

Notes & Group Questions from July 18 - 24 readings (Questions (Q:) for groups are bolded below)

1 CHRONICLES 26:12-2 CHRONICLES 13:22

7/18 - It is interesting to read about the various gatekeepers, treasurers, officials, military commanders and leaders in today's First Chronicle readings! In some ways it is sad to read about how well organized things were - knowing that the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple and the exile to Babylon is coming up. All of this organization will be destroyed. Why? Because of sin. Sin destroys. Sin kills. So sad. It is true that the lineage from Abraham to Judah to David will of course continue through to Jesus and now to us as spiritual descendants. But, the nation of Israel at this time of First Chronicles, with all of it's great organization, will later fall because the leaders and people will turn their backs on God in sin. In disobedience. **Q: Is there a lesson for us in this today? Do you see the dangers of sin? Of how it can destroy everything you hold dear?** Please - flee from sin. Jesus can set you free from the bondage of sin. Don't lose everything you hold dear to something as stupid as sin. Sin will sell you lies and leave you with nothing.

7/19 - We finish up the book of First Chronicles today! Second Chronicles begins tomorrow! Today's readings are a nice transition from the reign of King David to his son Solomon. Our readings today set the transition scene nicely in First Chronicles 28 verses 1 & 2: *"David summoned all his officials to Jerusalem--the leaders of the tribes, the commanders of the twelve army divisions, the other generals and captains, the overseers of the royal property and livestock, the palace officials, the mighty men, and all the other warriors in the kingdom. David rose and stood before them and addressed them as follows: "My brothers and my people!"* One thing that really stood out to me in David's address to his officials today was his absolute passion for God's Temple! David was so passionate about making sure the Temple was prepared for his son Solomon to build it. Yes, true, God gave David the plans for the Temple. :) **Q: But... what about us in our lives today... does God give us any "plans" for our lives today? What about the Bible? Is the Bible a "plan" for our lives today that we should follow?**

7/19 - I love David's prayer of praise to God today in 1 Chronicles 29 verses 10 through 12: *"O LORD, the God of our ancestor Israel, may you be praised forever and ever! Yours, O LORD, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty. Everything in the heavens and on earth is yours, O LORD, and this is your kingdom. We adore you as the one who is over all things. Riches and honor come from you alone, for you rule over everything. Power and might are in your hand, and it is at your discretion that people are made great and given strength."* **Q: Have you ever prayed a prayer of praise like this to God? Would you like to?** You could do so right now!

7/20 - Today we begin the book of Second Chronicles! Are you ready to read about the reign of King Solomon? Let's go!
~Second Chronicles~

Author: Unknown

Date: Fifth century B.C.

Content: Second Chronicles contains the history of Judah that was begun in First Chronicles. It deals with the glory of Solomon's reign, with a special emphasis being placed upon the glory of the temple. This emphasis is made because a priest point of view pervades the book. The remaining kings of Judah are discussed, with a stress upon how the religious affairs of the nation were going. Hezekiah is given mention because during his reign an extended revival took place. The destruction of Jerusalem and the exile of the people to Babylon are described, and the book ends with the Persian king's decree to let the people return home.

Theme: Judah's history is described from a religious point of view in this book. The righteous kings are commented on and the evil kings are named so that all can see who is responsible for the rise and fall of the nation. The religious leaders and their ultimate failure to remain true to God added to the sin of Judah - until God allowed his own chosen people to plunge themselves into ruin, as an example for all time that God will not tolerate sin. (Above commentary is from Tyndale Publishers "The One Year Bible Companion" pp. 7-8)

