

September 14-16 - Arriving in Australia!

Hunter left our house at 10:45 a.m. on Wednesday, September 14 and after a 6 hour flight (with a one hour on board layover), a 6.5 hour layover in LA, 13 hour flight to New Zealand, 3.5 hour layover there and then a 3.5 hour flight to Brisbane, he is almost stationary.

He just needs to land in Brisbane, catch a shuttle to Sunshine Coast, find his residence and maybe have a nap.

It's 5:00 p.m. on Thursday for us and so he has been travelling for 30 hours straight! He should land in Australia at 7:00 pm AB time and 11:00 am AUS time. It will likely take him three hours more to get to his destination.

Thank you for your prayers for safe travel. ~ Hope and Darcy

September 15, 2022

Today is finally the day I get to fly to Australia to start studying God's word. Thank you everyone for supporting me or wanting to follow along in my journey, I want to thank everybody who was able to meet with me before I left and thank you again for the support! I will be praying for a successful year where God walks alongside you.

I land in Australia Friday at 11:10 so as I am writing this in YYC airport I have 30+ hours of travel ahead of me. But I look forward to it because God has me!

A LITTLE LATER: Now just 7 hours away from my new home and the perspective of how far I am traveling is truly sitting in, But I will enjoy writing these emails to remember how I was able to get here.

Thank you and peace be with you

Hunter

September 24, 2022

Week 1 - Philemon

G'day. It's the weekend here which is still throwing me off a bit cause it's Friday night back home, but the amount that has been done in the last week is mind blowing. I've been taught the Inductive Bible Study method, which starts with an out-loud where you read the book in one sitting, you then move to paragraph titles where you find the main message of the paragraph and sum it up in 4 words, then 3 steps to break down the text. Observation: you look at the insides of the text and what the bible says, then you do outsides where you observe different observations in the text to help you understand the meaning like, atmosphere, who, where, connectives, comparisons, etc. Interpretation: You ask why, lots of why questions or what's this mean at the time and people it was written to. Lastly, Application: this part is about how it's relevant to us now.

In SBS we just finished studying the book of **Philemon** and on first read I didn't quite understand exactly what the message was that Paul was trying to say, but as we dove into the book I found that Paul is writing a

recommendation letter to Philemon asking him to spare Onesimus from his crime. Onesimus is a slave who stole from Philemon and ran away to the capital, which at the time was Rome where Paul was imprisoned/under house arrest writing letters. How Onesimus met Paul is unknown but in the end he came to find God and find a Brother in Christ. He then is convicted by his past life and is sent back to Philemon to ask for forgiveness, the journey alone would have taken months because Philemon is in Colosseum and Onesimus is in Rome nearly 2500 KM apart. Onesimus should be sentenced to death for being a runaway but he is asking for forgiveness, so it is a very desperate situation for him.

The message about this book is all about forgiveness, as Christians we should be quick to forgive and quick to ask for forgiveness which can be very hard especially depending on the scenario.

I could go into more detail about it but over 25 verses and 5 days of classes I have taken about 10 pages of notes. The next book I'll be studying is Titus then Ephesians, I look forward to learning the why about Paul's writing and then background about what was happening at the time.

I hope all is well and as Paul would say Grace and Peace be with you all.

Hunter

October 3, 2022

Week 2 - Titus, Ephesians

I broke this email into 2 parts because we studied 2 books this week so bear with me.

It is mid week currently but I just finished my second book, **Titus**, this book is a great read to help understand the requirements of a Christian walking after God's heart.

Paul talks to Titus instructing him to start church planting all throughout the island of Crete. Titus is an uncircumcised Greek Christian which is important because of the audience he is talking to. The Cretans are Jewish people but are still following the Old Law and the time period is 63-65 AD which means that Jesus has come and given us his sacrifice to abolish this old law so we no longer have to work for God's mercy and grace.

Cretans however are believers of works to gain faith so they don't want to listen to Titus because he isn't circumcised, and they are all people who have been circumcised to gain God's grace. Paul sets up the book by telling us the Who from Titus 1:1-4, the What from 1:5-2:10, the How from 2:11-15, and the Why from 3:1-15 if we break it down this way we can take the What, How, Why to apply this to common church and elders today to help us build and grow a healthy active church.

It is now Monday here and I have just finished my **Ephesians** reading, this book has so much more in it then I thought. The cultural background is a very corrupt city worshiping Greek gods, like Artemis and Mithra and they believe in magic, like witch doctors and curses.

This book is written to the church in Ephesus and specifically the Gentiles living there, Paul is calling them to faith and saying that God's grace has extended itself out to everyone past the Jews. It starts very wide by talking about all people and how we all are saved by grace through faith, it then goes into Gentiles and how they also have equal place with God, in chapter 3 it talks about both Gentile and Jew being equal and needing

unity in the church, in chapter 4 it says that there is one Lord above all One spirit, One faith, One baptism, with one father above them all. Right before the climax he talks about families, how Christ needs to be the head of every family and the model for all to look after. and my favourite verse of the book 6:10: "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power." This verse to me encapsulates all of the book that if we have faith in him we don't have to worry at all about anything the world will throw at us because Christ is bigger than it all. The whole book to me is narrowing down from broad people groups to smaller and smaller, slowly leading up to individuals.

This was a great book for me and now I will be reading Galatians next and it is due on Friday this week. Then we get out of the seminar and I will see what my life will look like for the next 9 months!

Peace and grace be with you all

Hunter

October 7, 2022

Week 3 - Galatians

Today was the last day of our seminar, and I am so excited for what the next year will look like for me! I get to have 2 study days on Tuesday and Thursday so my workload will be easier to schedule. I now have the weekend to prepare for my first gospel, Mark! I am excited to see what God reveals to me through the study.

This week however I studied **Galatians**. It is very interesting seeing how constantly in history people will tell us false truth about the gospel, taking the gospel and then adding to it. This is what happened in one of Paul's first letters, he taught the gospel to the churches he planted in Galatia and then somebody came and taught the Gentiles Paul preached to that they needed to be circumcised to be saved, now looking at the background God promised Abraham that he would raise a nation so numerous that they would be as many as the stars in the sky and, that they would be blessed, this promise came almost 430 years before the law, so why should the law apply to us still if Jesus came under the law in human form and was crucified on a cross to give us eternal life breaking the law and giving us salvation, why do some still believe in the gospel? The interesting thing about Jesus dying on a cross is, in Deuteronomy 21:22-23 it says anyone hung on a tree is cursed, when Jesus came down and was hung on the cross he broke that curse and fulfilled all the prophecies by becoming the bridge for both Gentle and Jew to get to heaven.

The few most impactful verses to me in Galatians are, 3:2 "Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith?" and 2:21 "I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose." Both of these verses can lead you in your faith because Christ came and died for us, the law doesn't matter for righteousness, and because we received the Spirit through faith, not works. Again the law doesn't impact how our faith is with God! and Paul is telling us that this is a truth that still stands today.

I just continue to find the context behind the book makes it so much more important to reading the Bible, but my next book is Mark so until that email,

Peace be with you.

Hunter

Colour Commentating by Mom: Seminar was the first three weeks of school where they learned how to take notes and what format is best for studying. There are two pictures above of examples of what the note taking looks like.

We have also learned that they are assigned a coach/mentor for four weeks that they turn their assignments into and then they rotate through coaches so they get to know everyone. This week Hunter's neck was hurting him, but he didn't tell anyone. His coach offered to use the Thera gun on him and relieved his pain. They know their students!

October 14, 2022

Week 4 - Mark

Hey Everyone this week was hectic. We did our first big book which was **Mark**, one of the Gospels I didn't read much but turns out now to be one of the gospels I like the most because of how he wrote it, chronological and simple.

But first I just wanna tell a bit of what a day looks like. Monday, Wednesday and Friday are school days where we have class from 8-12am, Monday we have worship in the morning, Wednesday we have intercession, and Friday we have test/review days. After classes I normally study from 1-7 or 8pm and then I go to the gym to give my brain a break and then bedtime. Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday are study days where we have all day to study. I mostly follow the same routine as class days except I start studying around 9am and then take a break for lunch and supper. So lots of time in the word learning about God. In Mark, I decided to split the book up by how Jesus travelled, from the Chapter 1-4:35 Jesus travelled by foot around his homeland, after this I titled the next part Jesus In A Boat, because Jesus was in a boat travelling up and down the Sea of Galilee preaching to towns and villages, after this Jesus starts his journey to Jerusalem where he is crucified. Two crazy things I noticed in Mark were the number 3 and the significance of his time in Jerusalem. Now the number 3: Peter denies Jesus 3 times, Jesus mentions his death 3 times, mentions a fig tree 3 times, tells the disciples to stay awake 3 times, prays 3 times, wakes the disciples up 3 times, 3 people were healed by faith, and all I could think while I saw this pattern was why? Now two numbers are the sign of perfection and completion 3 and 7. God uses these numbers in the Bible a lot so maybe Mark was showing how perfect Jesus's life was. And the other crazy thing I found out was the time Jesus spent in Jerusalem. When we see how long Jesus was dead we see he died on a Friday and was raised on a Sunday. To us that's not 3 full days but in their time the day started around 5pm and ran for 24 hours, so Friday night and Saturday morning were the same day. (It is a little confusing still but bear with me). In the Old Testament the law for Passover says, Get a lamb without blemish on the 10th day of every month and keep him until the 14th day where he will be sacrificed to God for the sins of people. Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the 10th day of the month, he preached in Jerusalem without any opposition arresting him until the 14th day, where Jesus and the disciples had the Passover meal and then went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray. Now it would have been night of the 14th day which is the start of the day, Jesus was then arrested at night and put in front of the high priests. Very early in the morning (still the 14th) they bound Jesus and took him to Pilate where he is sentenced to be crucified, then he is taken and crucified. This all happened on the Friday or 14th day, the day of preparation before the Sabbath. Now on the 7th day God rested and so did Jesus on the last day of the week, which was the Sabbath. Jesus was in the tomb and we don't know what happened that day. But he rose on the 1st day of a new week. This blew my mind because Jesus came into Jerusalem on the 10th the perfect lamb without blemish, stayed until the 14th, then was crucified for our sins. I loved it so much, I will go into more detail about the crucifixion and what it all meant.

This weekend was great! We do Outlouds of each book, so we read out loud word for word the whole book at once before we study it, so this week we are doing Luke on Tuesday and Psalms on Monday, so I thought it would be a good idea to read both books in full. I read all of Luke in the morning, took 3 hours then I went to the beach for an hour, came back and read all of Psalms, which took us 6 hours, and I can confidently say it was the most fun and fulfilling time I have felt while reading the Bible. It was daunting but I loved it and would say it is an experience to have. We tried singing the psalms and one of the guys has a lyre so it was cool to try and learn the beat David would have sung it. But, yeah, that's been my week. Happy thanksgiving to all my Canadians. I missed it last weekend but I am thankful for your support and love that you have shown me. Peace be with you

October 23, 2022

Week 5 - Psalms, Luke

Hello from down under!

