from John to Jesus at Christ's baptism. But, rather than seize the "momentum" of that event, the Spirit thrust Jesus into solitude and need.

**PRAYER & REFLECTION:**

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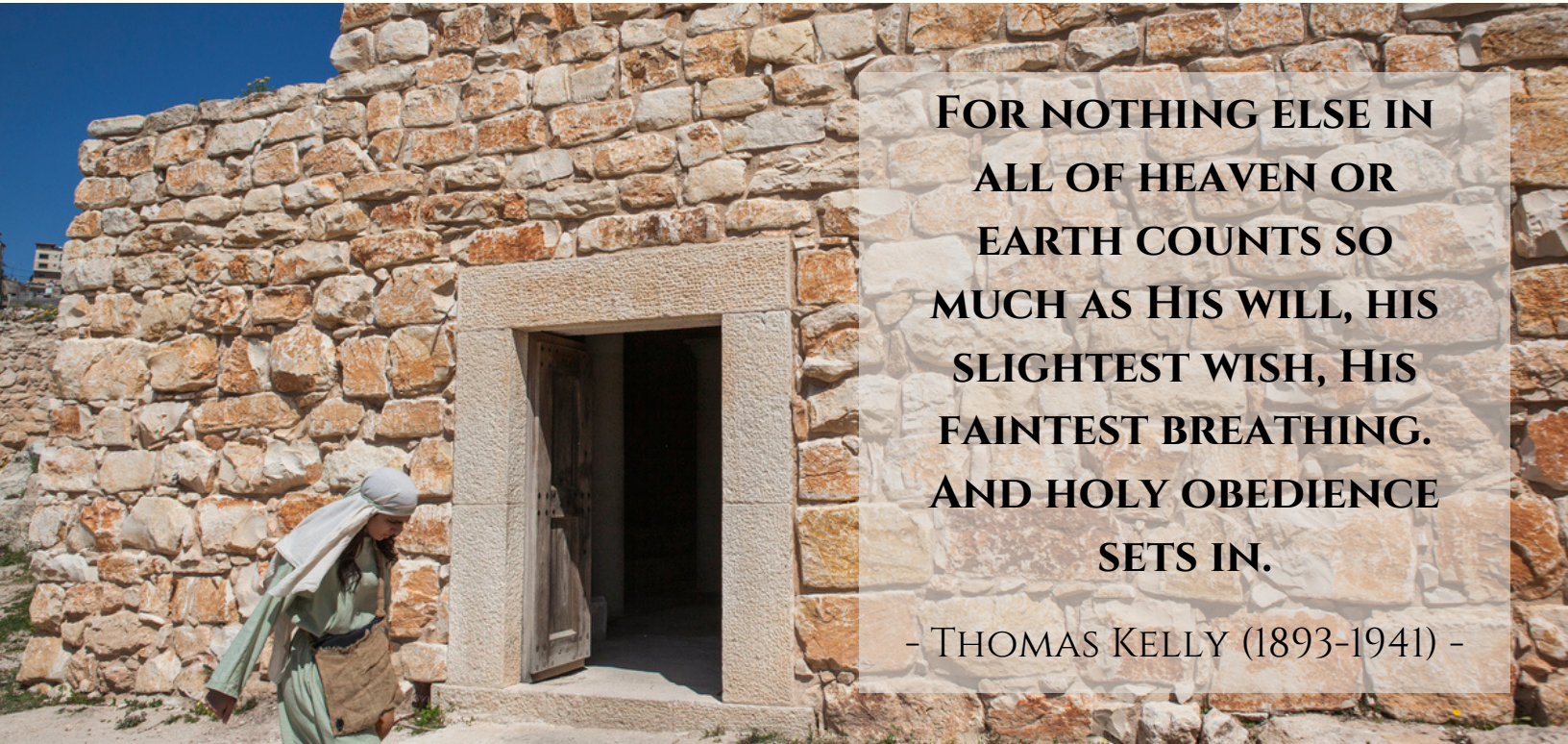
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**WEEK 2 THEME:**

Temptation

**WEEK 2  
OBSERVATION:**

Notice the interplay between Israel's 40 years in the wilderness and the way Jesus uses those scriptures during his 40 days in the wilderness.