7/20 - Today in 2 Chronicles chapter 1 we read about King Solomon asking for wisdom and knowledge from God. In verse 7 we read these words from God to Solomon - *"Ask for whatever you want me to give you."* In verse 10 we will read this amazing response from Solomon to God: *"Give me wisdom and knowledge, that I may lead this people, for who is able to govern this great people of yours?"* Solomon could have asked God for anything - more wealth, more power, more strength, more whatever, but he simply asked for wisdom and knowledge. Why? Because he wanted to lead God's people

well and distinguish between right and wrong. Amazing. **Q: How would you or I answer this question today?** What if God came to you today and said the same thing to you from verse 5 - "Ask for whatever you want me to give you." **What would you ask for? Would you ask for Wisdom? Would you ask for Knowledge? If so, God offers these to you and me right now. Where?** I believe wisdom and knowledge is offered to us through study of the Bible and by living in a loving and right relationship with God. We can receive the gift of God's wisdom today! **If we would answer this question from God differently - maybe wanting more money, or power, or fame, or whatever - do you think we might forfeit gaining wisdom? So, again, what if God were to say to you right now this same statement he said to Solomon? "Ask for whatever you want me to give you." What do you ask for?**

7/21 - Today in Second Chronicles we read about the furnishings for the Temple, including the completion of the Sea in chapter 4 verses 4 & 5 - "The Sea rested on a base of twelve bronze oxen, all facing outward. Three faced north, three faced west, three faced south, and three faced east. The walls of the Sea were about three inches thick, and its rim flared out like a cup and resembled a lily blossom. It could hold about 16,500 gallons of water." The Sea was used by the priests for their ceremonial washings. Interestingly, the New Testament views these washing rituals as a foreshadowing of the cleansing provided to us by Jesus, as we will read later this year in Hebrews chapter 9 verses 11-14. **Q: Has Jesus cleansed you of your sins? When? How?**

7/22 - Today in Second Chronicles we read about Solomon's dedication of the Temple of the Lord in Jerusalem! I meant to do this in yesterday's posting - show an exterior and interior image below of what's now often referred to as "Solomon's Temple." Even though it was clearly the Temple of the Lord, it's referred to as Solomon's Temple based on Solomon building it - and we'll read about some more Temple's later on in our readings in the One Year Bible this year, including Ezekiel's Temple, which is fascinating! Let me also highly encourage you to take a few moments to check out all of the cool images of the interior and exterior of Solomon's Temple [at this link](#). (make sure you scroll down quite a bit on this link to see all the images) I think this link will help you visualize the Temple much better! Also, at the [home page](#) of that link above, you can read up on the Temple Mount area of Jerusalem today where Solomon's Temple was believed to have been located, along with the Second Temple. And now where the Dome of the Rock mosque is located. Very interesting stuff on that web page! And tons of links. Can't say I agree with it all... but it's a website worth exploring. **Q: Have you ever been to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem? What stood out to you? If not, do you want to visit it?**

7/23 - Today in Second Chronicles chapter 8 we learn that Solomon married the Egyptian Pharaoh's daughter, which was not pleasing to God and was contrary to God's Law of not marrying foreigners (in large part because they worshiped foreign gods) as you'll recall from [Deuteronomy 7:3-4](#). The Chronicler overall paints a very rosy portrait of both David and Solomon, ignoring many aspects of their sins that we read about in Samuel and Kings. But, it's interesting the Chronicler mentioned this marriage. Solomon married likely for a military alliance with Egypt. Solomon's marrying of foreign wives ultimately led to his turning his heart away from God, as we read in [1 Kings 11:1-11](#). Interestingly, we see that Solomon won't allow his Egyptian wife to live in David's palace in verse 11: "Solomon moved his wife, Pharaoh's daughter, from the City of David to the new palace he had built for her. He said, "My wife must not live in King David's palace, for the Ark of the LORD has been there, and it is holy ground."" And so he builds her a brand new palace! **Q: Think Solomon knew something was amiss with this situation before God if he wouldn't let his Egyptian wife live in David's palace? What about us in our lives today - when we sin, do we try to "cover it up" or "build a pretty palace" to maybe try to distract ourselves or God from our sin? Should we instead just simply confess our sin to God and repent?**