This week was so good! We studied **Psalms** Monday and **Luke** Wednesday and Friday, the weather this week was not sunny coast like, it rained for about 30 hours straight which I am not used to at all, but it was a good reason to go sit in a cafe and study, there is a super nice cafe called Design Traders in Maroochydore if you want to search up where I have studied the last week.

I really liked reading Luke and figuring out who he was and why he portrayed Jesus in the way he did. Luke was a physician and a very detailed person, he was also writing to a man named Theophilus. Theo was a Roman official, possibly judge or lawyer who might have been defending Paul during his imprisonment in Rome during 60-62 AD which explains why Luke showed so many healings of the blind and lame as his miracles. It also shows why he had so much detail in the conversations between Herod and Pilate and Jesus and showing that both called Jesus innocent. A key point for Theo if he is defending Paul. Also Luke's upside down kingdom that he portrayed where Jesus came to forgive and speak to all the lowest people as a King or messiah shows that the Kingdom that Paul is preaching isn't one that is a kingdom Rome should fear because it is a peacefully forgiving Kingdom, I found this very repeated, especially as Jesus was being crucified thought to be the most painful death ever thought up. It was also one of the most shameful ways to die because when crucified you would have been tortured and then hung naked with no way to defend yourself. Even through all of this Jesus forgave the Romans who cast lots for his clothes, and forgave the man next to him on the cross for his faith. I just loved this side of Jesus.

We skipped chapters 3-9 because we will cover them in Matthew, but I am very excited to be writing this email and sharing a little bit of what God has been doing in my life. As a challenge I want you to spend some time thinking about forgiveness. Think of how grateful we are as Christians to have Jesus bear our sins and how we gained forgiveness we didn't deserve. Then ask God if he wants you to reach out and forgive anyone or ask for forgiveness in your life.

I will leave it at that and update you with part 2 of Luke's writing in Acts.

Peace and Blessing from God be with you

Hunter

October 30, 2022

Week 6 - Acts

Hey Guys this week I did the second part of Luke's writing, which is the book **Acts**. It was a very busy week for me. I had a few assignments to do on top of Acts, I had a Psalms assignment where I study one Psalm a week, a New Testament timeline following the lives of the kings, caesars, Jesus and a few of the apostles, and the procurators.

Acts was a different style of book I wasn't used to yet because it is a narrative without as much teaching like Paul has, But following it was fascinating. Luke showed so many times over the book how the Gospel will not be stopped and the Holy Spirit will be the guide for the spreading of the Gospel. I found it fascinating how often the Holy Spirit was mentioned and how it told Paul whether or not he could preach the Gospel.

The timeline was a lot of fun to draw up and figure out all of the different reasons that persecution happened or why it was a peaceful time. I will send a picture of it when I get it back from my one on one.

This weekend has been super nice to relax with but I have been beaten down by an ear infection so I have to slow down from all the ocean swimming. It hurt a little because today a bunch of us went to a swimming hole that was gorgeous, but don't worry, I didn't swim. I sat in my hammock and enjoyed God's creation. Being back out in nature was a great way for me to relax and refocus for our upcoming week which is Romans so I am excited to unpack all of Paul's teaching on how to be a Christian. I think it will be one of the books I get the most out of for applying it to my daily life so I can't wait until I get to study it and then reflect on it next weekend.

I hope life is treating you well and God is moving, Peace and grace be with you.

Hunter

November 6, 2022

Week 7 - Romans

Hey guys, this week was a very good week, I studied the book of **Romans** which was a very nice change of pace because it is theology and 16 chapters, so even though it is super theologically packed I only had 10 charts to do vs 19 for acts. So it was very nice to have a lighter load than last week.

I got to enjoy a 2 day weekend so Saturday I went to the beach and got to enjoy fellowship outside of studying, then Sunday I got to sleep in a bit and then go to farmers markets and the gym, which was a very nice change of pace. I bought a baby pineapple from the market for 1 dollar, and it was my best purchase yet. Also my ear finally has unswelled so yesterday for the first time in a week I could fully hear out of it again which was something I realized I took for granted when I had it. One of the main things God has been teaching me is that time is so precious and that you have to take advantage of it so that you don't regret later on when time has taken this thing away.

Romans was so fascinating to me, it honestly hurt my head a little because Paul was so smart and trying to unpack exactly what he meant in every verse would be insane, So I didn't but I did look at big pictures and I like how Paul uses scripture when he talks to the Jews and doesn't use scripture when he is addressing the Gentile audience. The other thing I noticed was how Paul said their faith was great but none of the apostles or missionaries had been to Rome to strengthen the church but the faith of the church was strong and recognized around the world. One of the awesome things about Romans is that it is a book that Christians can base their Christianity off of and live just by the teachings in Romans which is so cool to me that our faith can be followed in this book.

This next week I am studying 1st and 2nd Thessalonians and Philippians so 3 books in a week but still the total chapter count is only 12 for the week so I am excited for this week hoping it might be another slightly lighter week, but I will keep you posted next week if it was a relaxing week or not, so until then too-da-loo.

Peace and grace be with you

November 13, 2022

Week 8 - 1st and 2nd Thessalonians, Philippians

HeIIIIllo, this week was a very different pace than the last few. We did 3 books but it felt like a slower pace than big books which is odd. It was a very standard week outside of class, I was able to go to the gym and relax most evenings which was nice to do. I went to the beach last night to celebrate one of our student's birthdays and it was a very refreshing night, just enjoying company which has been quite hard here because all we do is study so face to face interactions that go longer than 5 minutes are so nice. Today we celebrated another birthday by going paintballing. It was a lot of fun but pretty painful. I took a gut shot from 3-5 meters and I might have a scar there now but it was still lots of fun playing paintball in the Australian bush.

1st Thessalonians is an interesting book for Paul, he doesn't follow his typical thanksgiving-rebuking-how to fix their problems-Final Greetings format, but instead encourages them, which is weird for Paul, but I did enjoy the change of pace and grace that he showed in this letter as he encouraged them as the received faith right away from Paul's teaching. The **second book** is a big contrast from the 1st because Paul has to teach the Thessalonians to use discernment on who they believe. A false letter was written in Paul's name and some believed it and were led astray, so Paul rebukes them and corrects how they should accept news and stuff

relating to faith. Both these books were very interesting to me because the people worshipped quite a few Greek gods and that shows how quick they were to believe new things, and worship the next thing.

Philippians was a different story altogether. During his time in Philippi he was in jail and not preaching publicly like the other cities. There was no Jewish synagogue; to have a Jewish synagogue there needed to be 10 Jewish people, showing that the people in Philippi were very Gentile or Roman. Philippi was a wealthy city and on a very fertile piece of land, it was also a retirement city for old Roman soldiers, this is interesting because Paul is writing to encourage the church in their faith and their support of Paul, Paul pushes for unity and strength in the body.

All three of these books were smaller but it had a light atmosphere and was loving and encouraging which was nice to see that side of Paul's preaching. The next book I go into is 1st Corinthians which is a book that, reading the outloud, is going to be very heavy and challenge a lot of what I grew up believing and was taught and likely make me question what is happening with the modern day western church and how some stuff is followed and some is disregarded. I am excited to unpack it a little bit and explore the meanings, Look for the update next week, until then
Peace be with you

Giving Opportunity

I had sent out an email last week (Nov 7, 2022) about a giving opportunity. The base I am staying at is in desperate need of new bathrooms, they are fully believing in God for it. It is an \$80,000 renovation for both bathrooms to be re-done, I have given \$20 and I am asking, if God prompts, to match my \$20. If you feel led to give, please send me an e transfer (hpawlak24@gmail.com) and I will then pull the money out in cash from the local bank and give it to our base leader for the cause. This morning (Nov 7, 2022) already the base raised \$30,000 dollars and I would like to help that cause not just for better bathrooms but also for the future of the YWAM base.

Thank you. Thank you.

November 20, 2022

Week 9 - 1st Corinthians

Hello everyone

This week was quiet and fulfilling, it started off a stressful week because we were supposed to have a test and a bible study project on top of studying **1st Corinthians** but our school got sick forcing to put the brakes on and just study 1st Corinthians, so because of that I am now ahead of schedule for studying 2nd Corinthians which is also good because we have the test and bible study this week now.

It's a little strange we are celebrating American Thanksgiving in Australia, so we have Friday off which means we are going camping! As a school we will spend a few days and nights in tents 4x4 exploring on a small island called Fraser Island. I am looking forward to getting out and getting pictures and seeing the stars over the ocean.

Now with 1st Corinthians...It is a pretty gross and grimy port city, comparable to Vegas. Ships would come into harbour and go straight to prostitutes, gambling, gods and tons of sexual immorality. The city was reestablished by Claudius Caesar in 46 BC and he put whoever he wanted in that city, making it a huge mix of

cultures and beliefs. The 1st church there which Paul established wasn't much better. There were lots of problems, the reported ones are: immorality, dissension, spiritual pride and lawsuits, the written problems are: Questions about true spirituality, abuse of freedom, sex, gifts, and marriage. So when people say they wanna be like the 1st church, know the 1st church wasn't this great thing worshipping God it was filled with sin and fleshly desires because they are humans. Paul addresses these issues and tells how to solve it,

Now the biggest thing Paul pushes is Love. Love is the theme which can be used to solve all the issues in churches, if it isn't done out of love it is nothing 13:1-3 following that is my challenge for everyone for the next week read 13:4-7 but instead of the word love put your name in, so Hunter is patient and kind, Hunter does not envy or boast, Hunter is not arrogant or rude, Hunter does not insist on his own way, Hunter is not irritable or resentful, Hunter does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with truth, Hunter bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. A super convicting way to look at love and see if you love. I will be doing that this week and seeing how it changes my perspective on love and if I love or not.

I am going to have to find a new way to sign letters once I get out of Paul's writing style but until then, Grace and Peace be with you

November 27, 2022

Week 10 - 2 Corinthians

Hello guys, It is currently a Sunday night as I write this and I am beyond tired. Our school got to go to Fraser Island which is the biggest sand island in the world. We were on it from Friday around 2 til Sunday night and it was so fun and unique. I slept in my hammock under the stars. It was gorgeous with shooting stars and the ocean being right beside us. There was even a little bit of bioluminescence so the sand glowed slightly when you walked on it. I got to see the sunrise both mornings which was at 4:30AM which is amazing but way too early. Look for an instagram video shortly which will put into video what it was like.

