

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