7/24 - In Second Chronicles chapter 11 today we read about Jeroboam appointing his own priests who served at pagan shrines and encouraged idol worship! Think this was a smart idea...? This led the Levites to abandon their homes in Israel and head south to Judah. Just imagine the spiritual vacuum this departure of the Levites left in Judah... **Q: maybe this is kind of like the spiritual vacuum that happens in our lives today when we don't go to church for a while??** :) This sin of Jeroboam unfortunately plays itself out over and over in the northern Kingdom until its destruction. Today in Second Chronicles chapter 12 we read about Egypt invading Judah. Why? Because Rehoboam and all of Israel abandoned God's Law. You will notice often in Chronicles the patterns of obedience=blessing and disobedience=punishment. In chapter 12 we're going into punishment... Verse 9 tells us: "So King Shishak of Egypt came to Jerusalem and took away all the treasures of the Temple of the LORD and of the royal palace, including all of Solomon's gold shields." Bible History Online says this about Shishak: "Shishak's invasion of Judah has been confirmed by archaeologists. Shishak's own record of his campaign is inscribed on the south wall of the Great Temple of Amon at Karnak. In his campaign he presents 156 cities of Judea to his god Amon."

ROMANS 4:13-8:39

7/18 - Wow. Romans 5 verses 1 & 2 are so true: *"Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. Because of our faith, Christ has brought us into this place of highest privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God's glory."* It is important to note that these verses are talking about more than just a "sense of peace." They are talking about literal "peace with God"! Peace with God is gifted to us through faith in Jesus' life, death and resurrection to redeem us from the depravity and consequences of our sin. **Q: Have you experienced literal peace with God?** I know that we do not always "sense the peace" with God - but I do not think it leaves us once we've entered into an eternal right relationship with Jesus. I think we can certainly distract ourselves enough or make ourselves worried or frantic enough that we might think the peace is gone. But eternal peace doesn't ever leave us. I do think we need to take time to connect with and rediscover Christ's peace within us each and every day. Reading, prayer and meditation on Scripture are great ways to do this. I have also found getting outdoors and taking a walk in nature helps me connect with Christ's peace again. **Q: What are other ways that you connect with Christ's peace within you?**

7/18 - Verses 3 through 5 are incredible today as well: *"We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they are good for us--they help us learn to endure. And endurance develops strength of character in us, and character strengthens our confident expectation of salvation. And this expectation will not disappoint us. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love."* Note that these verses are not saying to rejoice "because" of problems and trials (that would be morbid), but that we can still rejoice even "when we run into" the problems and trials. It is often difficult for us to remember to rejoice when problems and trials come our way - but please do remember these words of Paul in Romans about rejoicing during a time of trial. Remember our readings in Acts? Paul was ridiculed, beaten, jailed and shipwrecked - and yet, he never gave into a defeatist attitude. He kept preaching God's love! If anyone knows about trials and problems, it is Paul. And he tells us to rejoice through problems and trials because in this we learn to endure. I love that Paul says that character strengthens our confident expectation of salvation! And that this expectation will not disappoint! **Q: Do you believe this? Do you have a confident expectation of salvation?**

7/19 - Wow... I don't know what it is about Romans this year, but it is speaking to me like never before. For those of you that have gone through the One Year Bible multiple times, you probably know how this is. One year a book will kinda sorta speak to you - God's Word always does. And then the next year a book will just blow you away with its wisdom. Romans is one of those books for me this year... Paul's words in Romans 5 verses 6 through 8 today spoke to me right away: *"When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners. Now, no one is likely to die for a good person, though someone might be willing to die for a person who is especially good. But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners."* This is so powerful to think about. Jesus died for us sinners. Think about how selfless this is. **Q: Would you die for someone right now? Perhaps your family or maybe someone who is especially good, as this Psalm says. But would you die for a liar, a thief, a cheat, or a hopeless addict?** Maybe so... but probably not. Jesus came for us. He died for us. Us thieves. Us liars. Us cheat. Us addicts. He came to save us! **Have you been saved by Jesus?**