2nd Corinthians however was a much needed book. I really felt God in it with what he wants for me in the future, and how to go about defending myself. Similar to 1st Corinthians the historical background is the same, because they were written only a year apart, what happened in that year were super-apostles were trying to take down Paul's apostleship and ministry, and Paul is writing to defend himself from this. I really like how Paul took a stance where he wouldn't boast in the flesh unless he absolutely had to and would much rather boast in God then himself, and that hit me just with pride and envy and everything. Boasting in the flesh is on self righteousness and not God Glorification.

My next book is Colossians and Hebrews. I am excited for that but I got to get some sleep before the week starts tomorrow. Have a great end of the weekend and enjoy the last week before the Christmas season fully begins. Peace and grace be with you

December 4, 2022

Week 11 - Colossians and Hebrews

Hello guys, This week was a more restful week, Recovering from the camping trip was harder than I thought but it was alright, I studied colossians and Hebrews this week, and prepped james for next week, This week I mostly just rested and went to the gym nothing to fancy happened this week so far, but today we are having a

party for one of our students who is getting married during winter break, which is why I am writing this letter a little sooner than I normally do.

Colossians is a letter written by Paul during his roman imprisonment it all deals with Colossian heresy, meaning they weren't looking at christ rightly, They needed to know that Christ is sufficient for salvation and spirituality. I liked studying this book because of the simplicity of Christ and how he is sufficient.

Hebrews on the other hand had a much bigger problem, Jewish christians were in tons of persecution and to get out of that they would pull the Jew card, because Jews weren't persecuted but christians were, so Christians were being persecuted and killed for their religion to avoid this they denied Christ as the messiah and decided there plans were better for faith and salvation, So the author who I believe to be Paul is pushing the Idea of Jesus is better, Jesus is better, Jesus is better. The reason I think it is Paul is because He is about to die in the persecution and probably realizes that, So he is using all of his knowledge to write a letter to God's chosen people telling them the importance of Faith, How Faith in Jesus washes over all other sin.

I really liked this week and we only have 2 more until 1st quarter is done and I am a third of the way done SBS which is slightly scary but also very exciting, Until next time

Peace and grace be with you

December 11, 2022

Week 12 - James, 1st & 2nd Timothy

Hey everyone. It is the start of my last week of 1st quarter, where we have 3 books due in 3 days, 1st & 2nd Peter and Jude, so a big week to look forward to. We then only have John's writing left after Christmas break.

James was a very good book. I enjoyed reading it and seeing God's peace flow through the book. I felt quite convicted of how much Jesus means to me and how much I would defend it. Because the history of the book was during Nero's persecution of Jewish Christians they would deny Jesus and pull the Jew Card by saying "I'm a Jew" and they wouldn't be persecuted. So this book taught me how important it is to stay true to Jesus and continue living in his gift of grace through faith to get to Heaven. This book made me feel convicted of sin and actually living like a man who wants to glorify God.

1st and 2nd Timothy were quite fun books to chart and study, The first letter is an encouraging letter to Timothy who is a young man who is a leader of the only church in Ephesus, And Ephesus like my Roman newsletter is a terrible city, with Greek god worshipping and prostitutes and mystery religions, The temple of Artemis was the biggest Temple, 120 years to build, 160m Long and 5 stories tall made out of Stone, Everybody would come into the temple to worship Artemis through sex, she is the god of fertility and sex, so to have a "blessed child" you went to the temple and slept with a prostitute who would bear your child married or not. So Timothy is thrown into this environment and has to find a way to change it. 2nd Timothy is a much heavier and sadder atmosphere where Paul is passing the torch to Timothy knowing his death is nearing in the midst of Nero's persecution. A very sad letter, also Paul's final letter.

For Christmas I have been invited by one of my friends to go back to Sydney with her, so 5 of us are going to spend Christmas there which is a huge blessing that I am looking forward to. In saying that my newsletters will shift from studies to more daily adventures so I'd love to hear feedback on if you are still interested in getting newsletters like that for the next few weeks. But until then

Grace be with you

December 18, 2022
Christmas Break Week 13

Hey Guys,

Sorry I'm late on this one, my discipline has left me since going on break, but I want to continue updating on what is happening in my life in Australia.

I am currently in Sydney with 3 others staying at Nelle's, one of the student's houses. The hospitality they have shown us has made us feel like we are a part of their family. While here we have seen the Opera House and Harbour Bridge and it's been a crazy thing to see and check off my bucket list. We went to some Christmas markets and saw a drone show. It was a little light and short, but I was fascinated at the programming that would have to be behind 1000 some drones all syncing together. I watched the new Avatar movie which was really good, the graphics in that movie are amazing, and the detail is awesome. I won't spoil it for those movie buffs who haven't seen it yet but it is definitely worth the watch. The city is beautiful, the weather here is perfect and it almost reminds me of Vancouver, just more tropical. The downtown is clean and pretty and Sydney has amazing talent, street performers and musicians; it is a very fun city.

I am sad to not spend Christmas in Canada again but I am wishing you all the best and want you to really cherish the time, enjoy spending it with family and really thanking God for the gift of Jesus. Now that this is the second Christmas I have been away from my family, I realize more what it means and miss being able to spend time with them whenever I want but seriously enjoy the time, it is such a gift, and I am excited to get to spend time with my friends and celebrating it with the family I have been given here in Australia.

I know we are doing a Christmas party on Boxing Day and I plan on baking with the family to spread some traditions. On Boxing Day they want to spend it on the beach which is bizarre to me, I am used to white Christmases so it barely feels like Christmas. I hope everybody is able to enjoy the break and take time to rest and reflect on the year. I will try to update again Sunday. Until then,

Grace be with you.

December 25, 2022
Christmas Break Week 14

Hey Guys, Merry Christmas, I hope it is restful and refilling. This week I went to the beach a few times, one was a hike into a secluded beach, the first picture is from that beach, it was gorgeous and such a nice little hike. The ground isn't that hard here so I was able to hike barefoot, and just enjoy the nature I was in. Christmas Eve we watched The Grinch and made reindeer gingerbread. On Christmas Day we went to church in the morning, then came home and started cooking. We had ham, sausages, shrimp, potatoes, salads, and two cakes. and ate and ate, so just one meal around 3, then we did presents and then went to the beach and swam, which is so weird it almost didn't feel like Christmas cause its in the summer here, and we ended the day by watching a movie and playing Monopoly Deal. Then today they have a Boxing Day party to relax and enjoy company so we get to do that and enjoy more fellowship.

I hope your Christmas holidays were amazing as well! I will try and update you in the New Year and then I will be back to my regular studies and emails. So thank you for following and supporting me.

Grace be with you

January 1, 2023
Week 15 - Happy New Year

Sup Lads, Happy New Year from down under. I just got back to the base and started to settle back down for the next 6 months of school. We start the Johns on Wednesday and finish them on Friday, then the gospel and Revelation, finishing the New Testament by January 20th, which is crazy! Then we start with Genesis and continue through the Torah chronologically which takes us all the way to Kings and then we are done the 2nd quarter. So, it'll be a whirlwind of big books and big charting but I am very excited for it and ready to get back into the Bible.

This Christmas season and New Year's has felt quite weird for a Canadian. It feels like it should be July and days are long here so lots of sun and green nature. I definitely missed the snow and the white Christmas but was also blessed with friends and being able to explore and check boxes off my bucket list, which helped me build friendships with the 3 people I went to Sydney with; the comfortability I get from them is something I didn't expect to get coming out of my time off which is another blessing to help me with the next 6 months of my life.

I hope that the year of 2023 blesses you and I am grateful for your support and am excited to come back and share with all of you what God has done in my life.

Grace be with you

January 8, 2023
Week 16 - 1st 2nd & 3rd John

Hey everybody, sorry I am late this week but better late than never! This week went by so fast and I think it really hit me at how far I've come in SBS. I keep a day tally in my notebook and it is day 110 something now, which also means that I have 24 weeks left and am almost halfway done with school. Our next 2 quarters are also shorter so time is going to go by fast and I will be back home much sooner than I thought.

Aside from that, let me tell you about the Johns. He is writing 3 letters to all believers (1st John), the elect lady, whether that's a church or family, he is writing as if to a group of people (2nd John), or Gaius a hospitable house owner (3rd John). All 3 books and the Gospel of John deal with gnosticism, which is heresy. It had 3 points. First is salvation by secret knowledge meaning that only 1% of people had it, 9% could get it and 90% had no chance of getting it. The second point was dualism which was matter vs spirit, they didn't view Jesus as Man and God because Matter was evil and Spirit was pure and sacred so there was a misconceived view of Jesus. The third point was Asceticism/Libertarianism, Asceticism meant that they were super disciplined and anything with the body like sex was evil. This got to the point where they wanted knowledge over everything and lacked all love. Libertarianism was the opposite, they believed that the body was irrelevant so that meant they could do anything they wanted because it didn't matter, meaning they lacked righteousness.

The **1st John** is his longest letter and has a slightly tough pattern to follow, but if you think of his writing as a circle then it makes sense! Touching on some points, then 2-4 others, and then circling back to the same point. So the big one in 1st John is the antichrist and to be aware of who the antichrist is. If anybody confesses Jesus as Lord he isn't an antichrist but if anybody doesn't confess Jesus as Lord and tries to pull you away from faith, they are an antichrist so beware. **2nd & 3rd John** are about hospitality and telling people how to receive in the church, and just to be cautious as to who you let into your home. As soon as you send out that greeting you invite whatever that person has into your home so be careful.

This next week we have the gospel of John and our DTS gets back from outreach next weekend so I am super excited for this week but also nervous because it is the 1st big book we have done in a while. I hope your week goes well and I can't wait to write to you about John's Gospel.

Grace and peace be with you

January 15, 2023

Week 17 - Gospel John

Sup Lads, This week was our first big book of the quarter and I loved it, but man was it difficult time managing. Discipline is the only way to get through this school and I am so grateful it is teaching me. This week we have really started to feel like a family, We just finished a spontaneous worship set and all feel so fulfilled! Our school is currently all in the kitchen enjoying company and talking and hanging out with everybody! It just feels like we have finally gotten to a family stage.

The Gospel of John I think is what pushed us to see His love. John's writing is so deep and woven together like a beautiful testimony. The historical background of the book is still gnosticism and so that meant there were some not looking at Christ rightly and weren't seeing him as God. Structure wise he uses 7 I am's, 7 Miracles, 7 I am something, like I am the bread of Life or I am the true vine. This way of writing really showed me that Jesus is God and he was with God from the time of Abraham to the creation to the death and resurrection, but the whole time he was God. Trying to actually go into detail of this book was so difficult because there is so much in it, 90% of its stories are unique to John and my coach here says it would take 6 months to chart this book properly, so the fact we did it in a week shows how much there still is to get out of the book. The biggest tip I have if you decide to read it this week is to look at his story up until the death and resurrection of Lazarus, notice that he raises Lazarus and then is anointed for death. Jesus gave his life to Lazarus as an act of love and compassion. Then if you continue reading you'll notice that he shows he was anointed to be the king sent by God, but not a king like the Jews thought, he came as a suffering king, wearing a purple robe with a crown of thorns as shame, with the inscription, King of the Jews, nailed to his cross. Jesus came as our King to save us from all our sin and from the darkness and evilness of the world.

