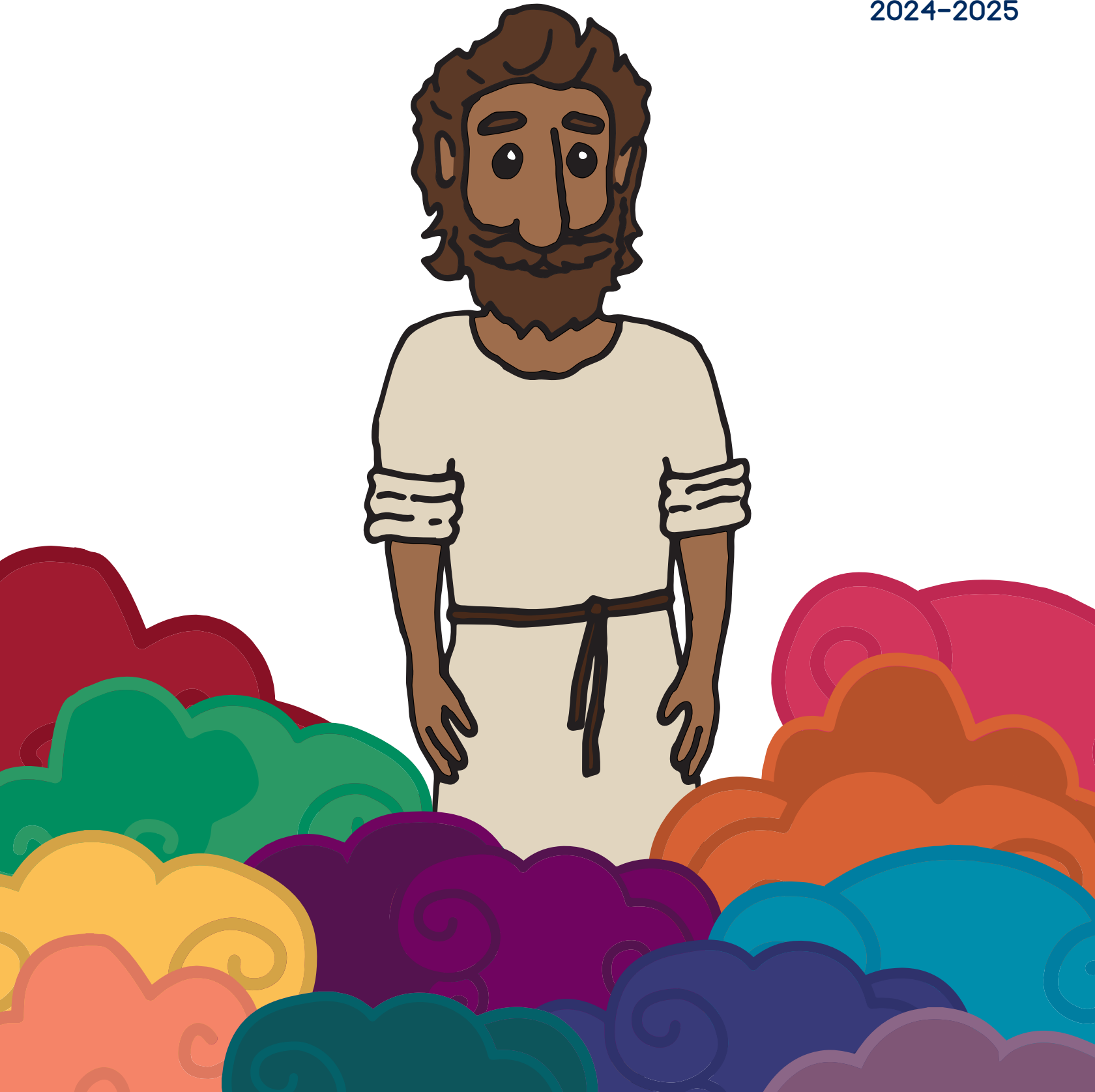


# Cloud OF Witnesses

GRACE CHURCH CHILDREN'S MINISTRY  
2024-2025



# CLOUD of WITNESSES



SCOPE & SEQUENCE 2024-2025  
GRACE CHURCH CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



*Curriculum Kick-Off*

October 6

Jesus is the Perfect Witness

Hebrews 12:1-2



## FAITH

*Abraham*

October 13

The Call of Abraham

Genesis 12:1-9

*George Mueller*

October 20

The Gift of Laughter

Genesis 18:9-15



October 27

Willing Obedience

Genesis 22:1-14

## TENACITY

*Paul*

*Hudson Taylor*

November 3

Encountering Jesus

Acts 9:1-22

November 10

Singing Hymns in Prison

Acts 16:16-34

November 17

Tenacity in Community

Philemon 10-14

November 24

The Tenacity of Christ

Luke 9:51-62



December 1

Shipwreck on Malta

Acts 27:1-28:10

December 8

A Willing Heart

Luke 1:26-38

December 15

Suffering Injustice

Matthew 1:19-25

December 22

The Power of Humility (Christmas)

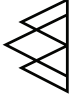
Luke 2:1-7

## HUMILITY

*Mary*

*Isobel Kuhn*

# CLOUD of WITNESSES



SCOPE & SEQUENCE 2024-2025  
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## ZEAL

*Elijah*

*George Whitefield*



## PERSEVERANCE

*Job*

*Adoniram Judson*



## COURAGE

*Joshua*

*Saint Patrick*



## LOVE

*John*

*Amy Carmichael*

December 29

Zeal from the Heart

1 Kings 17:17-24

January 5

A Zealous Stand

1 Kings 18:1-41

January 12

Zeal Brings Opposition

1 Kings 18:45-19:8

January 19

Zeal Brings Repentance

1 Kings 21:1-16

January 26

Job Trusts God

Job 1:1-2:10

February 2

Holding On in Suffering

Job 13:13-22

February 9

Perfect Perseverance

John 14:31

February 16

Job Speaks with God

Job 42:1-6

February 23

The Call to Courage

Joshua 1:1-9

March 2

Courage for the Call

Joshua 3:1-17

March 9

Courage to Confront Sin

Joshua 7:1-26

March 16

Courage to Inspire

Joshua 24:1-28

March 23

The Love of God

Matthew 4:21-22

March 30

Changed by Love

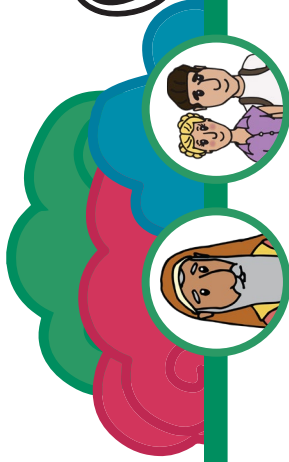
Mark 10:35-45

April 6

Christ's Sacrifice (Easter)

