

A vintage map of the Midwest, showing states like Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan, with a red outline of a house. The text "99:1 MISSION" is prominently displayed in the center of the house outline. The map is aged and has a textured, distressed appearance with blue, orange, and white paint splatters. The text "99:1 MISSION" is in a bold, white, sans-serif font with a red outline. The background is a vintage map of the Midwest, showing states like Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan, with various cities and towns labeled. The map is aged and has a textured, distressed appearance with blue, orange, and white paint splatters. The text "99:1 MISSION" is prominently displayed in the center of the house outline. The text "99:1 MISSION" is in a bold, white, sans-serif font with a red outline. The background is a vintage map of the Midwest, showing states like Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan, with various cities and towns labeled. The map is aged and has a textured, distressed appearance with blue, orange, and white paint splatters.

# 99:1 MISSION







# CONTENTS

- 2** Introduction
- 4** Using this Workbook
- 7** Week 1 » 99:1 Profile  
*Jesus: The Shepherd Who Goes After the 1*
- 17** Week 2 » 99:1 Profile  
*Barnabas: Generosity in All Things*
- 27** Week 3 » 99:1 Profile  
*Dorcas: The Influence of Selflessness*
- 37** Week 4 » 99:1 Profile  
*Timothy: Humble Listener*
- 47** Week 5 » 99:1 Profile  
*Stephen: Courage Under Fire*
- 57** Week 6 » 99:1 Profile  
*Priscilla: Power of a Truth Teller*
- 67** Week 7 » 99:1 Profile  
*Mary, Mother of Jesus: A Picture of Purity & Radical Devotion*
- 77** Appendices





# 99:1 MISSION

## **99:1 Mission**

God's heart to rescue and restore the lost runs throughout scripture: from Abraham to Moses, through David into the Prophets, to Jesus and now through the church; God has been broadcasting a revelation of his love throughout time. His heart for the lost is big, like REALLY BIG. God loves what he created, and He is moving Heaven and Earth to see it restored. There is no clearer articulation of God's heart for the lost than in Jesus' parables in Luke 15, in which he speaks of how the Good Shepherd will leave the 99 in search of the 1. In this parable we get a glimpse of just how much the lost mean to his heart and the absolute delight in the heavens over the 1 who was rescued.

When we see a culture that is drifting further and further from God, our response shouldn't be to condemn them because they are so wrong. What else could they do—they are lost! We shouldn't stand in judgment; we should be broken for them, just like Jesus is. We want the world to see Jesus' church as a people who are generous, selfless, humble listeners, courageous truth-tellers, all out of a pure devotion to Jesus. We long for all of our hearts to be burdened with compassion, love and grace. We want to be a people that finds ways to influence others towards the Kingdom and a saving relationship with our God and King Jesus Christ. That is the type of heart we are wanting to establish in each of our lives at White River and why we take faith development so seriously.

So in this study, we want to dust off God's 99:1 mission and put it at the forefront of how our church understands God's mission. I believe in the core of my being that if we keep this 99:1 mission at the center of our hearts and minds, we will enter into a new level of fruitfulness as a church and reach the lost by the hundreds and thousands. While the bulk of this study is about growing character traits that will expand your influence for Jesus, if we do not have this 99:1 perspective drilled into our hearts, we will not live as intentionally as the Lord desires us to be.



## **99:1 Character Profiles**

As we continue to unpack our Faith Development Plan, we are zeroing in on our 4th Faith Movement—Influencing Others. We understand Influencing Others simply as “participating in the lives of others and sharing the love of Christ.” It is our big dream that through this study you will be equipped to influence the lives of others towards Jesus in a more meaningful way. For the bulk of this study we are going to be looking at 99:1 Character Profiles. These are lesser-known characters in the New Testament that God used in powerful ways. We are going to focus on specific character traits that allowed them to make a significant impact for the Kingdom. It is our prayer as a church that we would model their example so that the Gospel would spread here in Indiana as fervently as it did in the first century.

The key to this study is choosing to be intentional. Influencing others is never a passive act; we have to open our eyes to the world of possibilities that God sets before us every day. So I highly encourage you to commit through this series to lean into this discussion, do the daily devotionals and take the weekly challenges seriously. Being intentional with these practices will equip you with the tools to make an exponential Kingdom impact!

**TOM RICH**

*Faith Development Pastor*





# USING THIS WORKBOOK

This workbook is a great resource to engage in the 99:1 Mission: Go Rescue the One experience and connect with what God is doing at our church. It contains group discussions, a daily devotional plan and a place to keep sermon notes. This workbook is designed to be used by anyone but is intended to be used in the context of your small group. A small group is the best place for you to be cared for and challenged to deepen your faith in Jesus. Be sure to take time before your first meeting to familiarize yourself with this format, so you can get a sense of the journey on which you are about to embark.

Be sure to use this workbook as a guide, not a straitjacket. If the group responds to the lesson in an unexpected but honest way, go with that. If you think of a better question than the one in the lesson, ask it! Your group has the freedom to ask the questions that the Spirit is prompting. If you are facilitating the group time, be sure to read through the Appendices section starting on page 77. There you will find some important instructions and information for your group.

If you approach each meeting with prayer and a little preparation, you will find this workbook easy to use. Know that you are not alone on this journey; as a church we want to support you and your group along the way. Feel free to contact your local Faith Development Leader with any questions or concerns you have regarding your group.

## ***Outline of Each Session***

It can be easy for small groups to struggle with this very basic question: *What do we do when we meet?* That is why we have tried to provide more than enough content and questions for you. Inside this workbook you will find teaching, discussion questions, and even some content for you to explore on your own during the week.

*A typical group session for 99:1 Mission: Go Rescue the One will include the following:*

**SERMON NOTES:** Be sure to take this workbook to our weekly services to jot down notes from that session's sermon. Your sermon notes will help add to the discussion in your weekly group experience.

**SHARE YOUR LIFE:** Our lives weren't created to be lived in isolation. It's essential that we connect with others as we follow God together. Relationships are built when we share our stories with people we can trust and depend on. For some, this can feel intimidating at first, but we encourage you to take the risk of sharing your story and



the things God is putting on your heart. This section includes some simple questions to get you talking—share as much or as little of your story as you feel comfortable. Ideally, everyone will share no more than a few minutes each.

**THE LAUNCH:** Read this section aloud to help set up the discussion portion of your time together. This short segment will help orientate your hearts and minds around the main concept you will be discussing that particular week.

**VIDEO & DISCUSSION:** In this section, you'll read aloud passages of Scripture relevant to the week's topic, watch the video lesson and discuss the teaching using the questions provided. In this study, you'll have an opportunity to go beyond Bible study and into biblical living. This section also has a question or two that will challenge you to deepen your faith in Jesus. This is the time where we talk about how He is developing our faith so we reflect his character to the world.

**WEEKLY CHALLENGE:** The book of James tells us that "Faith without works is dead." We are going to heed this truth by engaging in a new challenge each week designed to develop our faith. Transformation happens when we are intentional about putting what we learn into practice. So we encourage you to take up this challenge ... we think you'll be surprised at what God does in and through your life!

**REFLECTIVE QUESTION:** If we want to see our lives actually changed by what we are learning, we need to chew on it throughout our days. We have developed a reflective question to help you do that! You might consider copying it on a sticky note, so you can put that question into action.

**PRAYER & PRAISE:** Life can be tough. Every week it's important to spend about 15 minutes hearing about the things that are weighing on your hearts. Be sure to use the space provided to jot down your group's prayer requests, so you can be praying throughout the week.