7/19 - We are now called friends of God as Paul tells us in verse 11: *"So now we can rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God--all because of what our Lord Jesus Christ has done for us in making us friends of God."* **Q: Do you rejoice in knowing that you are a friend of God? If someone were to look at how you interact with others and how you spend your time and your days, would they know that you are a friend of God? Do you often spend quality time with God like you would with any other friend? Do you think spending time with God is more valuable than anything else you could do in this world?**

7/20 - Today in Romans chapter 6 verses 17 & 18 we read: *"But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness."* **Q: Do you believe that you were ever a slave to sin? Is it possible that you are still a slave to sin now? How can you be freed from being a slave to sin? Or, better yet, Who do you think can free you from being a slave to sin? Are you wholeheartedly obeying the teaching to which you have been entrusted? Where can you consistently find the teaching to which you have been entrusted? Do you consider yourself a slave to righteousness? Do you like the idea of being a slave to righteousness?**

7/21 - Great writings by Paul in Romans 7 today about the Law! I love how he wraps up today's readings in verses 12 & 13 by saying: *"But still, the law itself is holy and right and good. But how can that be? Did the law, which is good, cause my doom? Of course not! Sin used what was good to bring about my condemnation. So we can see how terrible sin really*

is. It uses God's good commandment for its own evil purposes." Great theology in this chapter today! Indeed - the law itself is holy and right and good. But, we couldn't keep the law and sin tempted us to break the law. And thanks to Jesus, Paul tells us in verse 6 today: *"But now we have been released from the law, for we died with Christ, and we are no longer captive to its power. Now we can really serve God, not in the old way by obeying the letter of the law, but in the new way, by the Spirit."* We now serve God by the Spirit! We are free indeed! **Q: How are you living your life in the Spirit? How do you recognize the Spirit in your life today?**

7/22 - Romans chapter 7 today has some amazing teachings about struggling with sin. I imagine that all of us at one point or another have concurred with Paul - and remember this is the apostle Paul writing this! - in verses 15 through 17: *"I don't understand myself at all, for I really want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do the very thing I hate. I know perfectly well that what I am doing is wrong, and my bad conscience shows that I agree that the law is good. But I can't help myself, because it is sin inside me that makes me do these evil things."* These verses get at Original Sin in a big way. We all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Sin can live inside of us and make us do evil things that we hate doing. What do you suppose - or Whom do you suppose - frees us from this bondage to sin? Jesus. Yes, Jesus frees us. How? He paid the penalty on the cross for our sins. And he gives us the free gift of salvation and the Holy Spirit to free us from the bondage of sin. Take a look at these verses again above from Paul. **Q: Is sin living inside of you making you do things you hate? Do you want to be free from this slavery to sin? Will you pray to accept Jesus as your savior today and allow him to free you from you bondage to sin?** Please do. It's the best decision you will ever make. Please spend a few minutes prayerfully at this website - <http://needhim.org/>

7/23 - Wow... I love Paul's writings today in Romans 8 verses 12 through 14! *"So, dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation whatsoever to do what your sinful nature urges you to do. For if you keep on following it, you will perish. But if through the power of the Holy Spirit you turn from it and its evil deeds, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God."* **Q: How do these verses speak to you? Can you imagine that these words were written for you and your life today? Do you believe that you have no obligation whatsoever to do what sin urges you to do? Are you led in your life today by the Spirit of God?**