**FOR NOTHING ELSE IN ALL OF HEAVEN OR EARTH COUNTS SO MUCH AS HIS WILL, HIS SLIGHTEST WISH, HIS FAINTEST BREATHING. AND HOLY OBEDIENCE SETS IN.**

- THOMAS KELLY (1893-1941) -

## DEVOTION

**READ: DEUTERONOMY 6:4-15**

God's worth calls to you. It exposes your idols, elicits loving obedience, and cautions you against pride. As Moses preached, the surprising enemy of worship is often *forgetfulness*. Remind yourself of who God is and the life God has called you to. Write it on your entrances and exits; inscribe it into your lifestyle.

**PRAYER & REFLECTION:**

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**WEEK 2 THEME:**

Temptation

**WEEK 2 OBSERVATION:**

Notice the interplay between Israel's 40 years in the wilderness and the way Jesus uses those scriptures during his 40 days in the wilderness.

POWER OFFERS AN EASY  
OF LOVE. IT SEEMS EASIER  
EASIER TO CONTROL  
EASIER TO OWN LIFE

SUBSTITUTE FOR THE HARD TASK  
TO BE GOD THAN TO LOVE GOD,  
PEOPLE THAN TO LOVE PEOPLE,  
THAN TO LOVE LIFE.

- HENRI NOUWEN  
(1932-1996) -



## TEMPTATION: SHORTCUTS

**READ: LUKE 4:5-8**

Shown a view of the nations (from "a very high mountain" in Matthew's gospel), Jesus was offered the quick and easy way to earthly power and glory. All that was required of him was to allow his devotion to shift away from God, just this once.

**PRAYER & REFLECTION:**

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**WEEK 2 THEME:**

Temptation

**WEEK 2  
OBSERVATION:**

Notice the interplay between Israel's 40 years in the wilderness and the way Jesus uses those scriptures during his 40 days in the wilderness.



WE HAVE LOST THE VERY CONCEPT OF MAJESTIC DEITY. OUR HIGHEST CONCEPT OF GOD MIGHT BE A MOVIE OR A MOUNTAIN VIEW.

-PAUL HUGHES -

## MASSAH & MERIBAH

**READ: EXODUS 17:1-7; DEUTERONOMY 6:16; PSALM 95:7-11**

If we are honest, our journey with God includes Massah's, places where we demanded God prove himself to us under the threat that we will pull away from Him if He doesn't. Testing God expresses our desire to control God for our purposes, and in this, we resist our place as creatures and God's place as Creator.