**THE DAILY:** During the week, these daily scriptures and questions will help you continue to solidify the truth of the study into your heart and life. This provides you with a chance to begin building a personal devotional life by slowing down and reflecting on a small portion of Scripture each day. Use the space provided to answer the devotional questions or write out prayers. We encourage you to take this opportunity to gain even more insight and confidence in God's promises for you.



What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

# 99:1 MISSION



# WEEK 1



# SERMON NOTES

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# 99:1 PROFILE

## JESUS » THE SHEPHERD WHO GOES AFTER THE 1

### Share Your Life

**LEADER:** If your group is new, welcome newcomers. Introduce everyone—you may even want to have name tags for your first meeting. Allow each person to share what they do and what they are hoping to get from this experience in a small group.

Open your group with prayer. This should be a brief, simple prayer in which you invite God to be with you as you meet. Next, have each person answer the following questions:

- › Being “lost” can take on many different meanings. Talk about a few interpretations of what it means to be “lost.”
- › Describe a time in your life when you were lost or felt lost.

### The Launch (Read Aloud)

*God’s heart is for the one who doesn’t know him yet. It is for the one who wanders far away and doesn’t know the way home. His heart is for the one who isn’t fully alive without him. Make no mistake, God’s heart is running after the one. His heart’s desire is that no one would live this life without him and miss out on our true home in heaven. There is no clearer articulation of God’s heart for the lost than in Jesus’ parables in Luke 15 where he speaks of how the Good Shepherd will leave the 99 in search of the 1 and the absolute delight the heaven’s take in the fact the 1 was rescued. In this parable we get a glimpse of just how much the lost mean to his heart. This is God’s 99:1 Mission!*

In this seven week study, we’ll learn from scripture and some of our pastors and elders about God’s 99:1 Mission and our call to influence others. Each week, they’ll describe a different characteristic from a lesser known biblical character and also from someone who has influenced them. We’ll have an opportunity to read God’s word, listen to a video and then discuss what we’re learning and the way in which we have an opportunity to influence others towards Jesus. We’ll also get to participate in some weekly challenges to get us using our influence in a positive way with each other and our neighbors.

For those who call Christ Lord and friend, we play an important part in God's plan to be united to his creation. Our influence is tied to the way we listen and speak truthfully and honestly. It is exhibited in our courage when we face adversity and as we strive to keep our walk pure. It is evident through our consistency in meeting the needs of others. Our influence has the power to draw people to us and ultimately to Christ.

Before we were born, Jesus walked this earth and was a magnet for the sick, the hurting, the lonely and those who were discarded by society. In fact, nearly everywhere Jesus went, those who needed bodily healing sought him out. He healed them, but his greatest concern was for their soul. In today's lesson, we are going to read together how Jesus Christ reflected the heart of God through his interaction with the Samaritan woman at the well.

**Watch Video »**

## ***Discuss the Lesson***

### **Read John 4:1–10**

Background Information: Samaritans were descendants of foreigners who later intermarried with the Israelites. Samaritans worshipped God, but according to their own traditions, which included idol worship. As time went on, racial tensions grew and Jews and Samaritans did not interact. Additionally, in this time period men did not speak to women alone—even in public places.

- › Based on this information, what would be one big reason why Jews and Samaritans would not associate in public or otherwise?
- › How did Jesus break all the “rules” with this woman at the well?
- › How would you describe Jesus’ conversation with her? How long do you think they were speaking?

### **Read verses 11–26**

- › What is the response of the woman as Jesus tells her about her many husbands? How does Jesus respond to her reaction?
- › How do you respond when someone points to a flaw or is critical about you or something you’ve done?



## Read verses 27–30

- › What is the woman's response to the revelation of Jesus to her at the well?
- › How does this differ from the disciples' response to what they find Jesus doing when they return to him?

## Read Luke 15:1–10

- › Jesus doesn't suggest that he leaves those who belong to him. He promises to never leave us from the moment of our salvation, yet he will continue his search for the lost. Note the response by Jesus and by others when something is found.
- › God's deep joy can be our deep joy. When we celebrate the finding of the lost, our influence is infectious. Describe a time when your celebration poured over into the life of another person.

## **Weekly Challenge » Pray With Your Family**

For our first weekly challenge, set aside three times you will pray and read God's word with your family. If you already do this, congratulations—please continue! If this is a new activity for your family, it may feel somewhat awkward at first, but keep doing it. This practice speaks volumes to your family about approaching God together. In addition, it's important to share our concerns and celebrations with each other and thank God for the truth of his word.

**HEADS UP:** The last challenges of this small group study will involve a little planning. Week 6 and 7 Challenges are focused on your engaging your neighbors in creative and intentional ways.

## **Reflective Question »**

**LEADER:** If we want to see our lives actually changed by what we are learning, we need to chew on it throughout our days. We have developed a reflective question to help you do that! You might consider copying it on a sticky note, so you can put that question into action.

As the old hymn says, "prone to wander, Lord I feel it, prone to leave the God I love," we are a people who are easily lured away from the one who loves us most, who loves us best, who loves us with an everlasting, living water kind of love. When we think back over our lives, we may remember times when we've wandered away. Even if it's painful, it's important to remember where Jesus found us. It helps grow our compassion for the one who is still far away and needs to be found.

***Where were you wandering when Jesus found you?***

**LEADER:** Before moving on to taking prayer requests, take a moment and read through the Small Group Pact below. Go around the circle and have each person read a portion of the pact. As an act of commitment, take some time to have everyone actually sign the document in their own workbook.

### ***Small Group Pact (Read Aloud)***

*Small Groups at White River Christian Church are designed to be safe places where you are cared for and challenged to become more and more like Jesus. Go around the room, each person reading one expectation. Agreeing to these expectations will help everyone get the most out of this group experience.*

*I commit to participate all seven weeks and engage in this community to be cared for and challenged, as well as to care for and challenge others by living out the following:*

**MAKE GROUP A PRIORITY:** I'll prioritize the scheduled group meeting and communicate in advance if I'm going to miss the meeting. I know that inconsistent attendance is one of the major factors that will keep this group from flourishing.

**TAKE OWNERSHIP:** The group will be as good as I make it. I'll share roles within the group and help challenge everyone to grow.

**ENGAGED BUT SELF-AWARE:** I'll stretch myself to be as open and honest as I can with my perspectives and experiences. I understand some of us are talkers and some are more quiet, so I'll be aware of not dominating the discussion or always leaving the weight of discussion to others.

**FACE CONFLICT:** Community can often be very messy, and conflicts may arise. I'll offer grace to others and won't leave the group over disagreements, realizing God might use conflict to develop my faith in some way I don't currently understand.

**HONOR OTHERS:** I'll accept everyone without judgment. I will model James 1:19 in that I will be quick to listen, and slow to speak. I'll listen well and refrain from giving quick answers, simple fixes, or engaging in side conversations.

**CREATING A SAFE PLACE:** I will work to make this a safe space for others to take risks in sharing their story and burdens. I will see their honesty as a gift and honor it by safeguarding it. What I hear and say in the group stays in the group. Period.

**MULTIPLICATION:** Recognizing the command to "go and make disciples," I will participate in identifying a potential leader or two in our group OR be actively inviting others to join this group. As the Lord raises up such a leader, may we grow this group in such a way that a new group becomes established.