This book truly rocked my view of Jesus and flipped it on its head. If you want a very quick overview watch the Bible Project videos of John, It will take you less then 20 minutes and will be a great explanation of the book.

The next book we do is Revelation. The outloud and second reading of this book honestly confused me, but we have 4 days to chart it with 4 classes each morning so It should make it somewhat easier to understand the meaning of everything. I am very eager to write to you all next week and I hope this week blesses you in everything you do. I love you all.

Grace and peace be with you

January 22, 2023
Week 18 - Revelation

Sup Lads! This week was PACKED! Our class finished the New Testament (besides Matthew) and it is crazy to think how far I have come since arriving in Australia. So this week we charted Revelation in 4 days Mon-Thur, had our final New Testament oral exam, where we memorized the key verse of every book, main idea, reason written, historical background, dating, and distinguishing characteristic, which was so nice to finish. We also had our DTS graduate Friday and leave Saturday which was quite sad, but life goes on and a new DTS shows up next Monday to replace them and I am so excited to meet them. The biggest country represented will be Canada with 8 students so I am stoked for that! And last but not least we had a small school party to celebrate finishing the New Testament!

Now, unpacking **Revelation** was extremely difficult and getting it taught by our school leader was the best. There are 4 ways most people approach this book and view it.

1. Historicist Approach, which is pre-written from the Apostles to the End of time, meaning chronological and started when Jesus first came and ends when he comes back.
2. Preterist approach. Happened around John 60-100AD when Christians were being mass persecuted by Rome (this one doesn't make sense because Jesus hasn't come back).
3. Futurist Approach. Majority of prophecies have yet to be fulfilled, so everything is still to come, this one only makes 1/2 sense and I will explain that more.
4. Spiritual Approach, which is the continuing unraveling of Principles of Christ. This was how we learned this book and at first I disagreed but now I love it.

Now if you wanna read it there are a few things you need to know to understand it and not be terrified. If you are a believer you can be very very comforted by this book, and if you aren't then you should be very afraid. Numbers in this book are crucial 1/4=Minority, 1/3=Significant minority, 2=strengthen/conformation or witnesses, 3=finality completeness, 4=wholeness, 6=one short of perfection, an evil number in Jewish eyes, 7=Perfection and completion, 10=human completeness, 12=God's People, 1000=largest number they had in the time, basically infinite.

So knowing this I am just going to unpack a few things from this book.

Starting with 7s, we see 7 churches, 7 seals, 7 trumpets, 7 bowls of wrath. The 7 churches are listed and they follow a study of Jesus, encouragement, (rebuke and Repent), strong warning, and promise. I encourage you to read through Chapters 2-3 and look for these. The 7 seals and trumpets are actually the same event from 2 different angles, the first 1-4 seals or trumpets are physical, and are currently affecting the world now, lemme explain:

Seal 1 = Conquer or war, look at Afganistan, Ukraine, Taiwan, Kenya...war is everywhere on the earth.

Seal 2 = People slayer or civil unrest includes Riots, and demonstrations

Seal 3 = Economic persecution which is happening everywhere the rich get richer the poor get poorer and prices continue to go up.

Seal 4 = Death through famine and beasts, this also goes on whether people can't afford food or droughts cause famine.

The 5th seal is Spiritual and talks about the souls under the altar.

The 6th and 7th are the 2nd Coming where it will all be finished, and Jesus comes back.

The 7 trumpets are the same 1-4 Physical, 5 Spiritual, 6-7 End Times but it follows the format of nature judging man.

1st trumpet = Wildfires or bushfires, seems to happen a lot around the world every summer

2nd Trumpet = Sea economic problems.

3rd trumpet = Undrinkable water, we see this almost everywhere, every 1st world country has filtered water

4th trumpet = Sky scorching, if you go anywhere near the equator you know how good sunscreen can be...

5th trumpet = Demonic possession

6th and 7th trumpet = Final Judgment where everything goes bad again.

The reason this can be argued as the same event is because the world seems to end and come back, end and come back, which doesn't make sense so if it is a different perspective of the same event.

And lastly I will go into Satan bound for 1000 years. I think this means Satan lost all power of sin when Jesus came and died for us binding Satans one power of sin to him, and we can see this with repentance, this goes hand and hand with Jesus' 1000 year reign. The last chapters sound like paradise to me and you should read them and see what God has in store for us, a city that is 2000 km wide.

Email me any questions you have please! I want to talk with you guys and try to help answer the questions.

Outside of Revelation I have bad news. DTS graduated on Friday at the Lifepointe Church where we took classes. We left the building at 10:30 p.m., at 11:30 p.m. a fire broke out somehow and 11 fire trucks showed up to fight the fire, but the damage from the fire was too big and the church was fully burnt down except for our classroom and office, maybe.... So pray that our school leaders can find a place for our classes and the new DTS when they get here.

My next book is Genesis and I am excited to see what God has for me in the OT. Until next time,

Grace and peace be with you

January 29, 2023

Week 19 - Genesis

Sup Lads! I hope everyone is having a good week, and for all my Calgarians I hope the snow didn't dampen or destroy plans for your week! This week was very different but God still was moving for us, studying through the first book of the Bible was quite a bit harder than I had expected. I think the switch to a narrative from theology played a big part of it, and I had a more difficult time with this book because of the simplicity and how the story is explained in the Book. It is written during the Exodus period where the Israelites are wandering through the wilderness and trying to find out where they came from, so this book tells the stories of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Issac, Jacob, and Joseph. These heroes of the faith all had incredible faith and managed to follow God in the end. In my opinion the most important part of Genesis is the sacrificing of Isaac, the one child who got the promise, and Abraham's fear of God was bigger than the need to keep the promise through Isaac. This act of faith to me changed my thought of a father and son act, to a crazy act where if Isaac had been sacrificed, the promise might have ended and Israel might have not been a nation and the snowball effect would be crazy.

But besides that, I did enjoy **Genesis**, especially after looking from it through the eyes of the Israelites wandering, it made it way more real to me. They would have wondered where they came from, how they got to Egypt, what is the promised land, all these thoughts that would make them wonder about their history. I liked reading it in this mindset. I challenge you guys to read through one of the stories and think of the Israelites in the desert hearing all this for the first time!

This week we have Exodus and the new DTS got here...so a bunch of new faces! I got to play Spikeball with some Canadians today and the sarcasm and accent was so nice to hear again! We finish Exodus on Thursday and then the next book is Leviticus on Friday so I will update you guys Thursday; so be on the lookout for irregular newsletters for the next while

Until next time Grace and Peace be with you!

June 25 will mark week 40 of this adventure and so I have reached the halfway point now!

February 5, 2023

Week 20 - Exodus

Sup lads, this week was one of our tougher weeks for sure in SBS, we flipped from Exodus to Leviticus on a Thursday and that was a hard transition to go from one big book to another big book in the same week but gotta keep going. Sorry I didn't get a newsletter out this Thursday but I thought it best to continue with Sundays. I am halfway through Leviticus but will give you the update next Sunday.

So, **Exodus** is a great book! It gives you the narrative from the Israelites leaving Egypt and going into the wilderness on their trek to the Promised Land. A fun fact Chapters 1-19 is the most miracle heavy part of the whole Bible, with the plagues, the burning bush, the parting of the Red Sea, the bread from heaven, the quail from heaven, and the water from the rock. Just a crazy amount of miracles from God in this book, I also saw God's mercy in this book! When the Israelites made the Golden Calf and worshiped it God said let my wrath rain upon them, but Moses interceded for them and God chose to listen to him and not kill the Israelites.

I also found the two tablets interesting, the first set seemed to be written by God, like literally carved in by God, and the second set seemed to be written by Moses with God's word so I wonder what the difference could be if Moses hadn't have broken God's original tablets. I don't think it matters too much but just a cool thought about the 2 sets of tablets.

And then the Tabernacle is so fascinating. It is made in such a beautiful way with the Spirit of God, which I find cool to see because it shows the timelessness of the Holy spirit and Trinity. But, I want to leave you with some encouragement. The tabernacle was made with gold silver, bronze in total; in today's world it would be valued at 93 million dollars. When Jesus died he opened the tabernacle by ripping the curtain, allowing the Tabernacle to be inside each and everyone of you, so by this act, God's starting value of you is 93 million, 93 million! Let that sink in. The starting point of your value is 93 million dollars and God values us much much higher than that

Grace and Peace be with you

February 12, 2023

Week 21 - Leviticus & Numbers

Sup lads, this week we studied books 3 and 4 of the Torah, and currently I am prepping for Deuteronomy! I hope the weeks are going well back home for all of you. I realized today I have 18 weeks to go, so more than halfway and time is flying so fast it's scary. I am excited to be back home and able to talk with everyone again, but I am also excited to continue studying and grow in the knowledge of the Old Testament.

The **Leviticus** book came to life for me! The outloud seemed a little boring, but that's cause I was reading it in such big chunks and fast paced; if you slow it down and read slower it comes to life. Almost all of the Laws are to help set the Israelites apart or to counter surrounding countries' worship, so when you read it, you see that it actually sets them apart and sets them up for the future in the land of Canaan. **Numbers** explains how they are to travel and why they are in the wilderness for 40 years,

This week we had a long break, we got 2 days off from Wednesday afternoon to Friday evening, and then we went into the weekend, so we didn't chart Numbers but I would love to when I get home. Our school also needed a break, we were all feeling quite burnt out from all the studying, so it was perfect timing.

I've also found a new hobby of filming surfers with my drone so shoot me a message back if you want me to find a way to add clips of that to the newsletter but alas until next time
Grace and Peace be with you

February 19, 2023

Week 22 - Deuteronomy

Sup lads, I will be honest with you guys, the more I study the Bible, the more of a blur the whole story becomes, it's like the weeks are all the same, but the content is different but the same, it's hard to describe but it might also be because we just finished the Torah and the description on how the israelites are to do life is how it is all described, so that could be why! This week was solid. The Super Bowl happened and the Chiefs won which was a bonus. I finished the book by drinking a frappe in a Don's and enjoying the final writing of Moses.

Deuteronomy was a great book, the OT cornerstone and the most quoted book of the whole Bible.