John 20:1-9

# CLOUD of WITNESSES



SCOPE & SEQUENCE 2024-2025  
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## DEVOTION

*Samuel*

*Jim & Elisabeth Elliot*

April 13

Hannah's Devotion

1 Samuel 1:1-18

April 20

Samuel Hears the Voice of God

1 Samuel 3:10-19

April 27

A New King

1 Samuel 8:1-22

May 4

Saul's Rejection

1 Samuel 15:1-31

May 11

Jesus' Example

Hebrews 3:1-2; 4:14-16



## LOYALTY

*Ruth*

*William Tyndale*

May 18

Loyalty to Naomi

Ruth 1:1-22

May 25

Loyal Service

Ruth 2:1-23

June 1

Loyal Obedience

Ruth 3:5-13

June 8

Redemption

Ruth 4:8-10



June 15

Jesus Teaches us to Pray

Luke 11:1-4

June 22

Daniel's Resolve

Daniel 1:8-21

June 29

Daniel Depends on God

Daniel 2:12-23

July 6

Daniel Trusts in God

Daniel 6:1-23

July 13

Daniel Humbles Himself

Daniel 10:1-21

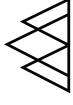
## DEPENDENCE

*Daniel*

*James Fraser*



# CLOUD of WITNESSES



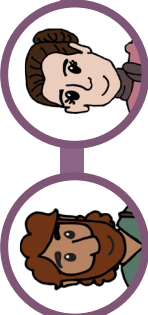
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## OBEDIENCE

*Moses*  
*Eric Liddell*

July 20	Steadfast Obedience	Exodus 5:6-22
July 27	Consequences of Disobedience	Numbers 20:1-13
August 3	Obedience and Love	Deuteronomy 6:1-25
August 10	The Reward of Obedience	Hebrews 11:24-29



## PATIENCE

*David*  
*Lilias Trotter*

August 17	David as Servant	1 Samuel 16:1-23
August 24	David Spares Saul	1 Samuel 26:1-25
August 31	David King of Judah	2 Samuel 1:1-28
September 7	God's Promise to David	2 Samuel 7:1-17



## THE PERFECT WITNESS

*Jesus*

September 14	The Cloud	Hebrews 12:1a
September 21	The Race	Hebrews 12:1b
September 28	Fixing Our Eyes on Jesus	Hebrews 12:2



*Jesus*

THE PERFECT WITNESS



# Jesus

## The Perfect Witness



### KEY CONCEPT

Jesus is THE faithful witness. His example exceeds all of the people we will learn about this year.



### SCRIPTURE

- » **Hebrews 12:1-2** – We are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses. . .
- » **Revelation 1:5-8** – Jesus is the faithful witness
- » **Hebrews 11** – The Cloud of Witnesses
- » **Hebrews 1:3** – Jesus is the radiance of God’s glory

## UNIT 1 | OCTOBER 6



### Lesson

This week we will begin building the Cloud of Witnesses one person at a time. Hebrews 11, especially Hebrews 11:32-40, captures the sheer number of faithful men and women of God who have gone before us. Each unit has been designed to focus on the lives of one biblical witness and one church age witness and a character quality in their lives that still speaks to us today. In this first week we’re going to take a step back and see how each of the lives we will look at fits into the big picture of the wide and varied legacy of faith that we join when we follow Jesus.



### Prayer Focus

Father, help these little ones to begin to grasp the amazing history of faith that we join when we decide to follow Jesus. May the lives we study inspire them to fix their eyes on Christ.



### Jesus’ Perfection

This unit is designed to focus on the life of Jesus as “THE faithful witness” (Revelation 1:5). As great as it has been to study the lives of over twenty men and women of God, they pale in comparison to Jesus, who is a perfect example of every quality! We’ve spent a whole year adding different colors to the Cloud of Witnesses. This week is our opportunity to join all of these colors together, point to this colorful cloud, and say: “That’s Jesus!”



## The Church Age Witnesses

There have been countless witnesses throughout history whose lives have testified to the glory and goodness of God. This year we will be pairing biblical witnesses with church age witnesses to see how they demonstrate character qualities like tenacity, perseverance, and love. We want the kids to get a personal look at the Cloud of Witnesses by studying the lives of people like Hudson Taylor, William Tyndale, and Amy Carmichael. These lives are powerful examples for us to follow. We also want the kids to see how the truths of the Bible and godly living have been exemplified in the lives of so many men and women of God. Ultimately we want them to see that they, too, can join the Cloud of Witnesses by living lives that honor God.



## For the Workers

Piper's article exhorts us to study the lives of Christians throughout history who have run their race well. Their testimony can strengthen our resolve today as we run our own races. Consider new ways that God is asking you to learn from these witnesses and follow their example.



## *Church Age Witnesses*



### KEY CONNECTION

Mary and Isobel Kuhn willingly followed God's leading in their lives, even when it was difficult.





# Abraham

FAITH



# Abraham

## Faith



### KEY CONCEPT

Faith empowers us to follow God wherever he leads.



### SCRIPTURE

- » **Genesis 12:1-9** – God tells Abram to leave his home (WEEK 1)
- » **Hebrews 11:8-9** – By faith, Abraham left his home (WEEK 1)
- » **Genesis 13:14-18** – God renews his promise to Abram (WEEK 2)
- » **Genesis 15:5-6** – Abram is counted as righteous because of his faith (WEEK 3)



### Lesson

In this unit, we're going to focus on God's call to Abram to leave his homeland and go to a land God would show him. Though he didn't know where he was going, the author of Hebrews tells us that Abram had faith in God's promises (Hebrews 11:8-9). At the age of 75, Abram traveled to the land of Canaan. It was a huge step of faith for Abram to pack up everything he owned, leave his family, and begin traveling without knowing his destination, but he trusted God and did what God was asking him to do. We want the kids to see that God often leads us in the same way if we're willing to trust him.



### Prayer Focus

Father, we pray these little ones would wait on you and choose to believe and obey whatever your plans are for their lives. We pray that they would know you deeply and intimately as they walk with you by faith, and that you would cause them to shine as stars in a world that needs Jesus.



### Jesus' Faith

God told Abraham to take Isaac and do something unimaginable: sacrifice him as a burnt offering to the Lord. Abraham willingly prepared to do what God asked, but God stopped him and provided a ram for the sacrifice instead. Because Abraham was willing to offer his son to the Lord, God promised to bless him and his descendants (Genesis 22:17-18). Many centuries later, Jesus would lay down his own life. He knew the Father wouldn't spare him as he had Isaac, but he set his face to do the Lord's will. God honored Jesus' faith. After three days, God raised him to life and seated Jesus at his right hand, placing everything under his rule and authority (Ephesians 1:19b-20).