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**Sign and Date**



# PRAYER & PRAISE

**READ ALOUD:** *Life can be tough, so each week it's important we spend about 15 minutes hearing about the things that are weighing on our hearts. Be sure to use the space provided to jot down your group's prayer requests to include in your prayers throughout the week.*

[illegible]

# THE DAILY

## **6 days worth of content**

### **Day 1 » Ezekiel 34:11–16**

- › How do you imagine God would describe his searching for you?
- › God says he will tend to his sheep and give them good pasture. Think about how God has cared for and given you land to learn and grow. Jot down what comes to mind.

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### **Day 2 » Revelation 7:15–17**

- › List the six promises in these two verses for those who look on Jesus as savior and friend.
- › Are you struggling to claim any of these promises for yourself today? Take a minute to pray over these promises—it's hard to reach out to someone who is lost if you're feeling that way yourself.

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# THE DAILY

## Day 3 » Luke 15:11–32

- › How have you celebrated the return of a friend or family member who has come back into a right relationship with God?
- › Do you have a prodigal story to tell? Spend some time writing down your comeback story so that you're ready to tell it to someone else who needs to know our Father welcomes us home.

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## Day 4 » 1 Cor. 13:4–6

*This may be a familiar passage commonly known as the "love" chapter of the Bible and often recited at weddings.*

- › Make a list of what love does and doesn't do.
- › Compare this list to Christ's interaction with the woman at the well.
- › Which of these characteristics of Christ's love do you most need help imitating?

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# THE DAILY

## Day 5 » Psalm 9:7–10

- › How does God judge the world? What does this mean?
- › What does God promise to do when we seek him?
- › Spend time praying for someone you know is lost and in need of the saving grace of Jesus.

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## Day 6 » John 7:37–39

- › As a follower and believer of Jesus Christ, a stream does flow from within you. What does that stream look like on a typical day?
- › How do you think those who are thirsty perceive your “streams of living water?”

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# WEEK 2



# SERMON NOTES

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# 99:1 PROFILE

## Barnabas » Generosity in all things

### Share Your Life

- › What was your experience meeting with your family last week for prayer and bible reading?
- › Have you ever felt an inner nudging to do something? Talk to someone? Take the initiative? What did you do?
- › Describe what prompts you to act, or describe how you feel about a time you didn't respond to this prompting.

### The Launch

Generous may not be the first word you think of when asked to describe God, but in the giving of his Son Jesus Christ, it's hard to say God isn't generous. Jesus walked this earth with us, died for our sin and defeated death in his resurrection. Jesus did this for every person who has walked this earth, but he'd do it for just one.

But this isn't the usual place our minds go when we think of generosity is it? You may have been thinking about money, right? And you would be right. Many people are extremely generous with their finances. But this week, we're taking a look at the generosity of time, of walking with someone and giving of oneself to the point that it elevates someone else (not you!). The unsung heroes of life are just this: generous with themselves, their time and sometimes their finances—often seeing how God has made great in you even when we have a hard time seeing it for ourselves. These heroes encourage you to believe the best; take a risk; to keep at it—whatever IT is. These unsung heroes are usually walking right beside you.

[Watch Video »](#)



## **Discuss the Lesson**

### **Read Acts 4:36–37**

- › What does the name Barnabas mean?
- › What did Barnabas do that was significant in this short passage? What does this tell us about his character?

### **Read Acts 9:26–31**

- › Saul (whose name was later changed to Paul) was a ruthless killer of those who followed Christ before his conversion (If you're not familiar with this story, read Acts 9:1–19). Being afraid of Paul for good reasons, the disciples wanted nothing to do with him. How did Barnabas react to this scene? What did he do?
- › Paul will later go on to write most of the New Testament books, but in this historical time, he is just getting started. How did Barnabas's vouching for an inexperienced Paul change the course of Paul's ministry?

### **Read Acts 11:22–26**

- › What does Barnabas do in Tarsus, and how much time does he spend with Paul once they return to Antioch?
- › Describe what it would be like for a good friend, a family member or someone you admire to give you the generous gift of complete access to their life for an entire year. What impact do you think this had on Paul?
- › What is one significant fact about the time Barnabas and Paul spent in Antioch?

## Read Ephesians 4:2–3 and Read Galatians 6:2

- › Why are humility, patience and unity important characteristics of a person who is generous with their life?
- › What does it mean to “Carry one another’s burden?”
- › Give a practical example of how helping to share in the burden of another person is an act of generosity.

## Read Matthew 6:19–21

- › These verses cause us to stop and consider what we treasure most in this world. What do you treasure? What is the first thing that comes to your mind?
- › Consider an example of a treasure from your life that could be destroyed and a treasure that is eternal, and share these with your group.

## ***Weekly Challenge » Intentional Thankfulness***

This week we want you to take a moment and thank the people who have influenced your life. In both big and small ways, God has placed people in your life that have shaped you. This week we want you to identify four people in your life who have done just that and write them a short note of thanks. Writing these notes will bring greater awareness to how God moves in your life through others and will also be a gift of encouragement to those influencers. Imagine them opening up your message of thanks and the encouragement it will give them! So take the challenge of intentionally thanking four people who have shaped your life!

## ***Reflective Question***

It is a 150 mile journey from Antioch to Tarsus over rough terrain. Remember the mode of transportation: feet and donkeys! Take some time and think about what it would have been like for Paul the moment he saw Barnabas in Tarsus and the friendship they developed over time. Paul had been given the very generous gift of sharing life intimately with Barnabas over the course of this year in Antioch. Naturally, Paul would have adopted many characteristics of Barnabas’ life, and as we read through Paul’s New Testament letters, we see the little we know about Barnabas is reflected in the life of Paul.

**Question:** Is my life worth imitating? Whose life am I generously pouring into today?

# PRAYER & PRAISE

[illegible]



# THE DAILY

## Day 1 » Ephesians 3:14–20

- › What does Paul pray we would receive from God in these verses?
- › As you read these verses again, what do you need to ask God for today?
- › Read verse 20 one more time. What is God able to do? By what power does he do this?

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## Day 2 » 1 John 3:1–3

- › What does God give you and how does he give it to you?
- › What does this verse say you are?
- › Who will we be like and when will this happen?
- › Write a short prayer of thankfulness for who God says you are.

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# THE DAILY

## Day 3 » Proverbs 18:24

- › Consider your family and friendships and who you count on in times of need and celebration. Who do you think feels that way about you?
- › Who is this “friend who sticks closer than a brother”?
- › Do you see Jesus in this way? Why or why not?

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## Day 4 » Ecclesiastes 4:9–12

- › Think about a time you needed help, but either you didn't ask or there was no one there to offer their help to you.
- › How did this experience end? How could it have been better?
- › In what way does verse 12 suggest we need our friends? Call two friends today and express your gratitude for their generous presence in your life.

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# THE DAILY

## Day 5 » Proverbs 27:9–10

- › When have you needed the counsel or encouragement of a friend?
- › Sometimes the words a friend needs to say are hard for us to hear. Recall a time when a friend shared a hard truth with you.
- › How can (or was) this experience be “sweet or pleasant”?

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## Day 6 » Philippians 2:3–8

- › Every day we cross paths with a co-worker, a neighbor, or someone who needs to be noticed and cared for with a generous and friendly spirit. That may mean putting your plans aside for a time.
- › Who comes to mind that needs a friend like this?
- › What would it look like for you to consider someone else's interests before your own? What would you possibly lose? What would you gain?

