

DAY 1 (week starting Mon 25TH Jan 2019)**Read: Numbers 13:25-14:9***“Don't rebel against the Lord and don't be afraid.”*

A Christian who chooses to live in God's love cannot be ripped from God's love. (David Chadwell)

Nobody decides that he or she would like to have a 'grasshopper complex' when growing up. That is unheard of, and highly improbable. Yet it happens. We tend to think of ourselves either incapable or insignificant in the eyes of God because of fears we have. It is as if we decide to trust God only in the things we can control. We don't see the bigger picture. Our fears can be real. Fear of death, fear of illness, fear of being able to serve God and others. Phobias of all sorts point to the fact that folk live in fear. And I'm not only thinking in terms of insects etc.

And so we adopt a “Grasshopper Attitude.” We don't see in God the ability to overcome our giants. In Genesis 18:14a we read *“Is anything too hard for the LORD?”*

Reports from some of the spies led the Israelite nation to live in fear. And we tend to do the same. But we don't take the fact *“For God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind”* (2 Tim 1:7) into consideration.

Caleb, Moses and team begged the people to not rebel against God and not to be afraid. Are they asking the same to you? Do you see the bigger picture?

Prayer: Lord I'm prepared to submit to Your authority and trust you completely. Amen

DAY 2**Read: Mark 11:20-25***Jesus answered them “Have faith in God”*

We live in a world where many people allow themselves to be limited by their fears of hurt, disappointment or criticism, and many times cannot see the bigger picture.

In Psalm 23, David praised God and then experienced release from His fears to see the bigger picture .

There is something real in realising that praise helps us gain a new perspective. Praise of God's Lordship over all aspects of life helps us see that He is sovereign and His power is greater than any problem. Praise opens our **eyes to see the bigger picture – God's picture!**

The Christian life is more than just showing up at services on Sunday. Anyone who lives with this mind set is merely a fig tree showing its leaves.

In cursing the fig tree Jesus is teaching us that he expects more from us than just the ordinary. Regular and honest worship draws us to the point of realising that God *is* Supreme.

Then, when we see the omnipotence of God, our faith is restored, and we begin to see the bigger picture.

Faith is a winning attitude. Faith is positive, doubt is negative. Faith is the one thing that is necessary for life in this evil world. With faith in God we are on the winning side.

Meditation: It was an impossible situation for Moses and Israel when at the Red Sea they seemed trapped. All things are possible with God.

DAY 3**Read: Romans 12:2 and 6:6-12**

Look at the heading to Romans 6:6-12 “Dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus ...” Its God's job to transform us, ... it's our job to die to our old self, so we can see the bigger picture!

You know the story of the caterpillar don't you? about metamorphosis? The transformation of a caterpillar into a butterfly? But it took a caterpillar being ready to die that brought out the beauty of the butterfly. And it took the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ to bring out the beauty in you and me.

Now look at what Paul says in verse 12. He says, "Therefore, as God's chosen people", and that's who we are, "holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with new stuff."

He says, "Clothe yourselves with compassion, Clothe yourselves with kindness, clothe yourselves with humility. Clothe yourselves with gentleness, clothe yourselves with patience" *because this is who you are now.*"

We need to remember who we are in Christ now! - transformed by the bigger picture we've seen. God did not make you to be a caterpillar, he made you to be a butterfly

Do you remember the Doxology at the end of the letter of Jude? ... “Now unto Him who is able to keep, able to keep you from falling And present you faultless before the presence of His glory With exceeding joy To the only wise God and Saviour, be glory and majesty Dominion and power both now and forever” Amen

Prayer: Lord please open my eyes that I may see Your glory. Amen

DAY 4

Read – Colossians 3: 1-12

The truth of not settling for the things of the world transforms our lives as we try to live out Christ's way. Stay with 3:1. 'Let's set our hearts on the things above because that's where Christ is seated - at God's right hand.' Do you know you can be seated with Christ at God's right hand?? Yes! at God's right hand, *because* of Christ, AND because you set your heart on things above!!

There is a saying among the Congressmen in American politics that says "How you stand depends on where you sit". If you know where you sit with Christ in the heavenly realms it changes the way you walk and live in your life.

And so, please look what Paul says in verse 12 again, "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with new stuff."

Clothe yourselves with compassion, clothe yourselves with kindness, clothe yourselves with humility, clothe yourselves with gentleness, clothe yourselves with patience ... because this is who you are now.

Paul says, "Remember who you are in Christ now." You've got all these things to put on. You've got kindness, you've got humility, and you've got compassion. AND over all these things, he says, "Put on love, which holds them all together in perfect unity."

Paul is saying, "You're new people in Christ who must become and practice what God has already declared you to be." You've seen the bigger picture – Now live it!

Meditation: "My Faith Looks up to Thee, Thou lamb of Calvary. May Thy rich grace impart strength to my failing heart."

DAY 5

Read - Mark10:46-52.

The blind man said, "Rabbi I want to see."

It has been said that blind people often see more than people who have physical sight. One reason being they have to rely more heavily on their other senses such as hearing, smell and touch.

The story of blind Bartimaeus is about his physical blindness. He had to have faith in others to lead him where he needed to be. He even displayed a faith in Jesus whom he had never seen or known.

It is obvious that being spiritually blind is different to physical blindness. And this could even be in the sense that spiritual blindness lends itself to not seeing the big picture.

An interesting twist in this story is that Bartimaeus means son of Timaeus. The name Timaeus means dirty or defile. That makes him the son of the defiled. He must have known that but he did not let that hold him back from claiming his healing.

While others thought this was his destiny he was prepared to look past that. He called out louder even though others in the crowd tried to silence him. His obvious reward was physical sight restored.

Bartimaeus didn't allow his disability to keep him trapped in his situation. Instead he used other senses like his hearing to draw him closer Jesus.

His ability to "see" the bigger picture allowed him to ask for his sight. His faith led him to seeking what would put him in good standing again. He would receive dignity.

Prayer: Lord when my faith grows weak I want You to be the one I seek. Help me look beyond my despair and dispositions with FAITH EYES. Amen

DAY 6

Read - 2 Kings 6:15-17

"Then the Lord opened the servant's eyes."

Someone once described spiritual blindness as being "like being a dog that has seen a rainbow". A dog can describe to all the other dogs the beauty and splendour of this colourful heavenly display. But they don't believe him. Dogs are colour-blind. They can't see rainbows, so they don't believe him.

In some ways we are like colour-blind dogs in spiritual matters. There is so much all around that God wants for us to see of His kingdom and of His will; we see right through the best of it because we are spiritually blind.

This was the case with the assistant to Elisha the prophet. He had sight but he did not see the bigger picture. The servant didn't see the things that God can do, at least up to that point.

There is an interesting side-issue here, in that the name given to the servant, Gehazi, means valley of vision. The man had the name, but he fell short of living-up to his name.

Seeing the bigger picture means we must major on being what God called us to be. Faith always gets the attention of the Lord. Jesus is said to have marvelled at another man's faith in Matthew 8:10 *"Truly I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith."* was Jesus' response after a Centurion placed faith in Jesus to heal his servant.

Faith believes in God without seeing in advance. Without faith we cannot please God. (Hebrews 11:6)

Meditation: "I once was lost but now I'm found, was blind but now I see."