## The Call

George Müller was born in the Kingdom of Prussia (present day Germany). He attended church and eventually entered seminary, but he was not living for God. Müller was a chronic thief and liar. He squandered his money and, on one occasion, was even unable to pay for his hotel room because of his irresponsible choices. Still, God had a purpose for George Müller. A friend and partner in crime surprised Müller by beginning to attend prayer meetings. Eventually George Müller attended the meetings as well, where he was moved by the sincere and genuine prayers. A letter from a missionary was the final stroke that disarmed Müller's rebellion and pushed him to surrender his life to Jesus. He had once followed his own way, but now, drawn by Christ's love, he was willing to change the direction of his entire life for the sake of his Savior.



## For the Workers

Piper's article exhorts us to study the lives of Christians Müller received God's gift of salvation through prayer meetings and was empowered to live a life of faith. *Robbers of the Cruel Streets* tells what Müller's life was like before salvation. Check out John Piper's biography of Müller to learn about the impact of God's power in his life. What stands out to you from his life?



*George Müller*  
Faith



## KEY CONNECTION

Just as Abraham left his home, George Müller left behind his sinful ways for a life that would be both challenging and rewarding.





*Paul*  
TENACITY





*Paul*

TENACITY



### KEY CONCEPT

Knowing Jesus allows us to live tenacious lives for his kingdom.



### SCRIPTURE

- » **Acts 9:1-22** – Paul’s conversion (WEEK 1)
- » **Acts 9:5** – Jesus appears to Paul (WEEK 2)
- » **Galatians 1:11-24** – Paul recounts his conversion (WEEK 3)
- » **Acts 26:9-29** – Paul’s testimony to Agrippa (WEEK 4)
- » **1 Timothy 1:12-17** – God’s grace to Paul (WEEK 5)



### Lesson

For this unit we will tell the story of Paul’s conversion. Prior to his conversion Paul was a well known Jew who worked hard to stop the spread of Christianity. However, on the road to Damascus, Paul had a dramatic encounter with Jesus and his life changed forever. While Paul saw himself as the “chief of sinners” (1 Timothy 1:15), he also recognized that God “had set [him] apart before [he] was born,” and “called [him] by his grace” (Galatians 1:15). His experience of Jesus’ grace and forgiveness motivated Paul for a lifetime of devotion to God and fruitful ministry.



### Prayer Focus

Jesus, we pray these children would experience your grace and forgiveness in a way that will completely change their lives forever. Please give them a desire to spend the rest of their lives sharing what they have experienced with others.



### Jesus’ Tenacity

Jesus made it clear that he came down from heaven not to do his own will, but the will of the Father (John 6:38). On his way to Jerusalem, Jesus foretold his death twice. He was aware that rejection and suffering were coming soon, and yet he was determined to continue on toward Jerusalem. Jesus revealed his aim to glorify God as he encouraged his followers to deny themselves and lose their lives for the purposes of God. Many did not understand or support Jesus but he “fixed his face like a flint” toward Jerusalem where his work on the cross would be completed.



## Early Life & Conversion

Before Hudson Taylor was born, his father's heart was deeply impacted by the spiritual state of China. He prayed that if God were to give him a son, that son would be called to mission work in China. As Taylor grew up, he tried to make himself a Christian, but his heart felt unchanged and he began to believe he could not be saved. He thought it best to take his fill of the world since there was no hope for him beyond the grave. This attitude changed one afternoon when Taylor picked up a gospel tract in his father's library and began reading. At the same time, Taylor's mother, who was about 80 miles away, felt an intense yearning for the conversion of her son and went to her room to pray, determined not to stop until God answered her. Hours later, when she finished praying, she was convinced that her son had become a Christian. The Lord had answered and Hudson Taylor completely surrendered his life to the Lord's work.



## For the Workers

Chapter 1 of "A Retrospect" describes Hudson Taylor's conversion. Consider your own conversion and how God changed your life. Look for opportunities to share your story with others.



*Hudson Taylor*

TENACITY



## KEY CONNECTION

Like Paul, Hudson Taylor's life trajectory was altered immensely after he encountered Jesus and received the call to go to China.



*Mary*  
HUMILITY



# Mary

## HUMILITY



### KEY CONCEPT

God uses the humble to accomplish his plans.



### SCRIPTURE

- » **Luke 1:26-38** – An angel appears to Mary (WEEK 1)
- » **Luke 1:47** – Mary views herself as a servant (WEEK 2)
- » **1 Corinthians 1:26-29** – God uses the lowly as his instruments (WEEK 3)
- » **James 4:6** – God opposes the proud but gives favor to the humble (WEEK 3)



### Lesson

When the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary and explained that she would give birth to the promised Messiah, it was a complete surprise to her. Mary's response was indicative of her relationship with God. Mary didn't understand how she could possibly conceive and give birth to a son, but her first reaction wasn't doubt or disbelief. When the angel explained how the Holy Spirit would cause this to happen, Mary exemplified a heart of humility when she uttered the words, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38).



### Prayer Focus

Father, we pray that these little ones would find favor in your eyes and willingly accept your plan for their lives. May humility flow from a heart that believes in you and your word.



### Jesus' Humility

Humility happens when we surrender our own rights for the benefit of others. This is exactly what Jesus did for us by coming to earth in human form. This Christmas, we want the kids to see God's tender love for us demonstrated in the lowly baby Jesus, who gave up all of his rights as God in order to bless and exalt us. This draws us nearer to God, and it compels us to live like Mary and Jesus: surrendering our rights for the sake of others, even those who don't deserve it.





## Working Hard Through School

Isobel Kuhn attended school at Moody Bible Institute. To pay for school, she worked as a waitress and was often humbled as she watched wealthier students enjoy their free time while she worked. Ruth was one such girl. She was wealthy and had a sharp mind but didn't have a relationship with the Lord. Isobel Kuhn felt a burden to pray for and to reach out to Ruth. She was amazed as God blessed her efforts and opened a door for friendship with Ruth. The two friends cherished their conversations, but Isobel's work schedule greatly restricted her ability to spend time with Ruth. Ruth had a hard time understanding why Isobel spent so much time doing menial work. God used Isobel Kuhn's humble witness to plant seeds of the gospel in Ruth's heart. Though it was not until much later, Ruth eventually came to know Christ.



## For the Workers

For Isobel Kuhn, following God meant embracing a life of humble status. Read Chapter 10 of "By Searching" and reflect on the ways that God used Isobel's small choices to serve as a waitress and to refuse "unconsecrated money" to forge humility in her. Reflect on the small choices God is asking you to make in order to humble yourself before him and before others so that he will be glorified.



*Isobel Kuhn*  
HUMILITY



### KEY CONNECTION

Mary and Isobel Kuhn willingly followed God's leading in their lives, even when it was difficult.