**PRAYER & REFLECTION:**

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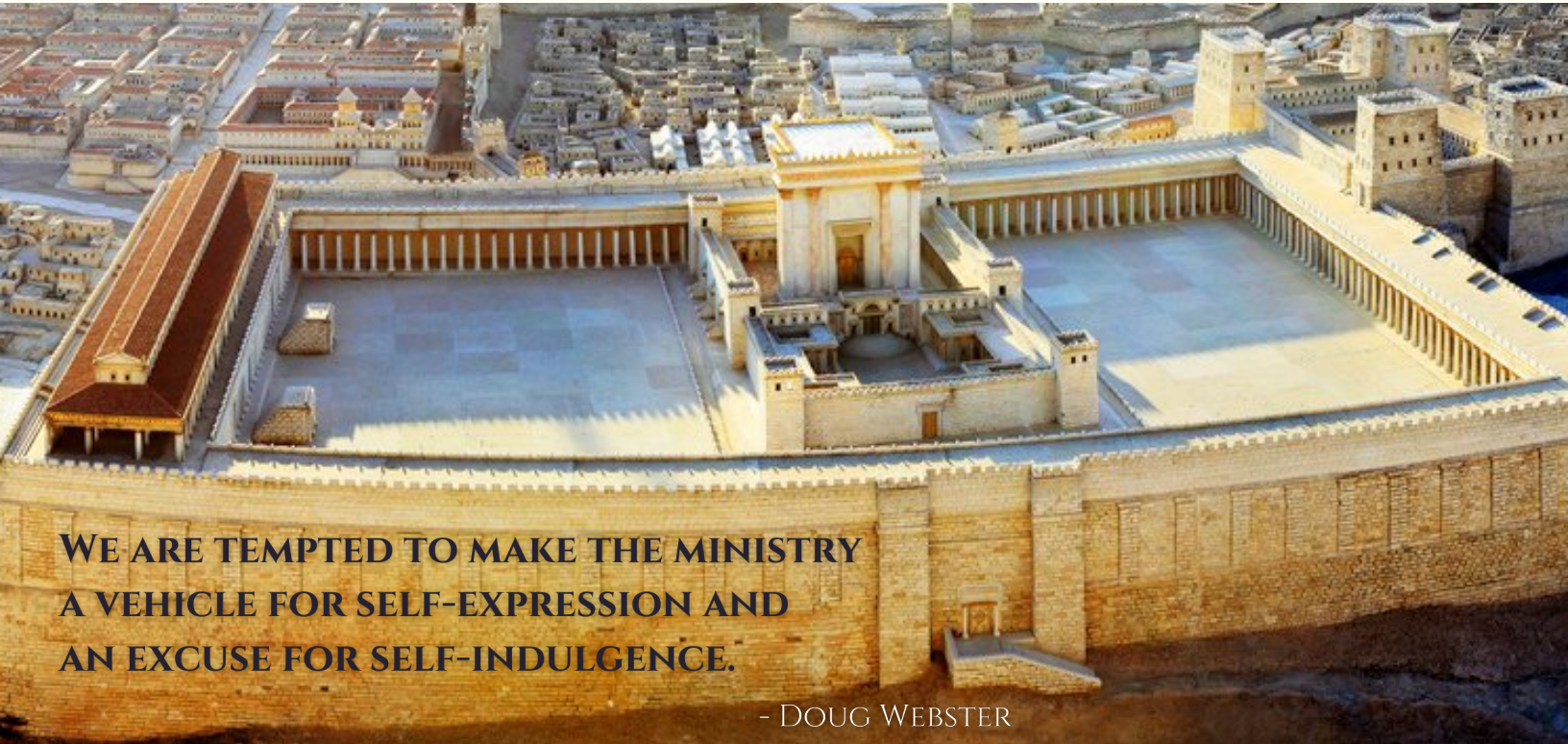
**WEEK 2 THEME:**

Temptation

**WEEK 2 OBSERVATION:**

Notice the interplay between Israel's 40 years in the wilderness and the way Jesus uses those scriptures during his 40 days in the wilderness.





**WE ARE TEMPTED TO MAKE THE MINISTRY  
A VEHICLE FOR SELF-EXPRESSION AND  
AN EXCUSE FOR SELF-INDULGENCE.**

- DOUG WEBSTER

## TEMPTATION: TESTING, INSTEAD OF TRUSTING

**READ: PSALM 91; LUKE 4:9-14**

A fall to his death from the temple followed by an angelic intervention (with many witnesses) would be remarkable indeed. But, Jesus remembers why Deuteronomy 6:16 was written.

**PRAYER & REFLECTION:**

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**WEEK 2 THEME:**

Temptation

**WEEK 2  
OBSERVATION:**

Notice the interplay between Israel's 40 years in the wilderness and the way Jesus uses those scriptures during his 40 days in the wilderness.





# WEEK 3

## R E J E C T I O N

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*Human rebellion towards God*

PRETTY MUCH THE ONLY PLACE WE CAN BE ALONE WITH OUR THOUGHTS ANYMORE IS IN THE SHOWER, AND IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME UNTIL OUR DEVICES ARE WATERPROOF, WHICH, IN TURN, WILL TRIGGER THE APOCALYPSE .

- JOHN MARK COMER



## THE HOLY SPIRIT SAYS

**READ: PSALM 95:7-11; PSALM 81:7; HEBREWS 3:7-12;**

Moses preached Deuteronomy (a series of sermons) to those who would enter Canaan, that they might avoid the rebellion of their parents. Centuries later, the psalmists reflected upon that time and wrote their own songs of caution. And finally, Hebrews presses this age old charge upon Christian "brothers" (Hb.3:12).

