

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.