*Elijah*  
ZEAL



*Elijah*

**ZEAL**



### KEY CONCEPT

Zealous followers of God speak the truth boldly.



### SCRIPTURE

- » **1 Kings 21:1-16** – Ahab wants a vineyard and Jezebel makes a plan
- » **1 Kings 21:17-29** – Elijah warns about the Lord’s judgment, Ahab repents
- » **1 Kings 19:3** – Elijah had previously run away in fear
- » **Revelation 3:19-20** – God disciplines those he loves; be zealous and repent



### Lesson

This unit focuses on the story of Naboth’s Vineyard, a portion of land that Ahab desperately wanted to possess. He asked Naboth if he could buy the vineyard, but Naboth declined because of the Lord’s command forbidding it (1 Kings 21:3, Leviticus 25:23). Upset that he couldn’t have the vineyard, Ahab went home angry and downcast. His wife, Queen Jezebel, saw that her husband was unhappy and she arranged to have Naboth killed. After his death, Ahab quickly claimed the vineyard as his own. But God saw the injustice of the situation and sent Elijah to tell Ahab and Jezebel that they would pay for the life of Naboth with their own lives. Upon hearing this news, King Ahab did something unexpected, he humbled himself before the Lord and repented.



### Prayer Focus

Lord, we pray that you would help these children to love your name and your ways. Amidst this broken world that has fallen far away from you, give them zeal for the truth according to your Word and Spirit. Use each of them to lead others to repentance.



### Jesus’ Zeal

Jesus modeled a life of zeal for God, leading many people to repentance and boldly proclaiming the truth through both his actions and his words. In John 2:13-20, Jesus found merchants selling livestock and others exchanging money. John tells us that he drove them all out of the temple. When they disciples saw this, they remembered the words of the Psalm: “Zeal for your house has consumed me” (Psalm 69:9).



## Preaching to Slaves

When George Whitefield came to Christ, he gained a zeal for the Lord that disregarded cultural norms and church traditions. Whitefield would eventually work to reach orphans and slaves, both of whom were generally overlooked by society. At the age of 25, Whitefield laid out a vision, raised funds, and superintended the creation of an orphan house in Savannah, Georgia. Whitefield provided ongoing support for the orphanage throughout his preaching ministry and the fruit of that work remains today. Whitefield also preached to slaves, affirming their value in the eyes of the Lord. This work led to some of the first African-American converts in the United States. Whitefield shared God's heart for the dejected, and his death was greatly mourned by the slaves and orphans he had preached to and defended.



## For the Workers

Using the excerpt "Equality" as a reference, think about the places you live and work and the expectations and unwritten rules that you follow. Consider the ways that Christ is calling you to confront the norms of those who seem important and reach out to those around you who may be overlooked.



*George  
Whitefield*  
ZEAL



## KEY CONNECTION

Mary and Isobel Kuhn willingly followed God's leading in their lives, even when it was difficult.





*Job*

PERSEVERANCE



*Job*

## PERSEVERANCE



### KEY CONCEPT

We can persevere because we know that God has put trials in our lives for a reason.



### SCRIPTURE

- » **Job 13:13-22** – Job declares his innocence (WEEK 1)
- » **Job 2:11-13** – Job’s friends come to comfort him (WEEK 2)
- » **Job 19:25-27** – “I know that my Redeemer lives” (WEEK 3)
- » **Job 23:1-12** – “When we has tried me, I shall come out as gold” (WEEK 3)
- » **Psalms 34:1-22** – God’s deliverance of the righteous (WEEK 3)



### Lesson

For this unit, we’ll look at Job’s response to losing his kids, his health, and all that he owned. Three of Job’s friends came and sat with him in silence for seven days (Job 2:13). Eventually his friends began to insist that he must have done something to deserve all of the trouble that had come upon him. Job refuted these arguments by asserting his own blamelessness (Job 9:21). He also pointed out that both the unrighteous and the righteous can undergo trials (Job 9:22). In time, Job would come to understand that God uses difficult things in the lives of his children, not to punish them, but to glorify himself and reveal a faith that is more precious than gold (1 Peter 1:6-7).



### Prayer Focus

Father, we pray that when suffering comes for these little ones, they would persevere by holding on to you, trusting fully in your good and perfect plan for their lives. We pray that they would rest in the foundational truth that they are deeply loved by you, and trust that you will make all things work together for their good.



### Jesus’ Perseverance

Jesus maintained an unwavering trust in his Father’s unchanging goodness and faithfulness and willingly submitted to suffering in obedience to the Father (John 14:31). He knew the torture and deep sorrow he would face, yet he humbly prayed, “Not my will, but yours be done” (Luke 22:42). As the disciples walked with Jesus, they had the opportunity to observe firsthand the perseverance of Christ. As followers of Christ today, it is essential that we, too, learn from Jesus and follow his example of perseverance in the face of suffering and trials.



## Baptist Conversion

Adoniram Judson's conversion was quickly followed by steps toward the mission field. As one of the first American foreign missionaries, he helped pioneer the first Congregationalist missionary society before he heading out onto the field. While studying scripture on his way to India, Judson came to the conclusion that the Congregationalist's understanding of infant baptism was not based on scripture. Upon his arrival in Calcutta, he and his wife Ann were re-baptized and proclaimed their conversion to the Baptist denomination. They cut ties with their former organization immediately, unwilling to accept the support of the Congregationalist denomination when they were unwilling to proclaim its principles. The political climate in India forced the Judsons on to Burma where they found themselves holding onto the Lord in a new land, with new beliefs, and in complete isolation from any financial or relational support from the U.S.



## For the Workers

Read through the excerpt "Theological Isolation" written by Ann Judson to her sister describing this period of the Judsons' lives. Consider the hard decisions you have made to obey God's word completely. Did you always stay resolute or did you give in to a more comfortable and "acceptable" way?



*Adoniram  
Judson*

**PERSEVERANCE**



## KEY CONNECTION

Like Job, Adoniram Judson had to fight against incorrect views of God and the scriptures in order to persevere in God's calling on his life.





*Joshua*  
COURAGE



# Joshua

## COURAGE



### KEY CONCEPT

God's presence gives us courage.



### SCRIPTURE

- » **Joshua 1:1-9** – God commissions Joshua (WEEK 1)
- » **Numbers 31:16** – Moses changes Hoshea's name to Joshua (WEEK 2)
- » **Deuteronomy 31:7-8** – Be strong and courageous (WEEK 3)
- » **Deuteronomy 31:23** – God tells Joshua that he will bring the people into the Promised Land (WEEK 4)



### Lesson

Today we are going to look at two key moments in the life of Joshua. The first occurred just before Joshua left to spy out the Promised Land. Moses changed Joshua's name from Hoshea to Joshua (Numbers 31:16). Hoshea means 'salvation' and Joshua means 'God is my salvation.' This marked an important transition in Joshua's life that would impact him for years to come. The second event occurred after Moses' death. God commissioned Joshua to lead his people into the Promised Land. He told Joshua that he had already given the land to the people, and now all they had to do was go in and take it. In this conversation, God told Joshua three times to be "strong and courageous" (Joshua 1:1-9).