**PRAYER & REFLECTION:**

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**WEEK 3 THEME:**

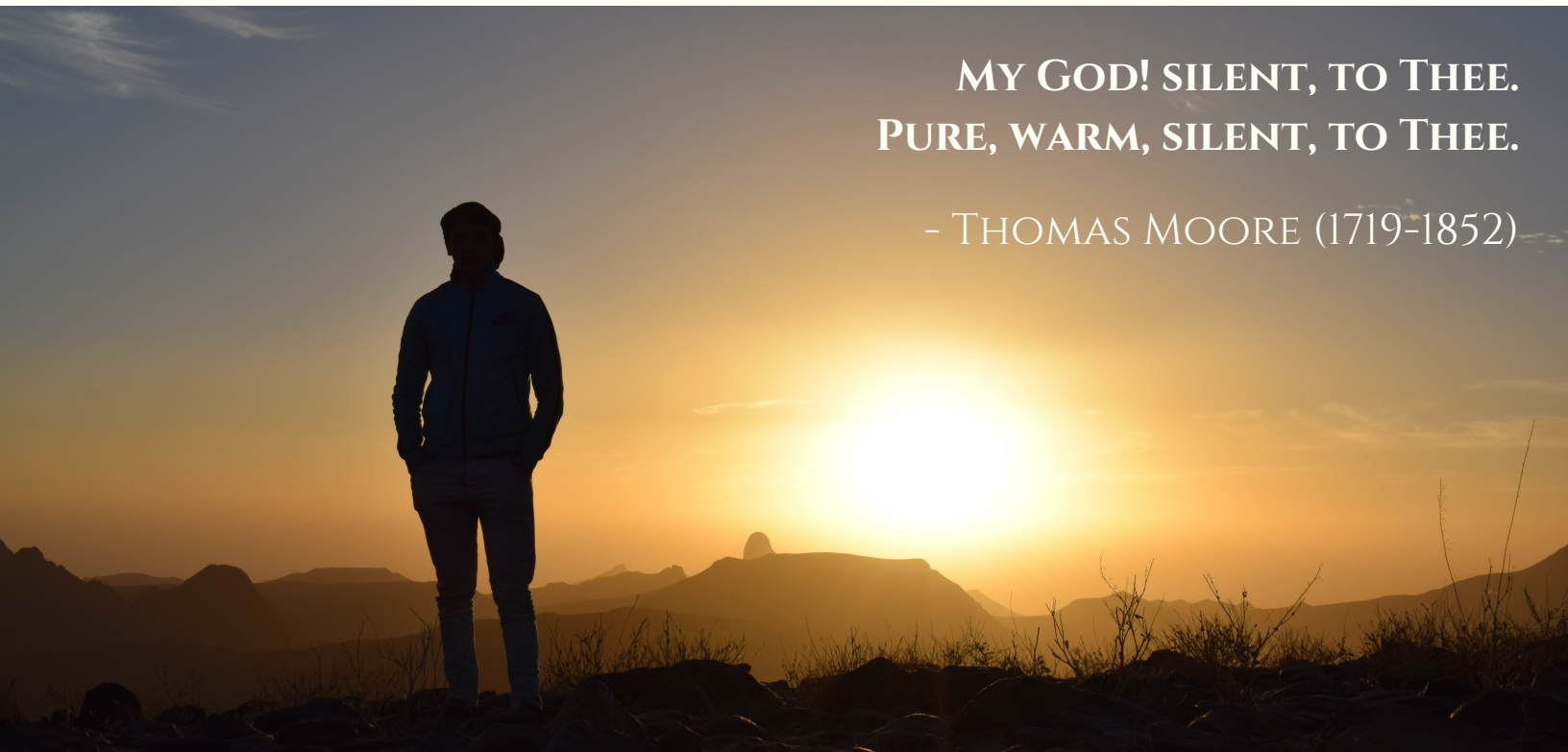
Rejection

**WEEK 3 OBSERVATION:**

Notice the ways people reject God, be they the generation in the wilderness or the villagers of Nazareth. Open yourself to the Spirit who says, "Today, if you hear his voice do not harden your heart."