Deuteronomy sets Israel up for success in the promised land with the biggest condition in the whole Bible, if they obey commandments; Blessed in everything they do. If they disobey; Cursed in everything they do (spoiler alert this happens). So, I loved this book because it tells the Original Reader what will happen if they turn their backs to God for gods, and Moses gives Laws to them to keep them sanctified and saved. Now I want to shift your perspective on the law, if you find it boring think there is only 613 laws they have to follow, then think of how many laws your country has and how many those you follow or don't even know. Now back to the curses part, often I thought when growing up why was God so mean to the Israelites, why would he let them be destroyed and captured, this isn't God's wrath against them, but instead it is his faithfulness to his word. God chose the punishment if they disobeyed, and followed through with that when they disobeyed and turned to gods, took many wives and chose to intermingle with nations God commanded they destroy. This was the biggest thing I saw in the book but there is so much depth to it and it is quoted so much in the NT and rest of the Bible.

This next week we are studying Joshua and the start of Judges. I am a little nervous but also excited, I am nervous because we have lots of charting to do this next week and there are so many different stories to follow because God starts to use so many people, but I am also excited because there will be so many different stories and ways God uses people, to grow his nation!

And for all of you who wanted to see videos of surfers, the files were too big so I will post on my instagram sometime this week of the surfers I filmed. So, sit tight, until then Grace and Peace be with you.

February 26, 2023

Week 23 - Joshua

Sup lads, This week was **Joshua**. Finally, the part where you see Joshua go into the promised land with faith. It was a great book where you see he fulfills the covenant and goes doing all that is told. This Book sets up the next one very well where you see the cycle of Israel not believing, but I will talk about that one next newsletter. This week was pretty standard. I just charted, got sick with a cold or covid or something so working was harder this week but I am on the tail end of it and I am praying that it will get better and this week I will feel like my normal self again.

Joshua is a book about him conquering the promised land. It is a huge call to see that through faithful obedience that God can do anything for you, I am only going to highlight one passage but it is one I heard from a staff member and it blew my mind. In Jericho, Rahab is told to put a scarlet cord in her window. Joshua 2:21 and all the people in her house will be saved from God's wrath. Now In Exodus 12:13 it talks about the blood from the passover lamb being a sign to Israel that the Lord will passover the house and not destroy it similar to how Rahab was saved in Jericho. The scarlet cord allowed her family to survive the destruction of the city. Now her house was built into the wall of Jericho; if they were fallen flat, how did she survive? Archeologists found that one section of the northern wall survived so It could be Rahab's house, meaning the Lord passed over it.

Otherwise, Joshua shows what happens if they obey the blessing of the covenant and then if you are reading after Joshua it shows what happens if they disobey the Covenant so something to look at as you read on in the Old Testament.

I can't wait to update you guys again in a week. We get the founders of SBS Ron and Judy Smith coming to teach us for 3 weeks and share wisdom with us. They have been teaching the school for 40 years and I am excited to get a small part of their wisdom. But until then Grace and Peace be with you.

March 5, 2023

Week 24 - Ruth Judges Proverbs

Sup lads, Sorry I am late today! I had such a good Sunday I forgot to write this last night. This week was PACKED and the next week is even bigger. Last week we studied through Ruth, Judges, and did an outloud of Proverbs with a small assignment, and this next week is 1st and 2nd Samuels together, which right now feels almost like an impossible task to finish but I am excited to see God move this week as our school feels very crunched for time.

Ruth is a beautiful story about a woman named Naomi and her daughter-in-law Ruth. In this story we see a Moabite woman get used in the lineage of Jesus, and farther above it in Joshua you see Rahab the prostitute. Rahab actually marries Salmon the father of Boaz, so this tells us that God uses faith over heritage or culture. The faith of Rahab and Ruth allowed God to give a line all the way to Jesus. The one act in Ruth I hope to give clarity to is the threshing floor. By Ruth uncovering his feet I believe it isn't a sexual act at all, but instead a beautiful act of submission, and a bridal act, Ruth is asking Boaz to save her, redeeming her and Naomi, this is a beautiful act by Ruth and shows her faith, a foreigner coming into the country knowing nothing but Naomi, but trusting that what Naomi tells her is true and will bring her into the country with safety and provision. The other key wording is "spread your wings over". You see in Exodus 25:20 that the cherubim spread their wings over the mercy seat, and the mercy seat is over the law, giving us an image that the LORD is protecting his seat and he is above the Law with the Mercy seat, which is an image that the LORD values his people over the Law, and that he will protect the people as well. Just as Ruth asks for protection from Boaz, the original readers would immediately think about the Ark of the Covenant and the Cherubim spreading their wings over the Ark.

Judges is a Book that might scare a lot of Christians, or kids, or anybody really. There is a massive cycle throughout the whole Book, and it goes like this, Israel does evil in the eyes of the LORD, LORD get's angry, Israel Repents, LORD rescues, and then as soon as the Judge dies, the cycle restarts. All the Judges seemed to have faults, (except for the few one verse Judges), this book follows the theme that, *"in those days there was no king in Israel, everyone did what was right in His own eyes."* All of Israel was making a King of themselves and not giving God the glory as King, We see that in the rest of the Bible the Israelites want a King, giving them a man to unite them not God to unite them. Man can never be the King over Man only God can truly be the King.

And last but not least, **Proverbs**, a book that has got tiny little nuggets of wisdom constantly spat at you. We didn't do a deep study on this book just a read through, but when reading it ask yourself what it means, meditate on it, ask God what he wants to show you.

Sorry for not going more in depth with it all! We are charting all of 1st and 2nd Samuel this week so my brain is swimming a little. I hope you all have a blessed day and week as winter back home is on the tailend and the final push towards spring and summer is right around the corner.

Until then Grace and Peace be with you.

March 12, 2023

Week 25 - Samuels

Sup lads, I forgot my newsletter again. I am having too much fun here so I apologize for that. This past week was hectic. We charted **1st and 2nd Samuel**, I had 27 charts but some students had 40+, so, a huge week. The SBS leaders call it Big Boy Week and I am grateful to have finished it and gotten out of it what I did.

The book follows 3 main characters of Samuel, Saul and David. Samuel was the last judge and the one to anoint both David and Saul. Saul was a king after man's heart and David was a king after God's Heart and this is shown by both of their sins. When Saul sinned he made excuses and blamed something for his sin, when David sinned he went straight to God and repented his sin. With this he sought God's heart and wanted to be looking for God's approval and not man's.

I want to talk a little bit about the David and Bathsheba chapters. In those chapters only David sinned. Bathsheba followed purification laws and cleaned herself, well David sought after another woman, laid with her and then killed her husband. The punishment for him should have been death, he should have died but he was saved because he chose to repent and go to God for forgiveness, and because he did this God forgave him. So I want you guys to know that David sinned and that's it.

I also want to talk a little bit about Kings, Saul's Character? He was handsome... Look at key words like this David was ruddy and handsome but was forgotten or left behind by his brothers, 1st Sam Ch 16:6-13 this shows Saul was loved by the people and stood apart, while David was forgotten and left behind. The same is true about Absalom. He had beautiful hair and was handsome. What about his Character?... Man looks at what he can see, while God looks at the heart. Both of these are great books and build the start of the fall for Israel to leave the promised land.

This week we have Song of Songs or Song of Solomon and Ecclesiastes and then one more week until spring break. I will update you guys again next week
Until then Grace and Peace be with you.

March 19, 2023

Week 26 - Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes

Sup lads, Getting right back into it with 2 fantastic books. **Song of Songs** (SOS)and Ecclesiastes. It was a nice chill week after Samuels but unfortunately tension has risen a lot in the school recently. I won't update on my newsletter but if you are interested in what has been going on I am more than happy to update you.

This week I had a great chance to do a lot of extra work, which was preaching in small groups, leading a small group, and then a deeper study on SOS and I found it a beautiful poetry, comparing it to perfect love; how God loves us individually is like how Solomon loved that woman. Now it is debated if Solomon wrote the song but he wrote 3000 proverbs and composed a 1000 songs, 1 Kings 4:29-34, so it is likely one of his 1000 songs made it and I think this was that song. He probably wrote it at the early stage of his reign when love was new and exciting. It is a beautiful song with lots of connections to God's love and the gift God gave to man which is love.

Now **Ecclesiastes** is possibly one of my new favourite books of the bible, the audience is youth and I believe Solomon wrote it which would put it at 970-930 BC but it could also be written at 480 BC when they come back into Israel. Anyway this whole book is wisdom and I love it. I saw the meaning of life in this book and it made me very content because life is simple. Look at God and make him your main focus, He will give you all you

need, our purpose is to seek him all our days and live after him and life will work out. Ecclesiastes has a format where it could be Solomon in the middle but the start and end look to be a different author but hopefully it is Solomon because that looks like a repentance and that means that Solomon is in Heaven, otherwise he is likely in Hell.

This next week is the last week of the Quarter and we are going to read Kings to finish it. I am excited for a break and resting in God's presence. I will update you guys again through the break! I hope you all stay blessed.

Until then Grace and Peace be with you

March 26, 2023
Week 27 - Kings

Sup lads, last week of the quarter, marking 2/3rds done on paper but the last quarter is 10 weeks so it is moving fast which is alarming, but I am excited to be home and sad to leave. My prayer recently is just that God will help me cherish this time and enjoy this season. I know that I get to come home eventually so I have been praying to continue enjoying fellowship and studying while I am here.

This book was one of the harder books I charted. It is a very repetitive cycle similar to Judges but with a lot less detail, if you read through it, take note of how many verses some of the Kings get and that will tell that they are emphasized more and are important to the story. Jeroboam and Ahab in specific are people that set the stage. After them, the author will say that the king didn't follow the commands of God and walked in the sin of Jeroboam and led Israel to sin.

The background of this book: I think Jeremiah wrote it but it is unknown, Jeremiah would have written it because he is a prophet at the time of Josiah and he was one of the last kings before the exile, but it also could have been written at the end of exile, the important thing is when reading to think of who wrote it and then keep that thought in the back of your mind.

I am excited to study the prophets because each King had some prophet that was living, similar to Acts in the new testament where it follows Paul's life and then you see when and where he wrote all the Epistles, that is like Kings and prophets so I can't wait to study them!

Currently I am on my 4th day of break and I have lost track of time.... it's why I am late on this newsletter so I am sorry about that, I will update you guys again next week on what adventures I get up to!

Until then Grace and Peace be with you.

April 2, 2023

Week 28 - Spring Break

Sup lads, Just finishing spring break. We had a very restful time there with 4 guys and 1 girl on base so it was extremely quiet compared to the 70 that are normally on base. I just rested by reading Lord of the Rings, going fishing, watching a few movies and then hanging with our school leader.