### Prayer Focus

Father, we pray that these little ones would courageously follow your leading in their lives because they know that your presence will be with them. We pray that they would always trust and obey you.



### Jesus' Courage

Jesus courageously confronted sin when he went to the cross. Instead of punishing those who deserved it, he took the punishment on himself so that we could walk in close fellowship with him. Jesus' courage makes it possible to be completely free to live righteously before God.



## Slavery in Ireland

Patrick grew up in the Roman colony of Britannia (present day Britain). His father was a decurion, a powerful local government official. His family had wealth and position and were also involved in their local church. But Patrick rejected the religion of his parents at a young age. At the age of 16, Patrick was taken captive by pirates and sold into slavery in Ireland. There he worked as a shepherd alone on a mountain. During that time, Patrick began to pray to God and as he did he said that, “The love and fear of God more and more inflamed my heart; my faith enlarged, my spirit augmented.” This led him to pray over one hundred times a day. After he had worked in Ireland for six years, God spoke to him in two dreams, telling him that it was time to leave Ireland and that his ship was ready. Even though the ship was 200 miles away and he didn’t know the way, Patrick listened to the Lord and courageously went “in the strength of God.” When Patrick reached the port, he joined the ship’s crew and sailed home.



## For the Workers

Read parts 1 through 22 of Patrick’s “Confession” and observe how Patrick’s life changed when he realized his helpless state and began to pray to God for help. During Patrick’s time in Ireland, God’s presence strengthened and enabled Patrick to follow his lead, even when the task seemed impossible.



*Saint Patrick*

COURAGE



### KEY CONNECTION

Both Joshua and Patrick found it possible to courageously confront their circumstances by learning to rely on the Lord for strength.





*John*  
LOVE



*John*

LOVE



### KEY CONCEPT

God's love transforms us as we follow Jesus.



### SCRIPTURE

- » **Mark 10:35-45** – John and James' request (WEEK 1)
- » **Luke 9:49-56** – John's responses to the man casting out demons and the unwelcoming Samaritan village (WEEK 2)
- » **John 19:26** – John at the cross with Jesus' mother (WEEK 2)
- » **John 13:23-25** – John refers to himself as the disciple "whom Jesus loved" (WEEK 3)



### Lesson

In his early days with Jesus, like the rest of us, John was fleshly and sinful. He tried to stop a man from casting out demons in Jesus' name, suggested that Jesus call down fire on a Samaritan village, and requested a place of honor in the Kingdom of Heaven. However, as he walked with Jesus, John was changed by Jesus' love. During the Last Supper, John reclined at Jesus' side, and for the first time he referred to himself as "the one whom Jesus loved" (John 13:23-25). John's life was changed from that of an ordinary fisherman to a man who knew he was loved by God. Having been perfectly loved, he showed loyal love to Jesus, and was the only remaining disciple at the cross. The man once known as a "Son of Thunder" became "the one whom Jesus loved."



### Prayer Focus

Father, we pray that these little ones would be transformed your amazing love for them. May that knowledge inspire them to love you by loving others. Help them to abide in your love daily and obey because of their love for you.



### Jesus' Love

The crucifixion is the most tangible and perfect demonstration of unconditional, sacrificial love, and the resurrection is our hope that God's love is everlasting and that we will spend eternity with him. Take some time to celebrate the resurrection and the victory that was won for us. Jesus laid his life down in humble obedience to the Father and we get to celebrate his resurrection. Jesus is alive and he loves each of us today with the same love that compelled him to die on the cross.





## From Riches to Rags

At the age of 17, Amy Carmichael and her brothers saw a poor woman in a shawl struggling to carry a heavy bundle through the streets of Belfast, Ireland. Because she came from a rich background, Amy Carmichael normally would not have noticed a “shawlie.” But, as words from Corinthians 3:12-14 flashed through her mind, she felt compelled to help. From that moment on, the world of fashion and affluence meant nothing to her. Instead, Carmichael dedicated her time to serving the shawlies in her community. She held Bible studies for them and these groups eventually grew into a new church. Over the next few years she sought to live more simply in order to be more relatable in her ministry to the shawlies. She even went so far as to move into the slums, a radical action that many friends and family found difficult to understand.



## For the Workers

How is Jesus’ love changing your motives and behavior? The word of God had a transformative power in Amy Carmichael’s life, most significantly during her encounter with the shawlie in Belfast. As you consider Corinthians 3:12-14, is there anything in your life that God has been asking you to change that will be revealed by fire on that Day when Christ returns?



*Amy  
Carmichael*

LOVE



### KEY CONNECTION

Just like the apostle John, Amy Carmichael’s life changed and her motives were radically transformed when she received God’s love.



# Samuel

DEVOTION



# Samuel

## DEVOTION



### KEY CONCEPT

When we devote ourselves to God, we submit our desires to his will.



### SCRIPTURE

- » **1 Samuel 3:10-14** – God reveals his plans for Eli’s family (WEEK 1)
- » **1 Samuel 3:15-19** – Samuel tells Eli about his vision (WEEK 3-4)
- » **1 Samuel 2:27-35** – God’s judgment on Eli’s family and his plan for a new priest (WEEK 5)



### Lesson

Even before Samuel was born, it was clear that those whom God had appointed to lead and intercede for Israel were not devoted to him. They abused their power and followed their own desires. As a result, the people of God no longer valued their offerings to the Lord and even grew to despise them. In contrast, Samuel heard and demonstrated a desire to listen to and follow the voice of God from a young age. The first time God spoke to Samuel, he was responsive and said, “Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening” (1 Samuel 3:10). God revealed to him how he would punish Eli and his sons for not honoring the house of the Lord. Initially Samuel was afraid; he knew that this would be difficult to tell Eli. But when Eli asked Samuel what the Lord had said, he remained faithful to God’s words and told Eli everything.



### Prayer Focus

Father, we pray that these little ones would devote their lives to you completely, even when it’s hard or not the popular thing to do. We ask that, as they grow, you would help them to hear your voice and do everything that you



### Jesus’ Devotion

Jesus remained devoted to the will of his Father so we can be made right with God. As Jesus’ followers, we’re called to devote every part of our lives to his will. Without Jesus, our devotion to God would be fruitless because our sin would still separate us from God. Because of Christ’s sacrifice, each of us can live a life that brings glory to God.