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What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

# 99:1 MISSION

# WEEK 3



# SERMON NOTES

[illegible]





# 99:1 PROFILE

## **Dorcas » The Influence of Selflessness**

### **Share Your Life**

- › What were some of the things you expressed your thankfulness for from last week's challenge? (4 notes of encouragement.)
- › Define what it means to be "selfless."
- › Describe a time when you met someone in need, or you noticed a need (friend, family or stranger). What did you do? Share about it with your group.

### **The Launch**

Throughout history, we can look back and name those who are well known for their selfless acts toward those they have devoted their lives to help and serve. Some short lists of past and current humanitarians would most likely include Mother Teresa, Mahatma Ghandi, Oskar Shindler, and most recently, Bill Gates or even Bono.

These people have intentionally chosen to live their lives in a specific service to those around them. The world knows them for their sacrifice, and in some cases, celebrity. While different in many ways, they share a common desire to come to the aid of the poor, the broken, and the forgotten. Jesus, who gave himself day after day to the service of those around him, gave until he had nothing left, even his very life. He lived his life intentionally with this purpose: that we might live our lives like his. He plainly declares, "The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve." Look back to those names listed above. Does that service to help those in need describe them as well? That's influence! When we are attracted to the life of someone else, causing us to imitate them, we are being influenced.

Today's lesson will bring to light the brief story of Dorcas, a seamstress who was greatly known and loved for her service to the poor. But we'll also learn what Jesus says about the length a friend will go when someone is in need. He knows better than any of us how far love will take you in our service to others, willingly sacrificing his life to rescue us. We were all 1 of 99 at one time, and Dorcas's story shows us how much God values selflessness in His mission.

[Watch Video »](#)

## ***Discuss the Lesson***

**Read Acts 9:36–42**

- › This is a relatively short story with a lot going on. Read the text through one more time aloud and then pick two people (your more creative types) from your group to use your “holy imagination” to retell the story in their own words. Painting a picture with your own words will allow this short story to come to life!
- › Now that we got a feel for the story, what are the three distinct ways in which Dorcas is described? What specifically did she do that was good or helpful?
- › What was the reaction of those who knew and loved Dorcas toward her death?
- › Bringing someone back to life is a powerful example to bring others back to Jesus, and God is working uniquely in each of us. Think about your life. What incredible thing has God resurrected in your life?
- › How has the faithful service of someone you know influenced you to act, propelling you into a deeper faith?

**Read John 15:13**

- › Does Jesus really mean you have to give up your life to love greatly?
- › What does giving up your life look like practically on a day to day basis?
- › Who comes to mind as a friend you would be willing to “lay down your life” for today?



## Read 1 Timothy 6:17–19

- › Paul gives teaching instructions to Timothy. What does Paul want the people to do?
- › If the church does this, how does it benefit them?
- › Put this in your own words, "... so that they may experience true life."
- › Look up verse 19 in another version. What richer understanding do you gain of this verse?

## Read Ephesians 2:10

- › What good works do you know God has created you to do for others?
- › How does this influence those around you to be more like Jesus?

## ***Weekly Challenge » Spend Time With A Friend—It's All About the 1***

This week's challenge invites you to practice selflessness. This week, set aside some time (be as flexible as possible) and ask a friend to have coffee. If you're not a coffee drinker, then think of something the other person enjoys doing and make a date. If you're stumped, then just tell them you'd like to spend some time getting to know them better and listen to their life. The goal this week is to practice selflessness, so you'll be doing the listening—make it all about them! Consider this person, pray for this time, and think of a few questions to ask to get the conversation started. Your group will want to hear about this time next week, so come ready to share.

## ***Reflective Question***

An influencer notices the needs of others around them and does something about it. Whether adding extra groceries to their shopping cart for the food pantry, volunteering at a local school or raking the leaves of an elderly neighbor; there is need all around us.

**QUESTION:** Ask yourself, "Who am I serving?" Consider how you serve your family, your neighbors, your co-workers and even strangers each day.



# PRAYER & PRAISE

[illegible]

# THE DAILY

## Day 1 » Proverbs 22:4–6

- › Whether we are aware of it or not, we are teaching those younger than us by our words and actions. Looking back, who was a positive influence in your childhood?
- › What did they do that has influenced your life?
- › Name one way you are a positive influence to a child or someone younger than you.

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## Day 2 » Psalm 32:8–9

- › There may be times when you are unsure about how to move forward. What promise does God give you in this verse?
- › Knowing that as a follower of Jesus people are watching how you will respond can be stressful at times. How can this verse comfort and bring you his peace in a difficult situation? Write this verse down and put it where you'll see it and work on memorizing it.

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# THE DAILY

## Day 3 » Galatians 5:13–15

- › How should we love our neighbor?
- › It's hard to do this if there's something about ourselves we don't love. Ask God to show you a way you don't care for and love yourself.
- › Ask God to restore this love within you and help you love others in this same way. This may seem counter to selflessness but having our lives grounded first in God's love for us affords the strength and freedom to be selfless in our love toward others.

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## Day 4 » Hebrews 13:5–7

- › How does finding contentment in life relate to living a selfless life?
- › When we experience contentment, we are free. This freedom comes in knowing that God sees us, knows us and is for us, regardless of our circumstances. We know God is always with us! Is there something that is preventing you from living fully into the freedom of this truth?
- › Look around you. Whose life of faith are you imitating?

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# THE DAILY

## Day 5 » Mark 10:35–45

- › Jesus came to serve us, and we learn from his selfless example. There are times when it is difficult to serve others like Jesus did, but the world needs to see his service through us. Consider who you will be with today. How can you serve them specifically?
- › Pray for this opportunity and for God to strengthen you to give of yourself, especially when it's inconvenient.

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## Day 6 » Ephesians 2:8–10

- › How does remembering this (that we are not saved by works) help us have the right motive for serving others?
- › Ask yourself this hard question: Do you need credit for what you do?
- › Who should receive the glory for our selfless acts and attitude?

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What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

# 99:1 MISSION

# WEEK 4



# SERMON NOTES

[illegible]





# 99:1 PROFILE

## Timothy » Humble Listener

### Share Your Life

- › Last week's challenge was all about the one. Did you make time for someone? What did you do? Share what it was like to ask questions and just listen.
- › Think of one person you believe is humble. How do they live this out?

### The Launch

Humility: a modest or low view of one's importance. Synonyms include meekness and modesty. How do these words feel as you read them or hear them being read? Words like weak, insecure, incompetent and poor may cross your mind. This definitely isn't what we are trained by the world to value in ourselves or others. But God says that through the weak and poor, He will showcase his strength and riches through the resurrected Christ who is our ultimate example of humility. The framework of the Kingdom of God says there is strength in humility and greater treasure in knowing where your strength and riches come from. We are wise to remember we are the created beings, not the Creator. Learning to have the posture of a humble listener allows us to both listen to God and see how he may be at work in the people around us. Why would we ever leave the 99 if we aren't actively listening for the 1?

With each new day, we have the opportunity to notice and catch what is happening in the life of someone else. But more times than not we are deaf to the needs of others because we are focused on our own agendas and "to do" lists. Let's be honest and ask ourselves how often do we really start our day asking God to help you notice those around you? How often do you really notice others and pay attention to them, not for what they can do for you, but what you can do for them?

Today's lesson focuses on the practice of humble listening. As you hear the message, let God remind you of a time you felt you were heard and how valuable that was to you. Likewise, consider the value you can extend to another person, especially the one



far from God. We pray that through this lesson you will be convicted to intentionally make the time listen to their story and hear what God is up to in their lives. Make no mistake, he's up to something good—very good.