Over the break I went to Gold Coast and bought winter clothes from the outlet stores. The Canadian in me doesn't like buying swimwear, apparently only fleeces and flannels! But once I leave this weather I will be prepped for Canada again.

I climbed the tallest mountain around us, it was a 300m climb and it felt so weird because I am used to the Rocky Mountains. Aside from what I have been doing God has been putting it on my heart to cherish this last quarter because it is only 11 weeks and after this our school will never be fully together again so I want to enjoy this time and not wish it away; after all, I will be home in 11 weeks and then I will be able to meet with some of you again and tell you about my school year!

Our next book is Job which we aren't charting and then Amos which we will have a seminar on for prophet literature, after this week we will only have 22 books left in the Bible. 2/3rds of the way through the Bible and the last quarter only has 4 big books, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Jeremiah and Chronicles, and then Matthew at the very end of the year so I feel like it is going to fly by and I am very excited for it but want to cherish the time so that I still capture everything God wants to show me.

I can't wait to update you guys again with a regular newsletter and tell you what God is doing in his story! Until then Grace and Peace be with you.

April 9, 2023

Week 29 - Job and Amos

Sup lads, 1st week back, last quarter only 11 weeks left of this school, it is crazy and it is going so fast! We have 22 books left and we will do 6 in one week, so it is going by very very quickly. I hope life back home is treating you all well and you are getting ready to welcome in Spring and enjoy the gift of God's creation!

Job is a book that is surrounded in suffering and we didn't actually chart it, but we did an assignment which I will share with you. It's a little long but if you wanna skim over just go to question 3.

Job's Friends' POV on suffering (300 words)

Eliphaz - Chapter 4:7 "Do the innocent ever perish, no they only prosper!" So, obviously Job isn't innocent because otherwise he wouldn't be suffering. Ch 5:8 "As for me I would seek God," basically telling Job that he should repent for his sins and seek God to redeem him; subtle accusation that Job isn't innocent without knowing the story. Ch 15:4 "Doing away with the fear of God," Job doesn't fear God and he is suffering because he isn't fearing God and following his commands. But Ch 1:1 says there was a man blameless and upright, one who feared God so this doesn't make sense. Ch 22:21 "Agree with God and be at peace thereby good will come to you", so Eliphaz says that clearly Job did something so wicked that he can't actually do anything for himself until he comes to God

Bildad - "Suffering is caused by sin and unrepented sin" 8:6 8:20. He thinks that Job's suffering is caused by sin and that if Job hadn't sinned then all this bad wouldn't happen to him and suffering wouldn't occur. In

Chapter 18, Bildad again talks about God and the Wicked saying in verse 20 that “such dwellings of the unrighteous are places of people who don’t know God”, basically telling him that he is wicked and possessed and that he doesn’t know God and that is why he is suffering. In chapter 25 Bildad says “all is God’s and man is simply a maggot, not really worth anything, man can’t even match God.” Conclusion of Bildad is that suffering is caused by human actions and man is so flawed that perfect or imperfect suffering happens because of the sin in their life

Zophar - Ch 11: 6 “know that what God expects of you is less than your guilt deserves.” So he feels that Job is so evil that whatever he did, his punishment is actually merciful, suffering is from evil. Ch 20:5 Exulting of Wicked is short and Joy of godless is but for a moment, so wicked are going to suffer on earth, they will get temporary love or satisfaction and then it will all turn to suffering.

Elihu - Ch 32-37 “God is Just” Ch 34:35 Job speaks without knowledge and his words are without insight so God is Just in Job’s suffering because Job shouldn’t ever be able to understand what God is doing. Elihu continues about God’s Justness and God’s Greatness and says that suffering by God is an unknowable thing, is it from God, or Satan, who is it? Suffering is God’s and man is below God.

God’s POV on suffering (200 words)

Satan is allowed to tempt it isn’t God who actually causes suffering but rather God allows Suffering by giving Satan enough power to attack and afflict suffering. God doesn’t enjoy suffering but 1 Cor 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability but with the temptation he will also provide a way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. So, God doesn’t like suffering. His character is against it and he actually wants his people to thrive and grow and not suffer. But then again in Deuteronomy his warning is for his people to not sin and throw away the promise, but when they do in Judges and Kings instead of God’s wrath being the cause for the suffering, instead it is God’s faithfulness to his promise and that is why the Israelites are suffering, is because of the justice in his promise not because God wanted his people to suffer. 1 Peter 4:16 Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name. Almost a trial from God that followers of him are going to suffer, but it is their choice to choose God and choose not to suffer in self pity but rejoice in the gift of suffering.

My POV on suffering

I think suffering sucks, and I wish life could be perfect, but it is a glorious chance to seek God and look for him and try to choose God. Recently in my first world mindset I have felt a lot of suffering, it is little things that are trying to distract me from God, and I honestly hate it because I don’t know why Christians have the most powerful God and yet we suffer and have to deal with pain and heartbreak and life loss. Why does God allow this? I think it is to show that we need him. We need God. All people suffer like this, Christian or not, but the blessing of God is that he will walk with me through any pain and anguish, which allows me to lean on God and ask him to help me, to heal me and to walk me through this suffering. So my stance on suffering is that God allows it, he doesn’t like it and that as a Christian I am called to choose God and that is the hardest choice that I will make, having to lean on God and rely on him to heal me is the greatest blessing I get.

AMOS

Now, Amos is a book that deals with destruction and promise of the Israel ending. Israel is destroyed in 722 by Assyria and that is the end of Israel in the Bible. After this, Judah comes back into the promised land but Israel as a whole never comes back. Amos was just a shepherd God called to be a prophet and he is clearly looked down upon but he is still following God's heart which challenged me to persevere

I will try and update you guys more as the Prophets go on but we are currently learning about Oracles, Promise, Lawsuit and Woe oracles and I will debunk those and give you examples from my Micah and Hosea newsletter next week

Until then Grace and Peace be with you

April 16, 2023

Week 30 - Micah and Hosea

Sup lads, BIG 30! That's a lot of weeks..... This week was a much brighter week, it was the last week we would have DTS with us, they left for outreach this morning at 3:30 am heading off to both Japan and Morocco so if you want to pray for them that they will have unity and strength and energy as they give 8 weeks to God in the nations.

In SBS we did Micah and Hosea, both books were amazing. **Micah** is about the coming destruction of Israel by Assyria and the destruction of Jerusalem as well which would come later. Israel was taken into exile in 722, and Judah in 586. Micah is kind of a last call to hope for restoration, damage will still come and they will go into exile but if they seek God then they might get his presence while they are in the exile.

What happened to Israel was Assyria took them and scattered them throughout their Kingdom so they would intermarry and lose the bloodline and lose the people of Israel.

Hosea is a beautiful book starting with Hosea and Gomer. Hosea is a high status man who was a prophet and generally called to a high standard, but God calls him to marry Gomer a prostitute, or an unfaithful servant whether she was a prostitute or if she was unfaithful changes in translation, but it perfectly mirrors the story of God with us! Hosea represents God, blameless and holy and God decides to create Human knowing that we would sin and fall away from him, like Hosea likely felt with Gomer when he was told to marry her. She represents us and she falls from Hosea, the faithful upright person who hasn't done anything wrong. God's Love is so beautiful because it continues and never runs out but instead runs after us. This short story sets up the rest of the book for Hosea to speak from God's heart. Heartbroken and destroyed is how he would feel, because God is heartbroken over us and heartbroken over his people who turned away and walked into sin.

We had a preaching on this book, and I chose the topic wilderness and I want to share with you what God revealed to me.

Now wilderness can look like many things to anybody it isn't just a desert or a forest secluded from society, but I think it can look like either a natural wilderness like a forest or desert where you don't have any comfort and you have to fight for survival and you are naturally away from everybody, but the other one I have found more often is modern wilderness, which looks like your average city life but you feel so empty, you have comfort and you don't have to fight for survival, but in the end it can be isolating and empty. Why? God's heart isn't for us to suffer or feel like we are in a wilderness, is it? I certainly don't think so and that's because in Genesis 1:26-27 it says 26 Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the

fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” 27 So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

God's plan wasn't for us to suffer or to be hurt but it happened anyway and I think that this breaks his heart but it isn't his choice.

Hosea 2:3 3Otherwise I will strip her naked and make her as bare as on the day she was born, I will make her like a desert, turn her into a parched land, and slay her with thirst.

God shows in these passages that He will do it, he will take it all away. Why?

To seek God, by being naked and empty what is their left to fill you? Only God can fill us and we see that in Hosea 2:14-15 14 “Therefore I am now going to allure her; I will lead her into the wilderness and speak tenderly to her. 15 There I will give her back her vineyards, and will make the Valley of Achor a door of hope. There she will respond as in the days of her youth, as in the day she came up out of Egypt.

Israel had just suffered for 400 years in Egypt and when they came out they were PRAISING, but then they started complaining again as soon as they lost that comfort, they lost God when it was hard. God wants us, he wants us naked and empty. What better vessel than one that has nothing but God; with just God he can redeem us and he can fill us. For me I felt like SBS was a wilderness and really it is. I am 12,450km away from home and with a 16 hour time difference, I have had to lay down relationships, friendships, job opportunities, money, comfort. And for what? God. As soon as I acknowledged that God had called me here to meet him in a wilderness without anything that I know or am comfortable with, he met me, he told me I have 68 days left, 68 days until this wilderness is gone and I go home to comfort. What are you going to do with those 68 days? I get the beautiful opportunity to seek God with 0 distraction, I don't have to worry about jobs back home because there aren't any, I don't have to worry about relationships or friendships because I'm 12,450km away. I'm just a dude living and seeking God and that is such a beautiful thing.

So what is your Wilderness? I challenge you to seek God, if you feel empty or lost then seek God and ask Him, “What do you want me to learn and grow?” I've learned that it will take time and perseverance but God will meet you and that will bring you to a beautiful place of rest and peace and joy, whatever you do seek him and he will meet you. I truly love you guys and hope that you find God in your wilderness

Which is why I have chosen what to do when I come home, very short term so far, but I fly home on June 23rd leaving Brisbane airport at 10:00am and getting back to Calgary at 10:41am on June 23rd, I will then spend 8 days at home and then go to Pine Lake Christian Camp and hopefully serve them for 3 weeks as a counsellor. With that, I am hoping for very minimal support just for those 3 weeks. All I am looking for is gas money so I can make it up there and back. During those 3 weeks I will continue to write newsletters to update you guys on some ministry and why it is so important!

In the 8 days of rest I want to meet with you guys and answer any questions you guys have or show you the work I have done well down under, whether that is going to a coffee shop or walking in a local park. I will happily meet you guys wherever you are.