## College

Unlike many of his peers, Jim Elliot's zeal and passion for the Lord did not diminish as he entered a new season of life at Wheaton College. Instead, he experienced a greater intimacy with God and was transformed during these years as his knowledge of the Lord deepened. Early in college, Jim Elliot's intensity for God inspired a legalistic lifestyle consumed by rigid study and rigorous prayer. This shifted in his third year as he began to see that God created man to enjoy life while also working hard. Whether at work or play, Jim Elliot did not allow anything to keep his heart from the pursuit of Christ. His passion for God fueled his obedience in many endeavors, even wrestling. He joined the Wheaton wrestling team because scripture said there was 'some value in physical training' (1 Timothy 4:8). Throughout college, Jim Elliot studied with all his might, rallied others to mission work, and preached wherever he could be heard.



## For the Workers

Read chapter 3 of Shadow of the Almighty. Jim was concerned most with gaining God's approval. Where do you most fear failure in your life? What does that reveal about who you are most seeking to please?



*Jim &  
Elisabeth  
Elliott*  
DEVOTION



## KEY CONNECTION

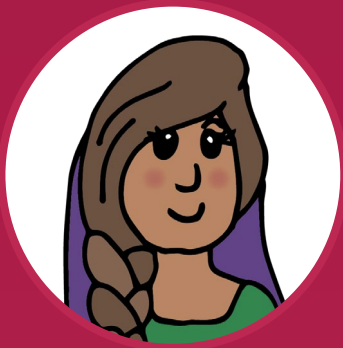
The hearts Samuel and Jim Elliot were constrained by love for God and their devotion to him was evident in their obedience, even in small matters.





*Ruth*

LOYALTY



# Ruth

## LOYALTY



### KEY CONCEPT

Loyalty is not concerned with personal gain.



### SCRIPTURE

- » **Ruth 1:1-5** – Death of Naomi’s husband and sons (WEEK 1)
- » **Ruth 1:6-15** – Ruth promises to stay with Naomi (WEEK 1)
- » **Ruth 1:16-18** – Ruth’s pledge to Naomi (WEEK 2)
- » **Ruth 1:19-22** – Return to Bethlehem (WEEK 3)
- » **Matthew 16:24-25** – Whoever loses his life will find it (WEEK 4)



### Lesson

In this unit, we will look at the first chapter of the book of Ruth. After both of her sons died, Ruth’s mother-in-law Naomi decided to go back to Israel. She began the journey to Israel with both Orpah and Naomi. However on the way there, Naomi released her daughters-in-law and told them both to return to their families where they might have a better future. Orpah agreed and returned to Moab, but Ruth remained. Three times Ruth refused to leave Naomi’s side, promising to stay with Naomi even to death (Ruth 1:17). Ruth chose to leave behind her people, her security, and her gods because of her loyalty to Naomi.



### Prayer Focus

Father, we pray that these little ones would commit themselves to you and your people from a young age. Develop in them a heart of loyalty that is faithful to you even in the most difficult circumstances.



### Jesus’ Loyalty

Ruth’s marriage to Boaz redeemed her from her old lineage and placed her in the lineage that would produce David and, generations later, Jesus. We experience something similar when we encounter the loyalty that Christ has for us. Even though we have all rejected and rebelled against God, God remained loyal to us and sent Christ to redeem us and make it possible for us to be a part of his family.



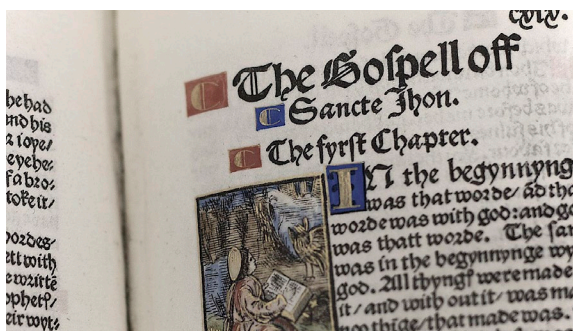
## Early Life and Ministry

As a child in the 1400s, Tyndale went to mass with his family in England, but the teaching meant little to him because it was in Latin. Tyndale's parents were fairly well off so he was able to learn Latin at school. At the age of twelve, he started school at Oxford where he also learned Greek, Hebrew, and other languages. His academic ability put him in a position to pursue positions of high authority in the Church. However, Tyndale became convinced that church leaders cared more about gaining power than being obedient to God. He thought they wanted to keep the word of God hidden from the general public as a way to maintain control for themselves. As Tyndale searched for truth in the original Greek and Hebrew texts, he became convinced that everyone should be allowed to read the scriptures.



## For the Workers

Tyndale was incredibly smart and had the potential to go far as a religious leader. However, his choice to translate the Bible meant he was turning his back on personal gain and a comfortable life. Check out William Tyndale's short biography this week for the full story. Have you known people who set aside personal gain for the cause of Christ? How might God be calling you to imitate them?



*William Tyndale*

LOYALTY



## KEY CONNECTION

Like Ruth, Tyndale gave up a life of relative ease and chose to loyally follow the call that God had placed on his life.





# *Daniel*

## DEPENDENCE





*Daniel*

DEPENDENCE



KEY CONCEPT

We must depend on God in every situation.



SCRIPTURE

- » **Daniel 6:1-13** – Daniel is distinguished above all and continues to pray (WEEK 1-2)
- » **Daniel 6:14-23** – Daniel is thrown in the lion’s den and subsequently delivered (WEEK 3)
- » **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18** – “Pray without ceasing.” (WEEK 4)
- » **Romans 12:12** – “Rejoice in hope, be constant in prayer.” (WEEK 5)



Lesson

Daniel was a man of great integrity, but he had enemies. Those enemies knew the only accusation they could find against Daniel would be with his faith (Daniel 6:5). Knowing that Daniel prayed daily, the officials went to King Darius and convinced him to make a new decree that everyone in his kingdom should pray only to Darius for 30 days. “When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously” (Daniel 6:10). Daniel’s actions were brought to King Darius’ attention. Though reluctant, Darius



Prayer Focus

Father, we pray that these little ones would grow to be faithfully dependent in both easy and difficult seasons of life. May they trust you and experience your great love and care as they learn to depend fully on you.



Jesus’ Dependence

Dependence on God through prayer was the daily pattern of Jesus’ life (Luke 5:16). It’s amazing to think that even Jesus himself needed time and space where he could pray honestly and express his dependence on his Father. Through the Lord’s Prayer, Jesus taught his disciples that prayer can focus not only on God’s character and kingdom, but also on the things that are of daily concern to us. Jesus’ prayer life serves as the perfect example of how prayer plays an instrumental role in our relationship with God and serves as the language of dependence on him.