MY GOD! SILENT, TO THEE.  
PURE, WARM, SILENT, TO THEE.

- THOMAS MOORE (1719-1852)



## AS LONG AS IT IS CALLED TODAY

**READ: HEBREWS 3:13-4:5**

"If you hear his voice," it is because the Spirit has opened your ears. If you hear, you can rest assured that you are inhabiting a sacred moment of grace, rather than personal achievement. Your place is to listen and believe with the soft heart *God has given you* (see. Ez. 11:19-20). If our hearts are hard, that is our doing.

**PRAYER & REFLECTION:**

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**WEEK 3 THEME:**

Rejection

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OBSERVATION:**

Notice the ways people reject God, be they the generation in the wilderness or the villagers of Nazareth. Open yourself to the Spirit who says, "Today, if you hear his voice do not harden your heart."



**SABBATH REST IS A FORETASTE OF ETERNAL LIFE.**

**- MARVA DAWN -**

## GOD'S SABBATH REST

**READ: HEBREWS 4:6-13**

The author of Hebrews recognizes that if David the psalmist (who lived long after Joshua) calls his own generation to enter God's rest, then Canaan must not have been God's final rest. Canaan was a downpayment of rest in Christ both present (v.3) and future (v.9-11), all of which harkens back to creation (v.4).

**PRAYER & REFLECTION:**

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**WEEK 3 THEME:**

Rejection

**WEEK 3  
OBSERVATION:**

Notice the ways people reject God, be they the generation in the wilderness or the villagers of Nazareth. Open yourself to the Spirit who says, "Today, if you hear his voice do not harden your heart."



**IF YOU BELIEVED MOSES,  
YOU WOULD BELIEVE ME;  
FOR HE WROTE OF ME.**

**- JESUS OF NAZARETH -**

# TODAY THIS SCRIPTURE IS FULFILLED

**READ: LUKE 4:14-21**

Jesus emerged from the wilderness in the *power* of the Holy Spirit. Jesus launched his public ministry from the wilderness and he returned to "desolate places" throughout his ministry.

**PRAYER & REFLECTION:**

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**WEEK 3 THEME:**

Rejection

**WEEK 3 OBSERVATION:**

Notice the ways people reject God, be they the generation in the wilderness or the villagers of Nazareth. Open yourself to the Spirit who says, "Today, if you hear his voice do not harden your heart."

THE FINAL SECRET  
OF REALITY WAS  
GIVEN AMONG  
MEN IN THE FORM  
THAT EVERY MAN  
COULD SEE AND  
HEAR AND  
HANDLE.

- LESLLIE NEWBIGIN  
(1909-1998)



## IS THIS JOSEPH'S SON?

**READ: LUKE 4:22-30**

We have heard it said that "familiarity breeds contempt." The people of Nazareth had an answer in mind about who the Messiah should be, and that answer didn't have in mind the guy who made their kitchen table. We also reject God's voice when it challenges our notion of who is worthy and who is unworthy.