7/24 - Tyndale's One Year Bible Companion has a very interesting Q & A today on Romans 8 verses 24-25: *"Now that we are saved, we eagerly look forward to this freedom. For if you already have something, you don't need to hope for it. But if we look forward to something we don't have yet, we must wait patiently and confidently."* Tyndale's commentary says: "In Romans, Paul presents the idea that salvation is past, present, and future. It is past because we were saved the moment we believed in Jesus Christ as Savior; our new life (eternal life) begins at that moment. And it is present because we are being saved. But at the same time, we have not yet fully received all the benefits and blessings of salvation that will be ours when Christ's new kingdom is completely established. That's our future salvation." This is pretty amazing to consider that our salvation is past, present and future! **Q: Do you appreciate being saved from your past? Are you living fully for God in the present? Are you waiting patiently and confidently for the future?**

7/24 - Today in Romans chapter 8 verses 27 through 29 we read these famous words of Paul's: *"No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."* **Q: Do you believe that we are more than conquerors through our relationship with Jesus? Does it encourage you to know this? Are you living your life in such a way that truly reflects that you know that you are more than a conqueror? Do you believe that there is absolutely nothing in this world that can separate you from the love of God because of your relationship with Jesus as your Lord and Savior?**

PSALM 14:1-18:50

7/18 - Psalm 14 could be seen at first glance as a discouraging Psalm for us as we look at verse 3: *"But no, all have turned away from God; all have become corrupt. No one does good, not even one!"* I think it is important to keep in mind that there is truth in this verse (particularly if we ever start thinking we're "good" and others around us are not...). But also I think it's good to keep in mind that this verse was written before Jesus came to the earth. Jesus was perfect. And through His resurrection we are called toward greater holiness and ultimately perfect goodness once we meet Jesus face to face in heaven. Jesus gives us the hope spoken of in the closing of this Psalm in verse 7: *"Oh, that salvation would come from Mount Zion to rescue Israel! For when the LORD restores his people, Jacob will shout with joy, and Israel will rejoice."* **Q: Do you recognize the salvation that has come to us? Are you shouting for joy for this salvation? Are you rejoicing!?**

7/19 - Psalm 15 verses 1 & 2 today are awesome: *"Who may worship in your sanctuary, LORD? Who may enter your presence on your holy hill? Those who lead blameless lives and do what is right, speaking the truth from sincere hearts."* Psalm 15 was written for those that wished to have access to God in his Temple in Jerusalem. However, I do believe that today, through Jesus, anyone can worship God anywhere - in a church or in our homes or wherever we find ourselves. However, I do think there is truth in these Psalm verses in that we can worship God beautifully by living a blameless life (not perfect life - only Jesus was perfect this side of heaven - we will need to confess sins & repent), doing what is right, and speaking the truth from sincere hearts. I do believe these are acts of worship that demonstrate our friendship with God and our growth in becoming more like his son Jesus in our lifetimes. **Q: Do you seek to lead a blameless life? Do you seek to do what is right? Do you speak the truth from a sincere heart? Do you seek to worship God in some way each and every day? How?**

7/20 - Today we read Psalm 16, which I absolutely love! I could probably share with you some thoughts on just about every verse in this Psalm. Verse 1 tells us: *"Keep me safe, O God, for I have come to you for refuge."* Do you believe that God will keep you safe if you come to Him for refuge? And verse 2 is so true: *"I said to the LORD, "You are my Master! All the good things I have are from you.""* Everything good thing in our life - absolutely everything good thing in our life - comes from God. Do you believe this? Verse 3 reminds me to rejoice for and pray for our pastors and spiritual mentors: *"The godly people in the land are my true heroes! I take pleasure in them!"* Do you appreciate your pastors / ministers / priests and spiritual mentors? And do you appreciate other godly people you know too? Are they true heroes? Do you pray for these folks regularly? If not, will you?