[Watch Video »](#)

## ***Discuss the Lesson***

Through Paul's letters to Timothy we can learn a lot about the type of man that he was. As we read these passages regarding Timothy, use your imagination to think about the character of man who would listen to this type of instruction.

### **Read 2 Timothy 1:1–7**

- › From this passage we hear about the people that influenced Timothy. Describe each one and imagine the type of influence they brought into his life.
- › Describe the mutual affection Timothy and Paul shared as evidenced in verse 4? Imagine the bond and trust they had for one another. What encouragement does Paul give Timothy in this passage?
- › Tell about someone whose faith has been modeled to you and how that has impacted your life. What was a special attribute of that person?

### **Read 1 Timothy 4:11–16**

- › How does Paul call Timothy to influence the church he is serving in?
- › Name one of the encouragements from Paul to Timothy you should incorporate in your life?

### **Read James 1:19**

- › This is most likely a familiar verse. First, slowly read this verse out loud together as a group. As you read, be aware of what part of this verse is the most difficult for you.
- › Which one stuck out to you? Why?

## Read Proverbs 1:5

- › Here, King Solomon (the writer of Proverbs and the wisest king to rule Israel) who as young man asked God only for wisdom, says "Let the wise \_\_\_\_\_ and become even \_\_\_\_\_."
- › What does this verse indicate about those who are wise?
- › How does this relate to humility?

## Read 1 Thessalonians 2:13

- › How did the church in Thessalonica receive Paul's teaching?
- › What do we open ourselves up to learning when we humbly listen, ridding ourselves of "thinking we already know all the answers?"

## **Weekly Challenge » Praying For the 1**

Our weekly challenge will bring you back to family once more. Make a specific list of those people close to you who need a saving relationship with Jesus. Who is the "1" in your lives that needs to be sought after by Jesus? This may be something your family has never considered before, so this can be an incredible opportunity to talk together about paying attention to others and their need for God. Ask God to break your heart for them as you bring their concerns and salvation before the Lord. Keep this list in a space you can check over time (like your refrigerator, white board), and celebrate how God has answered your prayers on behalf of others.

## **Reflective Question**

Think about the moments you are given every day, designed by our God who cares for his creation and asks us to simplify our lives in order to see someone else. Stop and listen; He's doing something in all our lives. Consider your daily environment and zero in on one specific part of it. What does it look like to put aside your agenda and practice humble listening?

**THIS WEEK ASK YOURSELF:** How can I be intentional to listen to the stories of the people God has put in my life?

# PRAYER & PRAISE

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal grey ruling lines. On the right side, there is a vertical blue band. The left edge of the paper is slightly irregular, suggesting it might be a scan of a physical document. There are no markings or text on the page.

# THE DAILY

## Day 1 » 1 Thessalonians 3:1–2

- › Paul sent Timothy to strengthen and encourage the faith of Thessalonian believers. You are being sent to do the same every day, wherever you go. Where is God sending you today?
- › Think about and pray for the people you will encounter or those you already did. Spend some time asking God to help you listen well and for wisdom to encourage those who need to know God is for them.

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## Day 2 » 2 Timothy 3:16–17

- › The Bible was written by those who observed and listened intently to what God was saying or doing all around them. What is your relationship with the written word of God? Why do you read it?
- › Has a verse or scripture passage you've read ever stopped, convicted or taught you on the spot of what is wrong or true in your life? What truth is God speaking to you in these verses today?

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# THE DAILY

## Day 3 » 2 Peter 3:9

- › This verse tells us God is not slow, but \_\_\_\_\_. Why?
- › How do you practice patience? Why does it matter that we should slow down, observe and listen to the 1/99?
- › What difference could this make to the 1?

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## Day 4 » John 1:45–50

- › Jesus was from the town of Nazareth, and Nathanael was not alone in his disdain for anyone from this town—it had a bad rap! Is there anyone you would be unwilling to spend time with because of where they are from?
- › Think about what happens after Nathanael meets Jesus and his change in attitude toward him. Is it possible God wants to do this work on your heart as well? This can be challenging, but pray that God would show you “greater things” through your obedience to him.

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# THE DAILY

## Day 5 » Proverbs 2:1–11

- › We can feel ill-prepared to sit and listen to others. Our culture teaches us that we need to have answers and advice for everyone. According to these verses, how can you prepare yourself to listen to others?
- › Spend time praying through these verses, seeking God's wisdom, knowledge and understanding.

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## Day 6 » Colossians 3:12–14

- › What “clothes” should you wear when you are listening to others?
- › Sometimes we need to listen to others who need forgiveness. How does God tell us to forgive them?
- › How does this help us be better listeners?

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What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

# 99:1 MISSION

# WEEK 5





# SERMON NOTES

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal grey ruling lines. The paper is oriented vertically and has orange borders on the left and right edges. There are 20 horizontal lines in total, evenly spaced across the page.



# 99:1 PROFILE

## Stephen » Courage Under Fire

### Share Your Life

- › Share with your group any positive or difficult experiences from last week's challenge to pray with your family for their "1."
- › Relay a time in your life you were scared or frightened at the situation or circumstance in which you found yourself. How did you react?
- › How would you define what true courage looks like?

### The Launch

We've already established that people are watching and listening to us every day. And in today's lesson, the rubber meets the road with courage. If we're honest, courage can be a huge mountain to climb. We have to stop regularly to catch our breath, ask God if he really meant it when he said, "Go!" It takes a good amount of courage and grit to ask continually for his help to get us to the summit. It's a deliberate one foot in front of the other act of faith to choose to be courageous in trying times. It takes persistence. It takes grit. But from deep within, we're reminded of the words God spoke to Joshua to "be strong and courageous for the Lord is with you."

When we get to the top, the view can be breathtaking, full of what we imagine it to be—all things beautiful. But it can also be breath-taking, and the end of life as we know it. Being truly courageous often means we have to learn to die to ourselves. This, too, can be beautiful as we learn to fully trust in the only one who saves us—Jesus. He is the one who will show us the 1 out of the 99 that needs to be sought after. As we watch this week's video, think about ways you are called to show courage in your daily responsibilities.

### Watch Video »

## Discuss the Lesson

### Read Acts 6:1–10

- › What qualities did the Twelve say should be evident when looking for someone to fill the needed role?
- › How is Stephen described in verses 3 and 8?
- › The words used to describe Stephen are strong, and in the face of what God did through Stephen, opposition rose from those in power. What “powers” are you up against in your home, at work, in your neighborhood, or where you serve?
- › Because a need was filled, what did the Twelve continue to do (vs.4) and what was the result (vs 7)?

**READ ALOUD:** The following is a condensed version of Acts 7 and is helpful to know going into the following questions.

*Stephen is seized and stands before the Sanhedrin, the ruling court, to answer to the charges against him of blasphemy. Acting as his own attorney, Stephen begins with God's command to Abraham to leave his home and follow God to the land in which these people now dwell. He points to the slavery of the Hebrews under the Egyptian rule and reminds them of God appearing to Moses in the burning bush and declaring that he would lead his people to freedom. Stephen goes on to quote familiar verses from the Old Testament readings the Sanhedrin would have known by heart about the “stiff-necked people” of Israel who constantly forgot who God was. Nearly all of Acts 7 is Stephen's case for our need for a savior and God's provision in the form of Christ. Stephen does not mince words.*

### Read Acts 7:51–53

- › What adjectives would you use to describe Stephen's character in these verses?
- › Do you think he should have used a different method to convince the Sanhedrin of his innocence? Why or why not?

