

4TH QUARTER 2025

"LOVE ONE ANOTHER"



"Your love for
one another
will prove to
the world that
you are my
disciples"
(John 13:35
NLT).

The Church of God **WEEKLY BIBLE LESSONS**

THE CHURCH OF GOD AT JERUSALEM ACRES
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It's time to Study the Word of God!

As we prepare to Study the Word of God together, I am filled with joy to introduce this quarter's Sabbath School book! Entering the beautiful Tabernacles Season and looking ahead to the close of 2025, my prayer is that each lesson will spark new life into your relationship with God—drawing us not just closer to Him, but also closer to one another. Central to all we will explore is the timeless commandment: **“Love one another.”** This foundational call weaves through every page of Scripture and stands at the heart of each lesson in our book. As we celebrate, reflect, and grow together—may the love God has lavished upon us overflow into our relationships, shaping our fellowship with compassion, unity, and grace. Whether we are delving into the joy of the Feast of Tabernacles, the story of forgiveness from Cain to Christ, or the assurance of God's steadfast love, let us remember: true spiritual growth is revealed by the way we love.

May this book ignite a fresh passion in your heart for God and for each other. Let's embrace this season of celebration and spiritual growth, walking hand in hand as a family of faith, knowing that every loving step brings us nearer to God's presence and to the fulfillment of His kingdom. Below is a glimpse into what we will be studying together in the coming weeks. May the Lord bless you all with steadfast love!

– Bishop Timothy Miller

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES – THREE PART SERIES

This Three-Part Series on The Feast of Tabernacles delves into the profound significance of this biblical festival, also known as Sukkot or the Feast of Booths. More than just a historical commemoration, the Feast of Tabernacles is a vibrant celebration of God's faithfulness, abundance, and the open-hearted invitation of the gospel. In this series, you will explore God's appointed season of joy, Christ as the open door, and the eternal tabernacles and final invitation. Join us for this enlightening series and deepen your understanding of the Feast of Tabernacles. Experience the joy, renewal, and hope that this festival brings, and see how it anticipates the ultimate ingathering into God's kingdom. Don't miss this opportunity to grow in faith and knowledge!

GETTING TO KNOW GOD – THREE PART SERIES

Step into a deeper understanding with our "Getting to Know God" series. In a world filled with distractions, these lessons invite you to focus on what matters most: who God truly is. Move beyond simple belief to a relationship that shapes your identity, values, and hope. Explore how God makes Himself known through creation, Scripture, and especially Jesus Christ. Discover why truly knowing God surpasses any earthly achievement and transforms your priorities and actions. Through this series, you'll learn to reflect God's character—His love, justice, and righteousness—in your daily life. Accept God's invitation to connect more closely with Him and find out what it means to know Him personally and deeply.

FROM CAIN TO CHRIST: THE GOSPEL OF FORGIVENESS – FIVE PART SERIES

In a world still echoing with the cries of vengeance and broken relationships, this five-lesson series boldly traces the crimson thread from Cain's curse to Christ's cross. Through vivid Scripture study and powerful reflection, we'll uncover how the blood of Abel cried for justice, but the blood of Jesus speaks a better word—of mercy, healing, and restoration. Each lesson will contrast humanity's natural instinct for retaliation with God's supernatural call to forgive, exploring the stories of Cain, Lamech, and Jesus' radical commands in the Gospels. Join us as we learn how to break cycles of bitterness, overcome evil with good, and walk the better way—the way of Christ.

ABOUNDING STEADFAST LOVE – TWO PART SERIES

As the calendar turns and one season gives way to the next, this two-part devotional series invites us to pause and reflect on the steadfast love of God—a love that has carried us through every trial, every triumph, and every unknown. These lessons explore how God's unwavering commitment to His people becomes both our anchor and our example. As we close the year with gratitude and enter the next with anticipation, we are called not only to receive His love but to mirror it: in our relationships, our service, and our daily walk. Let these lessons stir your heart with fresh resolve to love faithfully, live purposefully, and trust boldly in the God who never lets go.

“THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES: GOD’S APPOINTED SEASON OF JOY”

LESSON 1 • For week ending October 4, 2025

The Feast of Tabernacles, also known as Sukkot or the Feast of Booths, stands as a vibrant testimony to God’s faithfulness—past, present, and future. More than a historical commemoration of Israel’s wilderness journey, this biblical festival pulses with symbols of harvest, abundance, and the open-hearted invitation of the gospel. As we gather to study its significance, let us see how God’s holy calendar anticipates not just the ingathering of crops, but the joyful ingathering of people into the promise of His kingdom—a time of celebration, renewal, and hope for all who desire to enter while the door remains open.

KEY TEXT: *“Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the Lord. ... Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths: That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God” (Leviticus 23:34, 42–43).*

1. The Feast of Tabernacles is appointed by God as a season of rejoicing and remembrance, focusing on His provision and presence among His people.

- » The Feast of Tabernacles is a divinely appointed celebration (Leviticus 23:33–44), following Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement), that shifts the focus from repentance to joy and gratitude. For seven days, the Israelites left their homes to dwell in booths—tangible reminders of God’s provision during their wilderness journey and the temporary nature of life (1 Peter 2:11). Choosing to embrace discomfort helps us remember God’s faithfulness in our own lives. Discuss this in light of Psalm 27:5.

2. Tabernacles is intimately tied to the harvest: it celebrates the ingathering of fruit and is a prophetic picture of God’s final, joyful harvest of souls.

- » In ancient Israel, Sukkot arrived at the time of the *“harvest ingathering”* (Exodus 23:16; Deuteronomy 16:13), when the produce of the fields had been gathered—grapes, olives, and grain. The festival’s agricultural roots call worshipers to joy and gratitude for God’s material blessing, but also point forward to a greater, spiritual harvest. Jesus and the prophets employ the imagery of harvest to describe God’s redemptive plan (Matthew 9:37–38; John 4:35; Revelation 14:15). In what ways does the theme of harvest illustrate both our dependence on God and our partnership in His mission of evangelism?

3. Through the joy of Tabernacles, God’s people are called to radical inclusion—welcoming the stranger, the poor, and “whosoever will” to share in God’s abundance.

- » The Law’s instructions for Sukkot make room for everyone: *“And thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, ... and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow”* (Deuteronomy 16:14). The festival blurs social distinctions and draws all into God’s circle of rejoicing—foreshadowing the open invitation of the gospel (Matthew 22:1–14; Galatians 3:28). How does the spirit of rejoicing and welcome at Tabernacles inform Christian hospitality and outreach today?

4. The temporary booths of Tabernacles remind us of our pilgrimage on earth, and point us to the hope of dwelling securely with God forever.

- » The booths are a vivid illustration that all earthly security is temporary (Leviticus 23:42–43; Hebrews 11:8–16). They call worshipers from every age to live as hopeful pilgrims and sojourners, resisting the illusion of permanence and setting their hearts on things above. The New Testament echoes this truth: *“For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come”* (Hebrews 13:14; 2 Corinthians 5:1–4). By embracing this pilgrim spirit, we learn to rejoice in present blessings while longing for the fullness of God’s coming kingdom. What practices and perspectives can help us nurture this dual vision—contentment now, yet deep yearning for the home God has promised?

“CHRIST, THE OPEN DOOR: LIVING WATER AND THE HARVEST CALL”

LESSON 2 ■ For week ending October 11, 2025

In Jerusalem, during the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus stood amid the throng and made a stunning offer—an invitation to drink deeply of “living water.” This powerful proclamation tied the ancient harvest festival to the good news of the gospel, declaring that the spiritual door was wide open. For both Israel and the nations, the Feast pointed forward to the age when “whosoever will” could come. In this lesson, we uncover how the symbols of Sukkot—water, booth, and gathering—are fulfilled in Christ, the open door, and the call to soul-winning while the fields are ripe.

KEY TEXT: *“In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. ... But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive...” (John 7:37–39a KJV).*

1. At Tabernacles, Jesus revealed Himself as the fulfillment of the “living water,” inviting all who thirst to come and drink by faith.