7/20 - And verse 11 is a powerful closing to this Psalm 16 and perhaps a prayer for us to pray fervently: *"You will show me the way of life, granting me the joy of your presence and the pleasures of living with you forever."* **Q: Do you want to be shown the way of life from God? Do you want to be granted the joy of God's presence? Do you want the pleasure of living with God forever? Have you prayed to God and Jesus and the Holy Spirit to give you these things in your life? Will you pray this prayer?**

7/21 - In Psalm 17 David appeals to God as Judge when he is being attacked by foes. Verse 7 is a great prayer and comfort! *"Show me your unfailing love in wonderful ways. You save with your strength those who seek refuge from their enemies."* **Q: Do you seek refuge with God from whatever might attacking you? Do you believe that God will show you his unfailing love in wonderful ways? Have you been saved by God's strength? Have you sought refuge with God from your "enemies"?**

7/22 - Psalm 18 is an amazing one! We'll get this Psalm for the next 3 days of readings, which is great. And then comes Psalm 19 which is off the charts awesome! Verse 1 today is so beautiful: *"I love you, LORD; you are my strength."* **Q: How often do you tell God that you love him?** One thing that one of my former pastors does when he prays publicly, which absolutely moves me, is that he closes out just about every prayer with "God we love you. And we pray all of this in the name of your son Jesus." The last line of course is the powerful line! But, that second to last line... is just beautiful. Just telling God that we love him. I'm not sure I tell God that I love him often enough. God may not "need" to hear it. But I think that I need to say it more often. **I love you God!**

7/23 - There are so many great verses today for us to meditate upon in Psalm 18! I love verses 25 through 27: *"To the faithful you show yourself faithful; to those with integrity you show integrity. To the pure you show yourself pure, but to the wicked you show yourself hostile. You rescue those who are humble, but you humiliate the proud."* **Q: Are you showing yourself to be faithful to God? Are you living with integrity? Are you showing yourself to be pure? Is God showing you these things as well?**

7/24 - Today we finish up Psalm 18. (Psalm 19 tomorrow! So excited! :) The closing verse 50 of Psalm 18 today is powerful - and I believe can apply to both David and Jesus: *"You give great victories to your king; you show unfailing love to your anointed, to David and all his descendants forever."* **Q: Are you a spiritual descendent of David? Do you believe that God shows you unfailing love? Do you think that God's Word, the Bible, shows His unfailing love for you?**

PROVERBS 19:17-29

7/18 - Today in Proverbs 19 verse 17 we read – *"He who is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will reward him for what he has done."* **Q: Do you believe that when you are kind to the poor you are actually lending to God? Are you**

someone who is consistently kind to the poor? Are you kind to the spiritually, emotionally, materially poor that God has brought into your life? Are you also kind to spiritually, emotionally, materially poor that you do not know? Do you believe this kindness is noticed by God? Do you believe it is rewarded?

7/19 - Proverbs chapter 19 verse 19 teaches us today: *"Short-tempered people must pay their own penalty. If you rescue them once, you will have to do it again."* This is an interesting Proverb to think about. What it says to me is that sometimes people can only learn things on their own. They have to make their own mistakes. Pay their own penalty. And then they'll learn. If we don't let them go through this process, and we "rescue them" once, we'll have to rescue them again. Interesting to consider this in light of verse 18: *"Discipline your children while there is hope. If you don't, you will ruin their lives."* This verse to me indicates that we can actually "rescue" people with godly discipline early in their lives. We can "rescue" our children through godly discipline and save them much ruin later in their lives. **Q: Do you agree with both of these Proverbs? Do you see the wisdom in godly discipline for our children?**

7/20 - Proverbs 19 verse 21 is so true : *"You can make many plans, but the LORD's purpose will prevail."* I am so amazed by how God's purpose continues to steer the course of my life - tossing to the side my frivolous plans that were not part of His purpose. I think we do well to realize that God absolutely has a purpose for our lives - and that we very likely do not know what it is. :) Well, that's not always true. I do think many of us have a good indication of what God's purpose is for our lives. But I think perhaps more of us do not. And that's okay. I believe that if we stay close to God in a loving relationship and seek to live godly lives, God's purpose can't help but take over the course of our life. Without our even realizing it at times. There was that movie several years back called Mr. Holland's Opus, where the lead character realized that "Life is what happens while you are busy making other plans." I submit that "God's purpose is what happens if you are seeking after Him with all your heart, soul, mind and strength." Let us pray that God is the Master Planner in our life today! And let us also pray that God will reveal to us if we are ignoring His plans for us in any way and if we are perhaps in danger of planning to build a "tower of Babel" in our life in the place of God... **Q: Do you agree with this Proverb? Does the LORD's purpose prevail over our plans?**