Until then Grace and Peace be with you

April 23, 2023

Week 31 - Isaiah

Sup lads, this was a big week, 66 chapters! It was a challenging week for sure but it was doable, just a lot of work. My schedule was gym at 6am-7:15-30ish then class Monday, Wednesday, Friday until 12, and then charting work from 1-9 Monday to Friday! So it was packed, but so worth it.

The book is split at chapter 40, 1-39 is a lot of judgment and oracles on the nations and Judah, and then 40-66 has a lot of redemption. The book clearly points towards Jesus coming and saving Israel, in Isaiah 52:13-15 and then 53 it talks about Jesus's death, how he will be killed as a criminal but buried with the rich, he will be pierced for our transgressions, despised, rejected, no form, no majesty, marred beyond human recognition, it explains how Jesus was crucified, buried in Joseph's tomb, tortured beyond recognition, and rejected by his own people, Jesus would be pierced with the spear. Now the craziest thing about this was Isaiah is talking about the crucifixion 400 years before crucifixion was invented, which shows how divine God is, and how he planned to have Jesus come back and save them!

I would definitely recommend reading **Isaiah** 52-53. It will give you clarity on the prophecy of Jesus and the Saviour of Jesus coming back!

Next week it will be a 6 book small week, we study Habakkuk and Zephaniah, Joel and Obadiah, Jonah and Nahum. After this week we have 13 more books left in the Bible. I will try to update you guys with as much info as possible on all these small prophets but bear with me because there are a lot of books.
Until then Grace and Peace be with you

April 30, 2023

Week 32 - Habakkuk & Zephaniah, Joel and Obadiah, Jonah and Nahum

Sup lads, welcome to small book week, we are studying through 6 books this week. I have already finished 2 and I have 4 more to go so far. I plan to just give you guys little updates as I go so this first one will be Habakkuk and Zephaniah.

Habakkuk (Hab) is a book that is formatted like a lament, Hab complains to God about the situation in Judah first, how he is mad because they are so evil/. God's response is interesting, it is a you won't know what I am doing if I told you. How often do we do this where we don't believe what God is doing in our lives. Hab complains again asking God why would he look to evil if he is pure? God is doing it because of covenant faithfulness, he told them that he would punish them if they were disobedient and he is doing that! God tells that he will judge the Chaldeans (Babylon) after, but they are a critical part of his plan, so Habakkuk ends with a prayer and rejoices in the Lord. This ending cements a lament, getting any and all frustration out on God and talking to him instead of talking to people, then praise God and rejoice with him, give him glory for what he has done. It is a very important thing to do if you feel angry at God for looking at your plan instead of God's plan.

Zephaniah had a different theme, written around the same time as Habakkuk, 610s, this book deals with what the Original Hearers thought the day of the Lord would look like and they are looking at this event as a time when God will build them back into a strong nation with peace and lots of land, but in reality it will end with them getting booted out of the promise land and destruction coming to them. Zephaniah is flipping the script on how they imagine it will look. At the end of all of it Israel will be restored, but Judah went away? The remnant of Judah will become Israel and they will get the blessing and promise of both Israel and Judah.

Joel and Obadiah, these two books were good! a different change of pace but good. Both were difficult to place dating wise because they could be either 9th century BC or 5th century BC, so well before exile or just after the exile.

Joel has a key theme of Locust, the swarming, hopper, destroyer, and cutter, it could mean literal locust but I saw it as a figurative Locust and that is the 4 world powers that persecuted the Israelites: Assyria, Babylon, Persia and Rome. Now I know Greece was in between Rome and Persia but that was also during the 300 year silence from Malachi to Jesus, so it's hard to say how much they suffered in this time of life so I think it means Rome instead. The book has an interchange of destruction and restoration of land and people so chapter 1 is destruction of land, 2:1-17 is destruction of people. 2:18-32 is Restoration of land and chapter 3 is restoration of people. Because of the restoration of the land and people I think this book is written post exile when they had no king and little land, just priests and the temple, which would put it around 515 BC.

Obadiah is similar dating wise but it deals with judgment of Edom, and how Edom will be scattered, shattered and desolated while Israel or Jacob will be exalted. This book tells of judgment to another nation outside of Israel and how the brother bond and family bond should have kept the 2 nations close, but instead one is being destroyed and one is being exalted. God is showing that he will judge other nations outside of Israel as well. Sin is sin in God's eyes and it deserves punishment, regardless of who they are.

Jonah and Nahum were the last two books of small book week but I think they struck home the most.

Nahum is a book concerning Nineveh, how it is a terrible city who needs repentance or they will be judged. Nineveh was the capital of Assyria, it had a river running through the city, in case siege came they could grow crops and have fresh water, they had piles of bones outside the main gate so anybody coming in would have to walk past all the death that Nineveh has caused. Nahum writes an oracle concerning the Judgement and destruction of the city. This whole oracle against Nineveh is fulfilled in 612 B.C. when Babylon destroys the city.

Jonah, this book was completely different, I won't explain the story because of how famous it is but I will go into little details, first one is when he runs away, he is running as far away as possible and then is sleeping in the storm which means he would have been happy with even death if it meant he didn't have to go to Nineveh. Second he made a vow to go to Nineveh in the fish, but he didn't want to go because he knew God's character of being forgiving and merciful so he knew if they repented that he would forgive them. His anger in the end is very human of him. If you were the Judge to Hitler and got to choose life or death what would you choose? Most humans now would choose death but God chooses life every time. This action is exactly the same with Nineveh and Jonah acted exactly like humans now do. And then Jonah and the plant, Jonah's anger at something out of his control but a gift from God is also very human, how often do we get mad at something we can't control. God is above man and creation, we just have to serve and love him.

We do a final application at the end of every book, and at the end of this book I wanted to pray about everything I do in my day and then faithfully obey what God tells me, I don't know when I will do it but I will tell you guys when I do!

At the end of the week I had a little taste of home and made my Grandma Lynne's Master Mix recipe. So I was able to have pancakes, biscuits and tea and enjoy fellowship with the friends God has given me here! I hope you find joy in the little things!

Until then Grace and Peace be with you

May 7, 2023

Week 33 - Jeremiah

Sup lads, This newsletter is going to be a little shorter, the last few weeks have drained me and I am taking today to rest mostly and try to recover before Ezekiel week. It was another full week which just takes more out of me then I wish it did. But days are coming by quickly and I will be home before I know it, it's in the 40s now which is scary. My roommate is getting married in 16 days; SBS life is a full blur. All the weeks seem to blend together but it is also the biggest blessing I have had so far.

Into the book! **Jeremiah** is written up to the destruction of Jerusalem, from the 13th year of Josiah which is 627-626 B.C. - 586 B.C. the fall of Jerusalem which he left to Egypt and likely died around 570 B.C. He has been nicknamed the weeping prophet for how emotional he is. He contrasts emotion a lot, one going from praising God to cursing the day he was born. His nickname was terror because all his prophecies were against Jerusalem and nobody wanted to listen to him because nobody wants to hear bad news! He had a very tough ministry where nobody would listen to him but he was faithful to God throughout all of it even throughout persecution, which spoke to me. Being holy and living after God is hard and stuff seems to be thrown at you but looking at him constantly is all he asks.

This week's final app I want to write down any plans I made for the future and then burn them because Proverbs 16 says,

To man belong the plans of the heart, but from the LORD comes the reply of the tongue. All a man's ways seem innocent to him, but motives are weighed by the LORD. Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and your plans will succeed.

Recently I have felt myself leaning on my own plans and understanding rather than God's and I want to get out of this mindset and turn back to letting God tell me where and what to do in the future!

I challenge you to do something similar in your life, something that you plan that you want to give to God to control!

Until then Grace and Peace be with you

May 14, 2023

Week 34 - Ezekiel

Sup lads, this week was different for sure, I was feeling a little off all week but decided to do something different with the method to see if I feel better, so throughout **Ezekiel** I did a comic strip, just some classic stick figures and bad drawing, the picture this week is from Ezekiel 10 when the glory of the Lord has departed from the Temple. The main issue that Ezekiel is countering is the hearts, the people of Jerusalem are worshiping God with their mouths but not with their hearts, the hearts are said to be far away.

I had a lot of fun with this book, it was written to exiles and Ezekiel saw the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. It is a sweet story that shows how faithful Ezekiel was, he didn't mourn when his wife died because God told him not to, he lay on his side for 430 days eating food cooked on cow dung. Ezekiel had a very hard life and yet remained faithful the whole time. This challenges me when I feel I complain when the littlest things disrupt my life.

Outside of SBS I had a beautiful phone call that refreshed me so much! I was feeling like I needed an answer about SBS and why God called me here. I was told a little about obedience to God, it is extremely important, but is God's will to have his servants suffer and give up everything just for obedience? I think God does prompt things in our lives but it is our choice in what happens. Would God do something so that he can be blamed? I don't think so, and this just refreshed my mind over SBS and gave me joy and freedom to do what I want to do in this school, not what the staff or teachers or school leaders do but what I want and it made me feel quite happy and satisfied this week.

I hope that you all find joy and freedom as we come into summer! I can't wait to be back and tell you all about the year. Reply back to this email if you would like to meet with me for coffee once I am back!

Happy Mothers Day!

Until then Grace and Peace be with you

May 21, 2023

Week 35 - Daniel

Sup lads, This week was definitely more restful, we did **Daniel** from Monday to Wednesday and then we got a surprise retreat at a Macadamia Nut Farm. It was a beautiful property with amazing stars, wallabies and a cute mountain town where everybody had a unique hat. We got some amazing rest. It was quiet and people laughing again was such a nice thing to hear! Me and a few friends got to drive ourselves and it was almost therapeutic sitting behind a wheel again and driving in the "mountains" (foothills), we stopped at a town called Kenilworth which had a famous donut shop that sells coffee in a donut, and a Western/Mexican store which was very weird to see. It is getting to be winter here which is really like summer-fall for me, days are around 24 degrees and nights get down to 8-10 degrees, which makes nights more bearable and less sweaty. Today marks 1 month left of SBS and I can't wait to be back home, but I am also starting to get sad about leaving. But I will start talking about Daniel just a little before I call it a night.