- » On the climactic “great day” of Sukkot, as priests poured water at the altar (recalling Israel’s desert provision and praying for rain), Jesus declared Himself to be the true source of living water (John 7:2, 37–39). This dramatic moment reimagined the ancient ritual as a signpost to spiritual reality—God’s ultimate provision through the Holy Spirit. Only Christ can satisfy the deepest thirst of the human soul (Isaiah 12:3; John 4:10–14). Where have you sought to quench your spiritual thirst, and how have you experienced Jesus as “living water”?

2. The “open door” of Tabernacles speaks to God’s gracious invitation—now is the season to enter into salvation and the Kingdom harvest.

- » Both the Old and New Testaments echo the motif of an open invitation: *“Come, all ye that are thirsty...buy without money and without price”* (Isaiah 55:1); *“Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it”* (Revelation 3:8). The door is open, but not forever; the parables of Jesus continually urge readiness and response while the way is clear (Matthew 25:1–13). In light of Christ’s open-door promise, what does it look like to walk through while there is yet time? How can we help others recognize and answer this call?

3. The imagery of harvest at Tabernacles is a call to evangelism—believers are workers sent to gather in a ripe and ready spiritual crop.

- » Jesus connected the festival’s harvest theme with the urgency of soul-winning: *“Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest”* (John 4:35; Matthew 9:37–38; Revelation 14:14–16). The Great Commission (Matthew 28:19–20) mobilizes every believer—while the door is open, we sow, reap, and rejoice together. How does the reality of a limited season of “open doors” give urgency to our evangelistic work today? What fields, near or far, is God prompting you to harvest?

4. In the age of the Spirit, God’s invitation is truly for “whosoever will”—the gospel breaks down every barrier, fulfilling the feast’s universal promise.

- » The Feast of Tabernacles, once celebrated by Israelites and sojourners alike, prophetically anticipated the global reach of the gospel: *“And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations...shall go up...to keep the feast”* (Zechariah 14:16; Revelation 7:9, 22:17). The open door extends to all people, regardless of background, need, or status (Romans 10:13; Galatians 3:28). What practical steps can we take as individuals and as a church to ensure that our message and ministry remain radically inclusive, echoing the heart of God’s invitation?

“THE FEAST FULFILLED: ETERNAL TABERNACLES AND THE FINAL INVITATION”

LESSON ■ 3 For week ending October 18, 2025

The Feast of Tabernacles is not merely a relic of Israel’s history or a shadow of spiritual realities in Christ. It points unmistakably to a future fullness: the time when God’s kingdom gathers people from every tribe and nation, and the “tabernacle of God” is with men. This eschatological hope pulses through prophetic writings, through the promise of “living water,” and through the climactic invitation at the Bible’s very end. We conclude our series by beholding the Feast’s final fulfillment—and the closing of the open door.

KEY TEXT: *“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely” (Revelation 22:17 KJV).*

1. The ultimate fulfillment of Tabernacles is God’s eternal dwelling with His redeemed people—a restored creation where every need is met.

- » *“Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them...”* (Revelation 21:3). The booths were always a shadow; the substance is found in Christ (Hebrews 8:5; 9:11; Colossians 2:16–17). The Feast of Tabernacles offers a vision of all nations gathering to worship, a restored world overflowing with abundance, healing, and unity, and God dwelling intimately with humanity as the source of life. What features of the Feast’s prophetic fulfillment give hope and encouragement to you personally as you journey through life’s “wilderness”?

2. The closing invitation of Scripture is radically open and urgent: “whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”

- » Revelation 22:17 distills the message of Scripture into a sweeping, gracious summons: the Holy Spirit and the Bride—the Church—invite all who are thirsty to come and receive the water of life freely (see also Isaiah 55:1; John 6:35). This invitation is lavish and open to everyone, offered without cost, but it carries a sense of urgency, for there will come a day when the open door will close (Luke 13:24–28; Matthew 25:10–13). God’s Word asks us to recognize the priceless value of this invitation and to consider how we can respond, both personally and in encouraging those around us, so that no one delays in accepting God’s call while there is still time.

3. The feast foreshadows a thousand years of Christ’s reign and beyond, where justice, peace, and abundance cover the earth.