7/21 - I like Proverbs 19 verse 22 today! *"Loyalty makes a person attractive. And it is better to be poor than dishonest."* It is an interesting combination of proverbs in one verse. I do agree that loyalty is an attractive quality in people. **Q: How are you loyal to God?** And I wholeheartedly agree that it is better to be poor than dishonest. Dishonestly is a sin that breeds so many other sins and wrong-thinkings in our life. It's to be avoided - even if it means being materially poor. You will be wealthy in God's eyes because of your honesty!

7/22 - I hope you don't relate too well to Proverbs 19 verse 24... but I'll confess that I have been able to relate to this in my past - *"Some people are so lazy that they won't even lift a finger to feed themselves."* There were days in my past were I was literally this lazy. What a sad state of affairs. It's hard to say exactly why I was being so lazy - other than one clear reason: I was not in a relationship with Jesus. I was living for myself and myself only. So I thought it was fine to sleep and watch TV 24 x 7. What did it matter? Well... it mattered a lot. Being lazy like this is a scary place to be. I think it allows the Enemy to move into our lives in big ways. So - thankfully - as we know from our recent Romans readings, we can be free from our lazy ways! Being in relationship with Jesus has literally cured me of my laziness. Don't get me wrong - I still chill out and rest on occasion - we really need to take a Sabbath day of rest once a week.... but let us not live our lives as couch potatoes! Let us get in the game of Life! **Q: Have you ever struggled with laziness? How did you overcome it?**

7/23 - Proverbs 19 verse 26 is a great reminder of the commandment to honor thy father and mother: *"Children who mistreat their father or chase away their mother are a public disgrace and an embarrassment."* **Q: So.... have you called your Mom lately??** :) Of course I'm being facetious here with this question as it might (doesn't) relate to this Proverb, but hey, I'll let it stand...

7/24 - I love Proverbs 19 verse 27 today: *"If you stop listening to instruction, my child, you have turned your back on knowledge."* I am afraid that listening seems to be a lost skill in our world oftentimes today. We have a hard time slowing down enough to actually listen to someone else. To stop thinking about our own self and to listen to someone else. **Q: And, if this is the case, then how much harder do you suppose it is for us to actually quiet the distractions around us to listen to God? Have we stopped listening to instruction? Are we turning our back on knowledge?** Now - I do think the discipline of reading, studying, and meditating on God's Word, the Bible, is something that helps us get our listening skills back in fine-tuned shape. I do applaud you for going through the One Year Bible, so that you can

listen to God on a daily basis. But let us be ever vigilant to keep listening to instruction. Let us not turn our backs on knowledge!

Group discussions:

- Introductions.
- What were some of your favorite verses or passages from the past week's readings?
- What are some questions that were generated for you based on the past week's readings?
- What is something new you learned about God or the Bible from the past week's readings?
- How did God speak to you through the past week's readings?
- What is something you want to change or grow in your life based on the past week's readings?
- **Discuss the bold Questions in the Study Notes**
- Any prayer requests for the group for the coming week?

Each group is encouraged to close in prayer.

Daily questions for this next week's readings you may want to journal or pray through and discuss with your group next Sunday:

- My favorite verses or passages:
- What I learned from the readings:
- My questions for further study:
- How God spoke to me through the Word:
- Something I want to change or grow in my life based on the Word:
- My prayer points based on the Word:

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