## Read Acts 7:54–60

- › How is Stephen punished?
- › What is his reaction to his accusers and persecutors?
- › Have you ever felt attacked (physically, emotionally, spiritually)?
- › How did you respond, or how do you think you would respond?

## Read Matthew 5:43–47

- › Who do you perceive are your enemies?
- › Can you think of a time you showed love to an enemy? What happened?
- › Here, Jesus uses the example of a tax collector (widely viewed as traitors to the Jews because they were siding with Rome and stealing from their own people) as someone who loves those who love him. Before we pat ourselves on the back for loving others who already love us, Jesus tells us to check ourselves. Who is a person God has placed in your life that is harder for you to connect with, and what are one or two ways you can tangibly love them?

## Read 2 Timothy 1:7

- › Think about your typical reaction to adversity. What are you currently doing to help work through difficult (or even hostile) circumstances you may encounter today?
- › What kind of spirit has God given you? Read verse 7 out loud together, what sticks out to you when you read it out loud?

## **Weekly Challenge » Serve your neighbor**

This week, think about your neighbors. Who are they? What do they do? What are their known needs? Is there some way you could serve your neighbor this week? This might be an opportunity to surprise them with a clean yard, join them on a project they are currently working on, or even simply saying, "I have some extra free time this week. Is there anything I can help you out with this week?" Be creative! Your group will be waiting to hear all about it.



## ***Reflective Question***

Stephen was chosen to lead a group of men who would distribute food to the widows in their community. He was chosen to do this because he was a man “full of God’s grace and power,” and God knew what Stephen would come up against. When you choose to follow Christ, you also receive God’s grace and power, and 2 Timothy reminds us of the kind of spirit he has given all who call Jesus savior and friend—one of power, love and self-discipline.

**THIS WEEK PRAY:** Lord, show me one person to courageously love this week.

# PRAYER & PRAISE

[illegible]

# THE DAILY

## Day 1 » 1 Corinthians 16:13–14

- › This verse is a short list of commands. List them below.
- › What is the last command to heed? Why is this important in a situation when courage is required?
- › Circle one or two you need God to build you up in today.

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## Day 2 » Proverbs 28:1

- › Who is “as bold as a lion?”
- › Why do you have nothing to fear if you are righteous (having accepted the gift of salvation by the blood of Jesus Christ, you are righteous in God’s eyes)?

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# THE DAILY

## Day 3 » Ephesians 6:10–18

- › These verses again speak about how we should dress ourselves in the strength and mighty power of the Lord. List them below.
- › Again, read these verses carefully and mindfully put on the full armor of God.

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## Day 4 » Psalm 27

- › Why do these verses suggest we can be courageous even when in an especially difficult circumstance?
- › How should we wait?
- › Waiting on God means submitting to his timing. Why does it take courage to wait on God?

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# THE DAILY

## Day 5 » Isaiah 41:8–10

- › How would you describe how God feels about his people? About you?
- › What does God promise to do for you in frightening circumstances?
- › Are you currently in a situation causing you to be fearful? Use these verses to pray, placing your name before "Don't" and substituting "God" for "I."

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## Day 6 » Romans 8:31–39

- › According to these verses, do we have anything to fear? Why not?
- › What does verse 37 say you are? Take up these verses and remember the God who gave you his own Son is for you—always with you. Be strong and courageous, and wherever you are right now, shout it out, "I am a conqueror through Jesus Christ!"

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# WEEK 6



# SERMON NOTES

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# 99:1 PROFILE

## Priscilla » Power of a Truth Teller

### Share Your Life

- › Share with your group what you did to serve a neighbor last week.
- › Describe a time when you leaned in to a relationship, speaking truth to either correct or encourage. Is this difficult or relatively easy for you to do? Why or why not?

### The Launch

Telling the truth. It's something we are told as very young children is important to do. In speaking truth, we gain the trust of those around us. Trust is important because once we've established trust with someone, it creates a space where you feel safe to hear words of honesty.

But sometimes we have to speak the truth into moments that are uncomfortable, unwanted or as we'll see today, even harmful to us. These are times when confrontation rears its undesirable head and we have a choice—to smooth it over and avoid the truth, ignore it and pretend it doesn't exist or walk straight into it. Something awesome and transformational has the opportunity to grow in a heart when we set aside our fear and risk for the greater love of another. When we approach a difficult situation with bold truth generously bathed in love, we are imitating Christ.

In today's lesson, we'll be challenged to consider the opportunities for truth telling, as Priscilla did. We'll consider this in our own lives as we hear of the moments others have shared the truth in love to those around them and the far reaching influence that can have.

[Watch Video »](#)



## Discuss the Lesson

### Read Acts 18:24–26 and Ephesians 4:15

- › List all we learn about Apollos from these verses.
- › What do you notice about how Priscilla and her husband Aquila approach Apollos?
- › What could have been Apollos' response based on the verses from Acts and the way he is described?
- › How do you respond when someone corrects you on issues you are passionate about?
- › If the revelation of truth is hard for you to hear, what do you think could be the reason(s) for this?
- › Consider Ephesians 4:15 as you think about Apollos's faith development, how does it inform his ability to receive the truth?
- › Read Acts 18:27–28 to learn the difference Priscilla and Aquila made in the life of Apollos and ultimately countless others. Where have you experienced "speaking the truth in love" to be fruitful like this example?

### Read Ephesians 4:23–25

- › Verse 25 is a command. As followers of Jesus, we are instructed to be "truth tellers." From this passage, what are the elements that need to be in our lives to be effective "truth tellers" to our neighbors?
- › When you speak up a situation, do you have a tendency to be reactionary and respond quickly? How can we be both courageous and prayerful when we speak truth to others? What will it require for us to do that?

### Read Matthew 5:14–16

- › These verses may be familiar. Look closely. What do these verses say you are? What do you give to others?
- › What do they give to God because of your truth telling?
- › What is at stake if we don't?

## Read Acts 18:9–11

- › Paul was in an extremely difficult position. He was in a place that could be harmful to him. What does God promise Paul in his vision?
- › What does Paul do?
- › Have you ever felt that telling the truth could put you, your family or your position in life into jeopardy? If so, share that time with your group. What promise do you have from God to keep telling the truth at all times?

## ***Weekly Challenge » Neighborhood Block Party!***

Ok WRCC, it's time to party! Why wouldn't we? Celebrating life, our neighbors and God's great creation is a gift, and we should share it! Enlist a couple neighbors to help you plan a pitch-in block party (if you live a little further out, really make an effort to invite those who live in your neck of the woods to a simple pitch-in meal at your home). Make a date, send out an invitation, prepare a few games and pray for your block to come out for a great time together.

## ***Reflective Question***

Priscilla learned the accuracy of the Gospel from Paul who had been taught by the Holy Spirit. She learned how to handle the truth of the Word of God, and when she heard Apollos, she was confident of what the Spirit had revealed to her, and she and her husband Aquila shared it. Her obedience to the truth and her willingness to invite someone into her home and share what she knew propelled the Gospel of Jesus even further. The truth matters because it is the truth of the Bible that sets us free.