**PRAYER & REFLECTION:**

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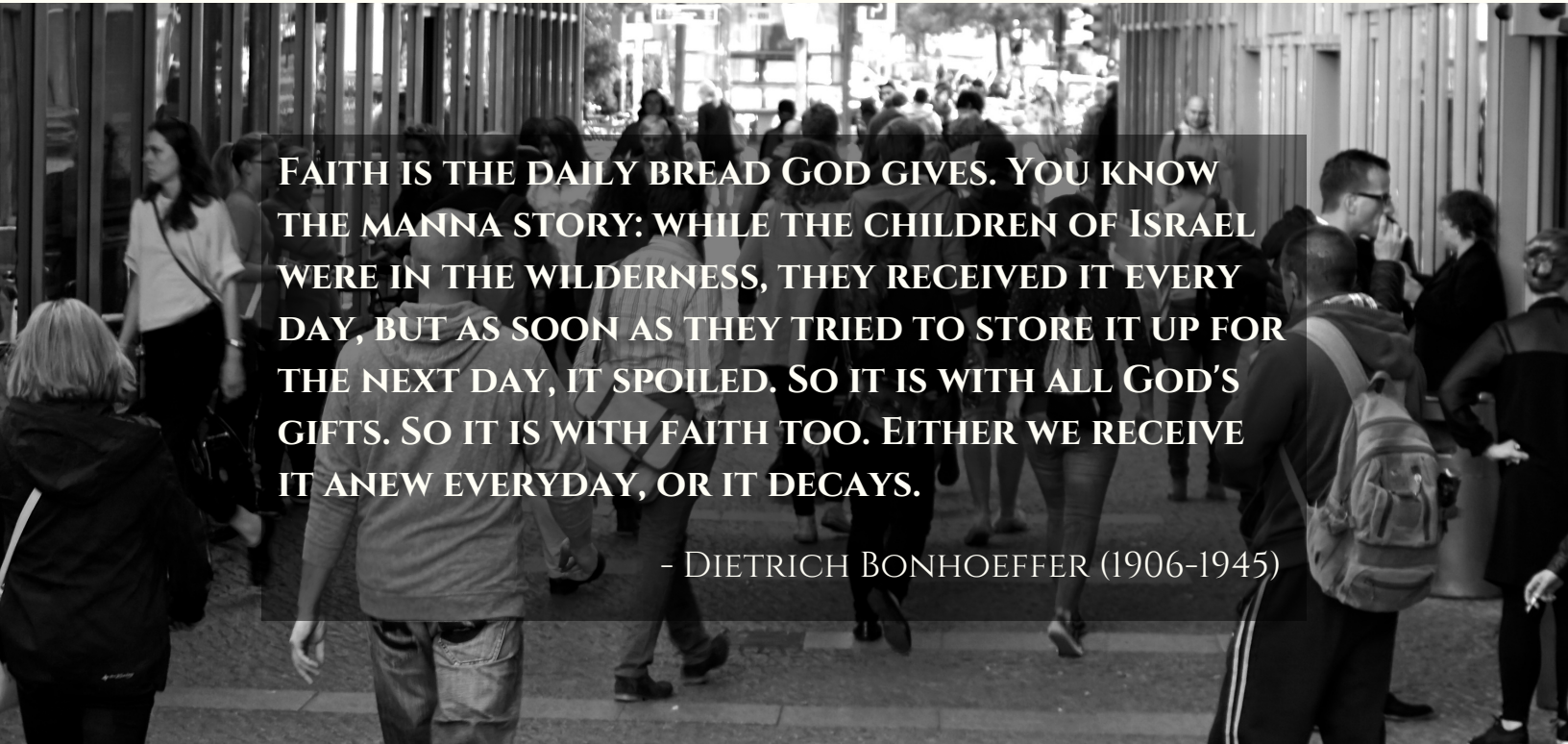
**WEEK 3 THEME:**

Rejection

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FAITH IS THE DAILY BREAD GOD GIVES. YOU KNOW THE MANNA STORY: WHILE THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL WERE IN THE WILDERNESS, THEY RECEIVED IT EVERY DAY, BUT AS SOON AS THEY TRIED TO STORE IT UP FOR THE NEXT DAY, IT SPOILED. SO IT IS WITH ALL GOD'S GIFTS. SO IT IS WITH FAITH TOO. EITHER WE RECEIVE IT ANEW EVERYDAY, OR IT DECAYS.

- DIETRICH BONHOEFFER (1906-1945)

## COMMON TO MAN

**READ: LUKE 3:13; 1 CORINTHIANS 10:1-13**

Paul explains that the Hebrews in the wilderness were not so different from Christians in Corinth. Spiritually speaking, Christ was the rock from which the Hebrews drank at Massah, and they tested Christ (v. 9). We must not grow complacent, because our baptismal identity and calling will be tested in the wilderness.

**PRAYER & REFLECTION:**

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**WEEK 3 THEME:**

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**WEEK 3 OBSERVATION:**

Notice the ways people reject God, be they the generation in the wilderness or the villagers of Nazareth. Open yourself to the Spirit who says, "Today, if you hear his voice do not harden your heart."



Meanwhile his disciples urged him, “Rabbi, eat something.”

But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you know nothing about.”

Then his disciples said to each other, “Could someone have brought him food?”

“My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.”

- JOHN 4:31-34 (NIV) -