

March 17- March 23:

“Growing through the Word”

Sunday, Romans 10:16-17

Most of us long for our faith to grow stronger and deeper. We do not want to be spiritually uprooted by the ups and downs of life. To see growth, happen in our lives, we must regularly encounter God through Scripture. Scripture is one of ways of reveals himself to us and it is one of God’s powerful instruments for transforming us. That’s right—God’s words can change us. Write down a few of the changes you want to see in your life. Paul reminds the Romans that not all the Israelites who heard Jesus’ good new accepted the message. Some heard and walked away unchanged. Others heard the message and experienced new faith. What about you? If you desire to grow in faith, will you listen to the word of the Lord?

Prayer: All Wise God, do not let me stay the way I am. Open my ears to your voice. Forgive me for the times when I have ignored your words. Speak life and hope over me and the people of Union Baptist Church and fill us with such joyful and bold faith that all who are weary will come in, hear your words and find rest for their souls. Amen.

Monday, John 20:15-16

When God speaks, things change. This happened to Mary after Jesus was raised from the dead. She thought she was speaking to a gardener outside Jesus’ grave until the man called Mary by name. When Mary heard her name, she knew she was in the presence of the Lord. Hearing the voice

of Jesus meant Mary was not alone. God was with her. That was enough for her. The good news is that God knows your name, too. God has promises for your life. And like Mary, you just might be surprised at the times and places God shows up to call your name. Listen carefully today.

Prayer: Gracious God, you are ruler over everything and everyone and still you pay attention to the details of my life. Surprise me today by showing up where I am. Call my name, God. I’ll be listening. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Tuesday, Hebrews 4:12-13

We do not change by willpower. The deep, lasting change we desire will happen only when we confront and accept the truth. God’s gift to help us see and hear the truth is God’s word. God’s word is living. God’s word goes beneath the surface and shows us the truth that is in our soul. This is why we need a regular routine of reading and mediating on God’s word. Nothing is hidden from God’s sight. What truth is God revealing to you?

Prayer: Thank you, God, for the gift of your word. Help us to feed our mind with Scripture so we can see the truth you want us to see. Then make us doers of your word and not hearers only. Amen.

Wednesday, Luke 5:4-5

Failure is not fun. We must be careful not to quit too soon. Peter knew this from personal experience. He had been fishing all night long in the Sea of Galilee and caught nothing. The next morning Jesus showed up at his boat and told him to try again. Peter moved beyond his failure and tried a second time because Jesus told him to. Is God calling you to try something again? Forgiving yourself or someone else, loving yourself or ours, or fulfilling your dream? Do not quit too soon. Jesus may be telling you to let your nets down again and be ready for the catch.

Prayer: Merciful God, help me to move beyond yesterday. Do not let what did not work in the past keep me from stepping in to what you want to do in this season. Speak your word, and I will follow. Amen.

Thursday, Psalm 119:49-50

Where do you turn when you feel discouraged? The psalmist turned to the words God spoke to him. In Scripture, he found hope. When he suffered, he remembered the promises of God. Discouragement comes to all of us. The blessing is that even before our circumstances change, we can experience God's hope and comfort. The word of the Lord reminds us of God's faithfulness and love. Take time today to remember one of God's promises.

Prayer: God of hope and comfort, you are the one I turn to when I am discouraged. Restore my joy and peace whenever I recall

your promises. Preserve my life. I will sing your praises forever and ever. Amen.

Friday, 1 Corinthians 1:18-19

God does not always make sense. We often want so much for God to fit in to our way of thinking that we miss what God is saying. Paul preached about the crucifixion of Jesus, but to many people his message sounded like foolishness. When God speaks, we must be ready to exercise our faith. God's words will not always sound sensible to our analytical minds. When you are in doubt about what God is saying, consult a trusted, spiritual friend. What seems like foolishness to you, might be the wisdom of God.

Prayer: God, all your ways are loving. Lead me in your wisdom even when I do not understand. Give me faith and courage to take the next step. All I want is to do your will. Amen.

Saturday, Psalm 1

Sometimes we need to sit still, be quiet and meditate on God's word. If we expect God to work on us through the Scriptures, we cannot rush through them. We cannot assume we already know what God has to say. The psalmist meditated on God's words day and night. To meditate is "to chew on". Reflect on a passage you've read this week. Go over it again. Chew on it and ask God to speak a fresh word to your soul.

Prayer: God, you have my full attention. Whatever is distracting me, move it to the back of my mind so I can hear your voice through your word. Bring forth fruit from my life through the power of the Spirit. In Jesus' name. Amen.