**THIS WEEK ASK YOURSELF:** Who will I be a willing truth teller to today?

# PRAYER & PRAISE

[illegible]

# THE DAILY

## Day 1 » 2 Corinthians 3:16–18

- › How do you reflect the Lord's glory in your everyday life?
- › As followers of Christ, the Spirit of God is transforming you to fully live in his freedom. How are you sharing this truth with those around you?

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## Day 2 » Matthew 5:33–37

- › Here Jesus impresses on us the essential importance of truth-telling, no matter how costly. How can this simple teaching improve your relationship with your neighbors and your community?
- › Truth telling can be perceived as offensive or convicting. When have you thought about not telling the truth? What was at the root of this desire?
- › What do friends and strangers really need to hear from your mouth?

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# THE DAILY

## Day 3 » John 14:1–6

- › What hallmark truth of the Christian faith do we claim from verse 3?
- › Why is it so important to know the truth?
- › How have you shared this ultimate eternal truth with someone in your life?

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## Day 4 » Zechariah 8:15–17

- › What is the result of telling the truth?
- › How does God feel about anything that is not true?
- › How can your willingness to tell the truth be an influence for good in a stressful situation?

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# THE DAILY

## Day 5 » Ephesians 4:25–29

- › How should we speak to our neighbor in vs. 25 and 29?
- › How can the life-giving words you speak be an encouragement to those who don't yet know Jesus?
- › What do you want the "I" to hear?

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## Day 6 » Proverbs 31:25–26

- › How does truth-telling promote dignity?
- › What two words stand out to you in this verse about "her words?"
- › Think about those you spend time with on a daily basis. How would they describe your words? Spend some time praying about the words you speak and ask God to temper them with wisdom and kindness so that others would be drawn to him.

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What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

# 99:1 MISSION

# WEEK 7





# SERMON NOTES

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# 99:1 PROFILE

## Mary, Mother of Jesus » A Picture of Purity & Radical Devotion

### Share Your Life

- › If you held the neighborhood block party, share 1 highlight and 1 do over from the block party. If you have yet to do it, use this time to make your final plans!
- › Think of something that is “pure.” What are some of its identifying properties? How does its purity distinguish itself from other things?

### The Launch

Purity. Single-mindedness. Devotion. Consistency. These are all words that describe a person who has found meaning and purpose in their life. This type of focused devotion is compelling for the world to see. We are often inspired by those who live with great intention because they seem to have an innate sense of direction in a chaotic world. But finding that purpose is often a battle. There are people all over the earth who wonder, “Why am I here? What should I be doing to make a difference in the life of another?” That is why it is critical for followers of Jesus to discover their purpose and value from God. Those who have tapped into God’s will for their life have discovered that He has gifted them in unique ways. Understanding our purpose allows us to focus our energy on the things that matter and allows us to say no to the things that bring distraction.

While God certainly wants us to live with a high sense of calling, purpose, and direction, he ultimately wants all of that energy pointed in service to himself and others. At the end of the day, we HAVE to remember that it’s all about him, his plan, and his love for humanity.

Our last lesson is centered around the pure and radical devotion of Jesus’s mother Mary. God saw something in her that no one else did. He saw someone who would be obedient to his life-changing plan, which would affect her first, then all of the world.

She remained unchanged by the influence of the world, keeping close to the one who promised to redeem the world through her son, Jesus Christ. She had no way of understanding the influence her life would have on fellow followers of Jesus. She only knew it was all about him. All of it.

As we turn now to the video teaching, let's remember that it will take a pure and radical commitment to live in this 99:1 Mission by being completely sold out to the message and mission of Jesus.

**Watch Video »**

## ***Discuss the Lesson***

**Read Luke 1:46–55, 2:19 and 2:45–51**

- › Mary has two similar reactions to potentially anxiety-ridden events. What is Mary's reaction?
- › What does it mean to "treasure something in your heart?"
- › When have you had a life-changing event occur in which you "treasured" the moment in your heart?

**Read Luke 11:27–28 and Luke 1:26–38**

- › Jesus seems to change the focus of the woman who pays a great compliment to his mother, Mary.
- › How does his response actually pay honor to his mother?
- › Recount how Mary lived this out when the angel visited her as a teenager?

**Read John 19:25–27 and Acts 1:12–14**

- › Where do we find Mary in John 19?
- › Just before his final breath, Jesus makes a provision. For whom does he do this and why?
- › In Acts, Jesus has died, rose again and ascended into heaven and still, Mary knows it is all about him.
- › What do we find her doing and with whom? Why is this important?

## Read Philippians 3:7–8

- › How are Paul's words reflected in the life of Mary?
- › How are they reflected in yours? What are you willing to give up (or have given up) for the sake of Christ?

## Read Ecclesiastes 3:11 and Revelation 21:1–5

- › What has God set in the hearts of humanity?
- › God says he will make everything beautiful in its time and is making all things new. What specifically is he making new, and what can't we know about this?
- › What is new about you?

## **Weekly Challenge » The Influence of Hospitality**

We've spent the last seven weeks reading God's Word and his heart for the one. We've considered those in our life who don't know God, and those who are just getting started but need a friend to walk this life with them. This week, invite a friend, neighbor or acquaintance for a simple meal at your home. Make your heart ready to receive your guests ahead of time. Spend time praising Jesus for how he has changed your life—a full heart of thankfulness will have an infectious influence on your guests. Prepare for them and take time to show them the generosity and hospitality of our savior, Jesus Christ.

## **Reflective Question**

We worship a God who made a perfect earth, and from the time of Adam and Eve and that fateful day in the garden, he has had a plan to restore the perfect purity of creation back to himself. God has had a plan, Mary obeyed her role, Jesus fulfilled it and we have a part in it for as long as we walk this earth because not everyone is there yet. This plan has always been about Jesus and will always be about Jesus. He is the only one who can restore us to his Father—our Father who made and loves us, even when we forget and make this life all about us. Our influence is powerful and the purity of our hearts is attainable. Remember, Christ says he is making all things new, and those who follow Christ are a new creation.

**THIS WEEK ASK YOURSELF:** How can I set aside my plans so that the 1/99 will see a God who makes all things new?



# PRAYER & PRAISE

[illegible]

# THE DAILY

## Day 1 » Romans 12:9–13

- › Paul writes this to the Gentile believers in Rome. How can loving and honoring other believers influence the world?
- › Specifically, how can you show love to another follower of Christ in a public place, where this influence can be seen or felt?

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## Day 2 » Ephesians 4:30–32

- › How can we “grieve the Holy Spirit?”
- › Unforgiveness is a wedge between believers and damages our influence among those who do not know Christ. Is there someone you need to forgive or ask forgiveness of today? Ask God to help you do this.

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# THE DAILY

## Day 3 » 2 Corinthians 4:16–18

- › What should we fix our eyes on in times of trouble?
- › What is this unseen eternal promise?
- › How is our reaction to the trouble of this world important to our influence?

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## Day 4 » Romans 12:1–2

- › What and how should we present ourselves as an act of worship to God?
- › Practically speaking, what does it look like to be a living sacrifice?
- › How does this worship God?

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# THE DAILY

## Day 5 » Luke 8:9–14

- › Describe the differences between the two men in this parable. Who do you most resemble?
- › How can remembering your own personal need for Christ's sacrifice and forgiveness grow compassion and a deep desire for the "I" in your heart?

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## Day 6 » Luke 5:1–11

- › Although it didn't make sense, what was Simon willing to do? Why?
- › Sometimes obedience doesn't make sense to us—we think we've tried everything. But Jesus asks us to not just believe, but follow him, even leaving everything behind for him. Do you know someone who has done this?
- › Consider the lives that have been impacted because of their obedience and ask God to help you obey him like this.