Daniel is a book that covers all of the exile, from the time he was taken, roughly 606 B.C. until the first return 70 years later, 536 B.C. This book is so accurate in its prophecy that scholars think it to be written around 150 B.C. but I believe it to be written around 530 B.C. Because that means God is outside of time and divine, which he is because he is God. If it was written around 150 B.C. God is in a massive box and I just don't believe that that is God's nature. We all know the famous fiery furnace story. So I will go into his dreams Chapters 7-12 a little bit. Chapter 8 is about 4 beasts with one to be greater than all the others but the Ancient of days and son of man comes and sets up an eternal life. Chapter 9 is a similar story with a battle of a Ram and a Goat, the Ram is a powerful force with 2 horns, (Persia and Media) and a goat comes with a great horn and kills the ram (Alexander the Great) and then the horn splits into 4 and the nations is divided, than one horn rises above them all but is destroyed by the son of man again. Chapter 11-12 is a similar story which has a north and south king, who are constantly fighting back and forth. Eventually the north king will win, but Michael will come and defeat the kings. All show Jesus in some way, I don't know if it is pointing towards post exile, Jesus's first coming, or his 2nd coming, but either way Jesus is going to overcome and win the world. This is a great motivation for mankind and the world! I hope all of you continue trusting that Jesus will come back and we will be made perfect, but we don't know when or where that will be just continue to have faith in God!

Until then Grace and Peace be with you

May 28, 2023

Week 36 - Chronicles and Ezra

Sup lads, this week was easier, I think we might have done all the hard bits of SBS, but even that being said can be a long shot, because this school is insanely hard. I got a nice 2 day weekend which feels very weird, once you work 6 days a week for a while, the 1 day weekends feel too short and the 2 day weekends feel oddly long. This weekend I got the chance to go to the Steve Irwin Australia Zoo. It is a pretty zoo; well put together and well run. They had parrots who were trained to fly point to point, retrieve and return bills from the crowd and to land on peoples arms if they stuck them out! They had saltwater crocodile shows which was awesome, they are crazy animals and so powerful. All in all it was a great experience getting to see all the Australian animals. I took a lot of photos, 2 of my favorites are up on display. When I get home, I want to find a way to print them and frame them if anybody would be interested in buying them!

The 2 books we studied this week, **Chronicles and Ezra**. Chronicles may seem like a recap event, and it is but it is a recap of the good events. Notice how David's sins with Bathsheba aren't in the book, or the whole chase with Saul, this book has similar main ideas as Samuels and Kings so I won't go into to much more detail, but I do encourage you guys to read it and compare stories that are in other books, and ones that are specific to Chronicles, like David preparing for the temple and Manasseh's repentance.

Ezra is the rebuilding of the Temple and the Altar. It is a 2 part story with Nehemiah which we are going to study next. Ezra is cool because it has the dating from 537 B.C. all the way until roughly 450 B.C. The first 6 chapters deal with him being away from Jerusalem. The temple and the altar are already built by the time Ezra comes into the picture at chapter 7, he sees the lawlessness and gives the people the law, instructing them on Godly living, and then it deals with intermarriage. If Ezra hadn't have caught this then the people of Judah likely were headed back to Exile, which is very odd because the first thing they do when they get back is build an altar to God, so they know that God needs glory and the land is His, but at the same time they were intermarried and that was one of the main things that led them to exile. It is an interesting book, and Nehemiah restates some of it, so I will give you more inside on what is happening when next Sunday rolls around. Only 3 more newsletters!

Until then Grace and Peace be with you

June 4, 2023

Week 37 - Nehemiah and Haggai

Sup lads, I got 2 more newsletters until I am home. It feels incredibly surreal and I don't know how to process what going home will feel like. I am excited to be back and can't wait to be in Canada anymore, but my biggest concern is about friendships and relationships. I find myself asking what will happen when I get home and I know in my heart I will never know that answer until I truly get home. Right now I have to live in the moment and enjoy what I have because I will never have this again.

That being said it was a slower week, **Nehemiah** with the wall being built and Haggai and deals with the temple being rebuilt, both post exilic books which means after the Israelites went into captivity in 586 B.C. With only these 2 books I had a 3 day weekend, it was amazing! I feel the most normal I have felt in months. This school beats you down so much and sometimes all that is needed is to step back and enjoy your life.

There seems to be lots of engagements and marriages recently, we attended another wedding, this time two DTS staff got married, tonight I will be enjoying an engagement party with 2 other SBS students who live in Perth, Australia. So constantly dressing up with YWAM clothes, basically casual formal or smart formal is the best I can offer while living in YWAM, no Formal Formal.

Now Nehemiah is about the rebuilding of the wall and then pushing towards holiness, with the law, old events like the feast of booths and passover and then consecrating priests, Levites and leaders. All of this leads to a dedication of the wall and then Nehemiah going kinda crazy on any sin that he sees in Jerusalem. Nehemiah is a great character, obedient and hardy, he pushes to have Jerusalem the best it can be while holding the Law and God close to his heart. The last thing we can all model from Nehemiah was his prayers, whenever Nehemiah felt opposed he prayed first and then went to deal with the issue from God's heart.

Haggai is another great minor prophet, he deals with the stoppage of the temple being built from 536-520 B.C. Ezra talks about the temple in his book, but Haggai gives us the reason why the Temple was rebuilt and what happened to get the building going again. This book is one that shows Zerubbabel will be stamped as a signet. If you look at the Luke and Matthew genealogies you will see Zerubbabel on both Joseph's line and Mary's line. Zerubbabel, a priest, was the one to carry the Davidic line back to Jerusalem from exile which explains his signet. He is stamped in history as one of the men who carried the line of Jesus.

Next up is Malachi and Zechariah, then we got Esther and finally Matthew. Time is going by fast and I will be home soon, I love you all and can't wait to see you!

Until then Grace and Peace be with you

June 11, 2023

Week 38 - Malachi, Zechariah and Esther

Sup lads, life is crazy! 10 days until I graduate, 12 days until I am back on Canadian soil. Life is crazy for that but I am excited to come back! I only have a short push and 1 more book left, the Gospel of Matthew. I don't exactly know what to think when I hand that book in but I will have accomplished something big and exciting!

Malachi is the last prophet of the Old Testament, his authorship is debated because Malachi means the messenger, so he could have been a nobody that God used and he adopted the name Malachi, but he also could have been an actual Malachi who was unfortunate with his name. It is a cool, somewhat apocalyptic literature, and it was fun to study. The first bit attacks the priests and Levites for misleading the city and not being holy, the rest depicts what the messenger could look like. It could be JTB or Elijah are the most commonly thought, but in Matthew 11:11-15 it talks about JTB being Elijah to come, so the messenger is likely JTB preparing the way for Jesus.

Zechariah was a hopeful book for me, all of it was pointing towards Jerusalem being a light for the nations, and a light that draws people in and so they are saved, lines like Jerusalem was aloft and the plains were around it, It's as if Jerusalem's mission is to be a light for the world and God will use that city and it will be placed slightly above the World in the world.

It is sad to see now that Jerusalem has the wailing wall and Jews still worship the little wall instead of God, the veil over the place is crazy and I am so grateful for Jesus coming back and allowing me, a Gentile, to be allowed into the kingdom of Heaven!

Now, **Esther!** What a phenomenal book, one that focuses on a woman, and doesn't mention God. There are a few places where God is evident like Queen Vashti rejecting King Xerxes and Esther gaining favor to become queen, or the king waking up to read the book of records and finding Mordecai's name the night before Haman wanted to kill him. It is a crazy key story, if Esther hadn't saved the Jews, Jerusalem would have been destroyed and the people in Persia and Jesus' line would have ended. Luckily we have a divine God who had planned this from the beginning!

Besides books I have finished my final paper which means I can focus on Matthew with my whole heart!

My brother graduated while I was here. He is becoming a man and he has found God along the way. I am proud of who is becoming and am excited to come back and continue being your brother!

Side note it is my dad's 50th birthday so Happy Birthday, Dad! I love you and you have raised me up to be a gentleman who loves the Lord and loves to challenge authority. You carry a discipline and perseverance that is inspiring and you lay down everything to serve. You are humble and kind and have the ability to talk to anybody! I hope that you enjoy your birthday and do something fun! I will see you in 12 days!

Until then Grace and Peace be with you

June 18, 2023

Week 39 - Matthew

Sup lads, Happy Father's Day to all the dads reading this!

Now the last newsletter, it's kinda crazy. **Matthew** is an amazing book and I loved it, the amount of Prophecy Matthew uses is insane. The audience is Jewish people which is quite sad honestly, the Jewish veil they have is so sad, the fact they worship a wall because that's all that is left of the original city is so sad. Jesus is our God, Jesus is the son of God, and the son of David, which means he was the last king of the line, and that means that Joseph was also a King.

I just wanna touch on a few things, Matthew's writing is so amazing. He will set up his chapters to show that Jesus is above man, whether it be Peter exalting Christ and then Peter being called Satan, or the feeding of the 5000 and 4000 and then being challenged by the Pharisees. The whole book points to Jesus as God, and as the King, even when he comes to Jerusalem he is the humble King, on the cross he is the King, when mocked he is the King. Jesus is undeniably our King.

Besides Matthew we have a lot of lasts, we had one last DTS grad, we will have a last dinner on Tuesday, our grad on Wednesday, goodbyes on Thursday and then I leave on Friday. We had a last communion last night, we will have our last base worship today and I will have to say goodbye to a lot of my friends. But knowing God and seeing his plan I understand so much more. I see that we are meant to live out Matthew 28, the Great Commision and make disciples of all nations. The importance of knowing God and knowing his word is so much bigger and better than pursuing the world. I am praying that I do not become stale or complacent with the Bible but try to learn more and more about what God wants to show me.

Email me if you wanna meet with me for coffee once I get back. I would love to talk with you Guys about the ups and downs of SBS and travel.

Until then Grace and Peace be with you

June 26, 2023

Week 40 - Home

Sup lads, I thought I'd give an update at home before I go off to camp next week.

The goodbyes were extremely hard when I left. I didn't think I would miss it but it is hard adjusting back to life in Canada. So far I haven't seemed to sit down for longer than 3 hours, because life keeps throwing curveballs my way. I am meeting for coffee almost everyday this week and would love to continue meeting up with you.

I will be volunteering at camp for two weeks, and then I will hopefully be relaxing a little bit before finding a job. If you would like to support me with camp that would be greatly appreciated, whether that be prayers, meeting for coffee and giving encouragement or donations, I would love to reach out to you guys. My plans after camp are open until the last weekend of July, the weekend of the Vermillion Fair where I will spend time with my family at the small town fair, then I hopefully will do a small backpacking trip in Montana with an SBS student from the Montana base. I went to Kona, Hawaii for my DTS with her so I am super excited to see her and learn what has happened in her life since then!

I would love to meet you when I am free! I had to get a new phone number when I got here, it is +1 587-284-3060 reach out to me or call me and I would be happy to tell you guys about my life and the school!

I plan on doing a whole Bible horizontal and link as much as I can throughout the Bible and then be able to study whatever I want whenever I want. This will likely take me 4-6 months to complete because I will be going at my own pace but I would love to keep updating you guys on stuff I find.

Until then please pray for clarity on what to do next and endurance to do that with a clear mind and a mind that follows God.

Until then Grace and Peace be with you