## Early Days in China

At the age of 22, James Fraser arrived in China and settled in the bustling city of Tengyueh. The city market was bursting with new sights and smells. Fraser enjoyed the rapid and musical tonal changes of the Chinese language but struggled to adjust to life in this new culture. Cut off from everything that was familiar to him, Fraser found it easy to give in to loneliness. He learned how important discipline and obedience were in fighting these tendencies. He rose early to walk and pray in the surrounding hillsides. He spent much of his time studying Chinese and even attempted to preach the gospel with his limited vocabulary. While in the market looking for opportunities to preach, Fraser first saw members of the Lisu tribe standing out in their brightly colored traditional clothing. They were mountain people and visited the market only occasionally. Fraser was eager to meet them, unaware that he would spend the rest of his life among this tribe.



## For the Workers

Consider the areas of your life where God has asked you to remain faithful. How might God be at work in the mundane, and even difficult, aspects of your life, preparing you for something greater?



*James  
Fraser*

**DEPENDENCE**



**KEY CONNECTION**

Like Daniel, James Fraser's lifestyle of dependence on God through prayer paved the way for a ministry that honored God.



*Moses*

OBEDIENCE



# Moses

## OBEDIENCE



### KEY CONCEPT

We need to obey God even when we are discouraged or afraid.



### SCRIPTURE

- » **Exodus 5** – Moses speaks to Pharaoh on behalf of the Israelites
- » **Exodus 5:14** – Pharaoh accuses Moses of taking Israelites away from work
- » **Exodus 5:6-14** – Israelites are forced to make bricks without straw
- » **Exodus 6:1-10** – God encourages Moses and reminds him to keep going



## Lesson

Moses had a massive challenge ahead of him when he approached Pharaoh on behalf of the Israelites. Pharaoh didn't care what God said, and accused Moses of distracting the people from their work. He even went so far as to increase the Israelites workload because of Moses' request. When Moses returned to the people, they were angry with him and blamed him for their increased burden. Overwhelmed and discouraged, Moses cried out to God. The path of obedience wasn't going the way he had expected. The Lord spoke firmly with Moses. God reminded Moses of his majesty and reiterated the command, "bring the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt" (Exodus 6:13).



## Prayer Focus

Father, we pray that a loving relationship with you would be the foundation for obedience in the lives of these children. May they learn to follow you in every situation, even when they don't fully understand what you are doing. As they little ones learn to obey you, we pray they would find peace and assurance in their relationship with you.



## Jesus' Dependence

Jesus also chose to obey God even though it would involve opposition and pain because He loved His Father. We need to identify with Christ and choose obedience even when it might be uncomfortable, knowing that the Lord wants to use our obedience in powerful ways to bless and free those around us. Ultimately, the obedience of Moses and Jesus led to freedom for an entire nation and for the world!





## Ministry in China

Eric Liddell was born in 1902 to Scottish missionaries in Tianjin, China. When he was six years old, he left all that he knew in China to attend boarding school in Scotland. There, he excelled in athletics and was eventually presented with the opportunity to compete in the 1924 Olympics. His exceptional speed led everyone to believe that he would win the 100-meter race. There was just one factor standing in the way: the race was on a Sunday. Without hesitation, Liddell withdrew his place in order to obey God and keep the Sabbath. He chose instead to compete in the 400-meter race. There was little time to train for the longer race and few people expected him to win. The media ridiculed him for his decision but he chose to obey God anyway. He trained harder than ever and not only set a stunning new world record, but brought glory and honor to God by choosing to obey. As Liddell once said, "One word stands out from all others as the key to knowing God, to having his peace and assurance in your heart; it is obedience."



## For the Workers

Eric Liddell was not afraid to follow God, even though his obedience often led to greater challenges. Are there any ways that God has been asking you to obey, but you've been hesitant or unwilling because of what other people might think?



*Eric  
Liddell*

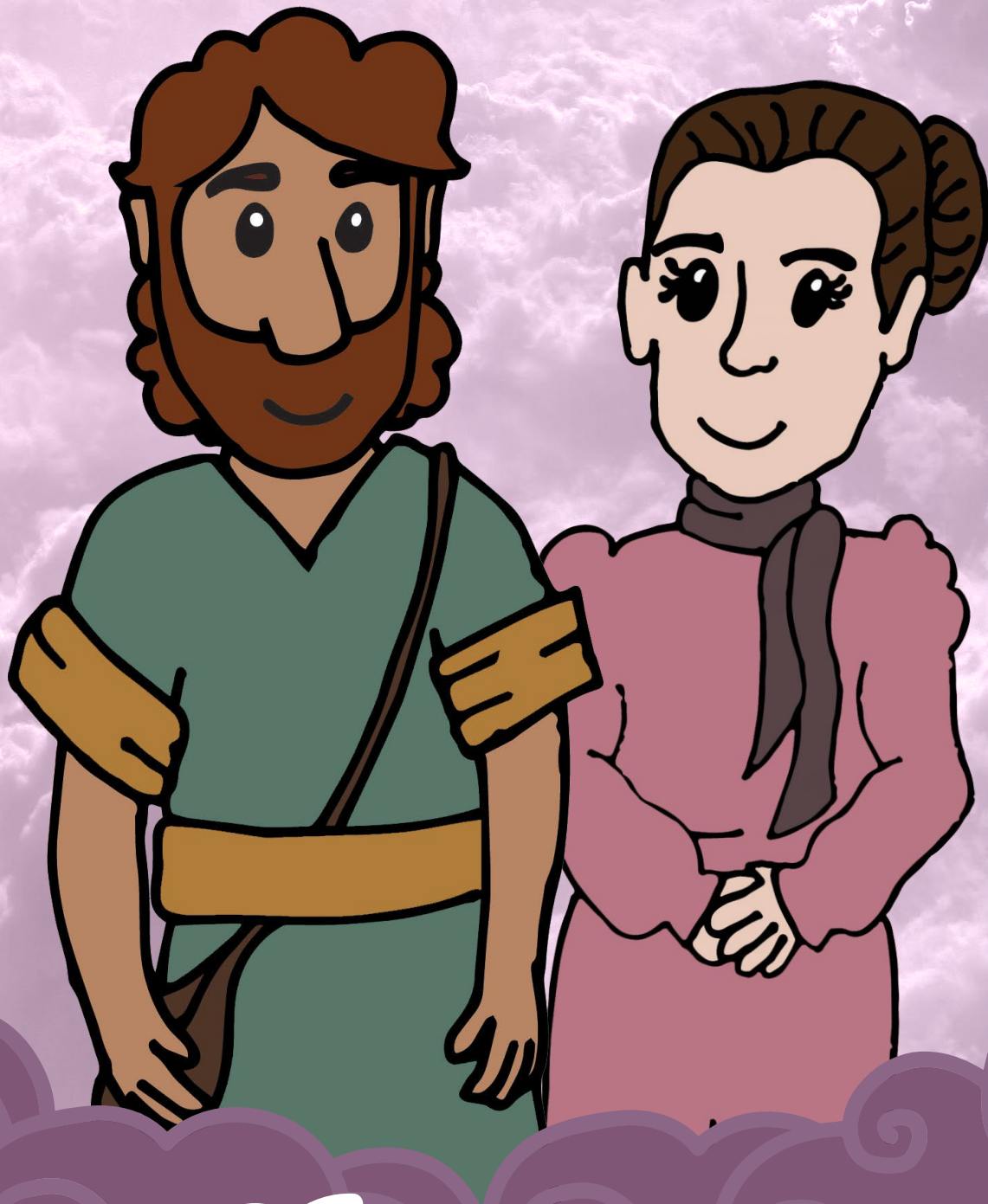
**OBEDIENCE**



**KEY CONNECTION**

We need to obey God even when we are discouraged or afraid.