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What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

# 99:1 MISSION

# APPENDICES

## ***Hosting a Small Group***

This journey of faith was never meant to be walked out on our own; we need each other if we are going to follow Jesus in a meaningful way. Groups at White River Christian Church are designed to be safe places where you are cared for and challenged to become more and more like Jesus. Our heart at WRCC is that you find a group that allows you to develop your faith to become all that He has called you to be that is why our Faith Development Plan is at the center of our teaching.

### **FAITH DEVELOPMENT PLAN**



**Establish Faith**



**Form Character**



**Live Missionally**



**Influence Others**

#### **ESTABLISH FAITH**

A posture of trust and repentance in Jesus

#### **FORM CHARACTER**

The process of becoming more like Jesus

#### **LIVE MISSIONALLY**

Partnering with God in His Kingdom work

#### **INFLUENCE OTHERS**

Participating in the lives of others and sharing the love of Christ

[wrcc.org/99to1](http://wrcc.org/99to1)



## ***Leading for the First Time***

Take a breath ... feel better? Hosting a group is not nearly as difficult as you may have built it up to be in your mind. No one is expecting you to be a spiritual giant. This workbook is designed so that you can come alongside of one another as co-learners. Hosting a group is as simple as opening your home, reading Scripture and questions aloud, playing a DVD (or streaming from the web at [wrcc.org/99to1](http://wrcc.org/99to1)), and having a conversation from the heart. Trust us, after your first meeting, you'll find that your group will fall into a familiar rhythm and this whole process will become less daunting.

***Here are a few tips for you as you get ready for your first meeting:***

**LEAD WITH HOSPITALITY:** Creating a warm and welcoming environment is the first step of hosting a group. Who doesn't like the idea that someone is expecting them? Keep in mind that for many people, the thought of going to someone's house to have a "spiritual conversation" can be intimidating. It can trigger all kinds of insecurities. Be mindful of this in all your interactions with your group ... from email communication, to the way you greet them at the door, a warm and welcoming environment will go a long way toward easing their fears.

**KNOWING NAMES IS IMPORTANT:** Cheat with name-tags. For new groups, it's especially hard to remember the flood of new names that come rushing at you and you are embarrassed to ask once you get to week three! So, for this nine-week journey, have name tags available to deepen connection within the group.

**START WITH INTRODUCTIONS:** Especially for week one, hearing stories trumps getting through content. We want to take time to go around the circle and have everyone introduce himself or herself. Share some of the raw data from their life (family, occupation, etc.) but also include one significant thing about their life that would be good for the group to know about them.

**GROUP PACT:** The key to getting off on the right foot with your group is to appropriately discuss and set expectations. During week one, you will read through the Group Pact on page 12 and have an opportunity to lay out clear expectations.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **When should I reach out for help from the Faith Development Team?**

Anytime you want! Sincerely, we want to hear from you! Don't feel like it has to be something big or really important to contact us. We love to be a sounding board for you. Call us early. Call us often. Contact the Faith Development Leader at your location:

- › **Tom Rich** » trich@wrcc.org (Hamilton North)
- › **Tim Garner** » tgarner@wrcc.org (Noblesville)
- › **Pat Moor** » patmoor@primerica.com (Cafe)
- › **Miguel Lara** » mlara@wrcc.org (Hispanic)

### **Is it okay to invite someone to the group who is not a member of our church?**

If the person does not have a home church or doesn't yet have a relationship with Jesus, a group can be a great 'on-ramp' to the Christian faith while providing a good connection to the local church. Joining a group also provides a way to get to know other church members on a deeper level and develop new relationships with neighbors in your area. If the person has a home church, ideally they would get connected in their own church, however, there are times when it may be appropriate to make an exception.

### **What should we do if a member misses a meeting (or several)?**

Define mutual expectations early on with the Group Pact. If attendance becomes an issue with someone in the group, address it with them in person, not via email. Again, in this type of situation, err on the side of grace. Be in a place emotionally where you are more saddened you didn't get to see the person at group than you are frustrated they didn't show up.

### **How long will this group meet?**

Your commitment to this group is through the duration of the seven week 99:1 Mission series. We certainly hope and pray that your group will continue to meet well beyond the length of this campaign, but we are structuring this campaign so that people who have always been hesitant about getting connected to a group will be able to experience the blessing of living their faith within community. At the end of this study, each group member may decide if he or she wants to continue on for another study. Some groups launch relationships for years to come and others are stepping stones into another group experience. Either way, enjoy the journey.

If your group decides to continue meeting, we recommend jumping on to RightNowMedia and deciding as a group what the next study should be for your group. You can access a FREE subscription to RightNowMedia through [www.wrcc.org/rightnowmedia](http://www.wrcc.org/rightnowmedia). Study guides or other materials to support those studies can be purchased online via [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) or [christianbook.com](http://christianbook.com). For other recommendations, feel free to contact our Faith Development Pastor, Tom Rich (trich@wrcc.org).

## How often should we meet?

During the 99:1 Mission: Go Rescue the One, groups meet every week. After the campaign, we recommend that groups meet three weeks a month and take the fourth week off. This works with busy schedules while also helping to maintain a sense of community. We need an occasional break, but we also need to be intentional with one another. Some groups choose to meet every other week. One of the challenges of meeting every other week is that if someone misses group, it will be a month since you have met with them. Therefore, groups that meet every other week will need to be intentional about looking for additional ways to build a sense of community.

## What if this group is not working for us?

You're not alone! This could be the result of a personality conflict, life stage difference, geographical distance, or any number of things. Relax. Pray for God's direction, and at the end of this nine-week study, decide whether to continue with this group or find another. You don't typically buy the first car you look at or marry the first person you date, and the same goes with a group. However, don't bail out before the nine weeks are up—God might have something to teach you. Also, don't run from conflict or prejudge people before you have given them a chance. God is still working in your life, too!

## Who is the leader?

Most groups have an official leader. But ideally, the group will mature and members will rotate the leadership of meetings. We have discovered that healthy groups rotate hosts or leaders and homes on a regular basis. This model ensures that all members grow, give their unique contribution, and develop their gifts. This workbook and the Holy Spirit can keep things on track even when you rotate leaders. Christ has promised to be in your midst as you gather. Ultimately, God is your leader each step of the way.

## How do we handle the child care needs in our group?

Very carefully. Seriously, this can be a sensitive issue. We suggest you empower the group to openly brainstorm solutions. You may try one option that works for a while and then adjust over time. Our favorite approach is for adults to meet in the living room or dining room and to share the cost of a babysitter (or two) who can watch the kids in a different part of the house. This way, parents don't have to be away from their children all evening when their children are too young to be left at home. A second option is to use one home for the kids and a second home (close by or a phone call away) for the adults. A final option is to decide you need to have a night to invest in your spiritual lives individually or as a couple and to make your own arrangements for childcare. No matter what decision the group makes, the best approach is to dialogue openly about both the problem and the solution.



**Small Group Calendar**

Planning can help ensure the greatest participation at every meeting. At the end of each meeting, review this calendar. Be sure to include a regular rotation of host homes/leaders, and don't forget birthdays, socials, church events, holidays and mission/ministry projects.

DATE	LESSON	HOST HOME	REFRESHMENTS	LEADER





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# 99:1 MISSION







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CHRISTIAN CHURCH

connecting every life to Jesus