*David*  
PATIENCE



David

## PATIENCE



### KEY CONCEPT

We honor God when we wait patiently and serve those around us.



### SCRIPTURE

- » **1 Samuel 16:1-13** – David anointed as king (WEEK 1)
- » **1 Samuel 16:14-23** – David plays music for Saul (WEEK 2)
- » **1 Samuel 17:34-36** – David kills lions and bears as a shepherd (WEEK 3)
- » **Colossians 3:23-24** – We are serving Christ! (WEEK 4)



## Lesson

God sent Samuel to the city of Bethlehem to anoint one of the sons of Jesse as the next king (1 Samuel 16:1). Seven sons came before Samuel, but they were not the ones the Lord had chosen as the next king. When Samuel asked if there were any more sons, he learned there was still one son left tending the sheep. When David walked in the room, God revealed to Samuel that David was the Lord's anointed! Although David did not immediately become king, the Spirit of the Lord was upon him from that day forward. While waiting on God's timing, David continued to care for the sheep and often spent his days playing the lyre with great skill. Later, when Saul needed someone to play music to soothe his spirit, David was recommended to play before



## Prayer Focus

Father, we pray that you would help each child to develop a mindset of patience. As they learn to be patient, we pray that they would look for ways to serve and bless others.



## Jesus' Patience

God promised David that he would establish his throne forever and would never remove his steadfast love from him (2 Samuel 7:5-16). God's promise to David was an unexpected blessing that came after he had waited on God for more than 21 years. Although this promise was fulfilled in David's lifetime, we see its fulfillment in even greater ways hundreds of years later in the birth and life of Jesus (Isaiah 9:1-7, Luke 1:32-33).



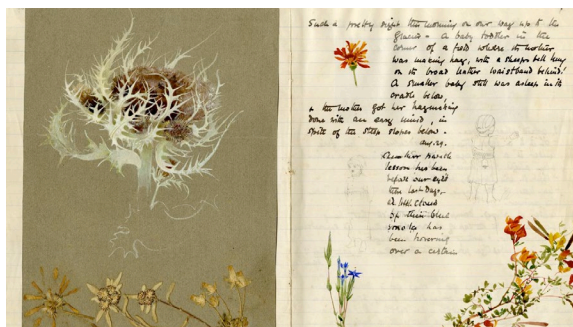
## Early Years

Lilias was born into a wealthy English family in 1853. As Lilias grew, her mother noticed her natural ability for art and wanted to give her opportunities to develop this skill. Once, while traveling in Europe, they met John Ruskin, a famous artist and critic. Lilias became his student and he was frequently surprised by her skill and diligence. She was captivated by the beauty she found in nature and in Scripture and often combined both elements in her art. Lilias did not limit her work to art, however. She also spent a significant amount of time serving the poor of London. Many people did not approve of this work considering it dangerous and undignified, but Lilias wouldn't stop and eagerly shared the love of Christ wherever she went.



## For the Workers

In seasons of waiting and patience, it is easy to focus on what we don't have. Take some time to consider what the Lord has given you, particularly the opportunities he has already given you to serve. How can you thank him and press into wholehearted joyful service in this season?



Lilias  
Trotter

PATIENCE



KEY CONNECTION

Like David, Lilias worked and served diligently in whatever ways were set before her.





# Jesus

THE PERFECT WITNESS



*Jesus*

## THE PERFECT WITNESS



### KEY CONCEPT

We honor God with our lives when we receive Jesus' forgiveness and follow his example.



### SCRIPTURE

- » **Hebrews 12:1-2** – “Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses...”
- » **Revelation 1:5-8 (esp. v1:5a)** – Jesus is the faithful witness
- » **1 Corinthians 6:19-20** – Our lives are not our own; we must glorify God with our bodies
- » **2 Timothy 4:7** – Paul speaks of finishing the race that was set before him



### Lesson

During this unit we want to focus on Hebrews 12:1. As we consider the lives of faithful men and women of God throughout the ages, the writer of Hebrews challenges us to join them as we “lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely and run with endurance the race that is set before us” (Hebrews 12:1b). Living a life that honors God isn’t something that happens by accident. We can stay the course in the race set before us because Jesus finished the race that the Father set before him and freed us from our sins by his blood (Revelation 1:5).



### Prayer Focus

Father, help these little ones to fix their eyes on Jesus, our perfect example. May they grow up as a part of the body of Christ, follow Christ’s perfect example, and join him in building his church.



### Jesus’ Perfection

This unit is designed to focus on the life of Jesus as “THE faithful witness” (Revelation 1:5). As great as it has been to study the lives of over twenty men and women of God, they pale in comparison to Jesus, who is a perfect example of every quality! We’ve spent a whole year adding different colors to the Cloud of Witnesses. This week is our opportunity to join all of these colors together, point to this colorful cloud, and say: “That’s Jesus!”



## Summary

Over the last year we have seen an incredible range of witnesses from the Bible. We began with Abraham and learned from his example of faith. His children were the chosen people of God. We saw obedience in Moses, zeal in Elijah, and devotion in Samuel. We watched as the grace of God was extended to the Gentiles through the tenacity of Paul. Hebrews 11:4 reminds us that their lives still speak to us today, and we have spent the year learning from their example so that we can be encouraged to keep going in our own walk with Christ. While each of these witnesses demonstrated godly qualities, they fell far short of perfection. Jesus embodies each of these traits perfectly. He is the ultimate example that we want to imitate. It is his perfect love and example that we can look to each day of our lives.



## For the Workers

John Piper's article encourages us to learn from Christians that have gone before us. Which biblical witness and character traits stand out to you most from this past year? How did Jesus model these character traits in his own life? Consider the ways that Jesus is calling you to press on to maturity in one or two of the character qualities that we've studied this year and share these with your team as you prepare to serve together.



## Cloud of Witnesses



### KEY CONNECTION

Witnesses from the Church Age demonstrate what it means to follow the example of Christ and walk in the power of his forgiveness.



GRACE CHURCH  
MOUNT PLEASANT