- » Tabernacles prefigures the Millennial Kingdom (Zechariah 14:16–19; Revelation 20:4–6): a restored earth, where peace flourishes among nations, judgment gives way to mercy, and healing streams continually flow from God’s throne (Ezekiel 47:9; Revelation 22:1–2). All that the feast and the harvest symbolized—abundance, health, joyful worship, and unity—finds its true and lasting completion in the age to come, when barriers are removed and God’s people dwell securely. How does this vivid vision of the Kingdom Age shape your prayers, priorities, and daily walk as a disciple today?

4. The close of the open door warns us not to presume on God’s grace, but to respond—and invite others—while there is still time.

- » Jesus and the apostles often warn that the invitation, though wide and free, is not endless: *“Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many...will seek to enter in, and shall not be able”* (Luke 13:24; Matthew 25:10). The Feast of Tabernacles embodies the lesson that the current season of mercy precedes a time of reckoning and accountability. As we await Christ’s return and anticipate the full ingathering of God’s people, we are entrusted with making this invitation unmistakably clear and urgent: *“The Spirit and the bride say, Come...”* Reflecting on the reality of a closing door, how might this shape your witness, deepen your worship, and heighten your sense of urgency in daily life and in reaching out to others?

“GETTING TO KNOW GOD”

LESSON ■ 4 For week ending October 25, 2025

Understanding who God is matters more than any other knowledge we can gain. In a world filled with information and distraction, the journey to know God stands apart—calling us not to shallow belief, but to a relationship that informs our identity, values, and hope. This lesson invites us to reflect on how God reveals Himself, why genuine knowledge of Him outweighs every earthly achievement, and what steps we can take to begin that journey today. Let your heart be open to God’s invitation, and consider what it would mean to truly know Him, not just about Him.

KEY TEXT: *“Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD” (Jeremiah 9:23-24 KJV).*

1. God desires to be known by His people.

- » From Genesis to Revelation, God initiates relationship with humanity, calling us not just to observe His works but to understand His heart. Adam and Eve walked with God in the garden, and through the prophets, Israel was summoned to know and serve Him intimately (Genesis 3:8; Hosea 6:6). The passage in Jeremiah reveals God's delight not in human accomplishment, but in people who *"understandeth and knoweth Me."* Why do you think God places such value on being known rather than merely acknowledged? How might your own spiritual journey change if you viewed God as someone available to be known personally?

2. True knowledge of God transforms our priorities and values.

- » Jeremiah’s words directly challenge the natural human tendency to boast in knowledge, strength, or riches. Instead, God asks us to prioritize the knowledge of Himself above all earthly pursuits. This was radical in Israel's ancient culture, where status depended on wisdom, power, or wealth—and remains so today. Consider: What are the “riches” or “wisdom” prized in our age? How does knowing God shift the way we think about success, purpose, or self-worth? (See also Matthew 6:33; Philippians 3:7-8). When we seek God above all, our ambitions are reordered, and what once seemed most important fades in the light of His presence. This perspective enables us to pursue lasting fulfillment rooted in our relationship with God rather than temporary achievements.

3. Knowing God means embracing His character—lovingkindness, justice, and righteousness.

- » The knowledge of God is not abstract; it bears fruit in our lives by revealing His attributes and shaping our actions. God delights in lovingkindness, true justice, and righteous living. In ancient Israel, these were not just private virtues, but communal responsibilities. Consider the words of Micah 6:8, which calls us *"to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God."* Similarly, 1 John 4:7-8 reminds us, *"Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God... Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love."* How do these attributes manifest in your family, church, or workplace? What concrete steps can you take to reflect God’s character in your conduct this week?

4. The journey to knowing God begins with humility and seeking.

- » To know God is to approach Him with humility, recognizing our limitations and His greatness. Proverbs 8:17 assures us that God rewards those who diligently seek Him, and Hebrews 11:6 echoes this promise: *"And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who seek Him."* The historical context reminds us that ancient Israelites were surrounded by idols and counterfeit gods, yet the living God promised to be found by those who pursued Him. What does it look like for you to seek God with intention and perseverance? In what ways might busy schedules or distractions hinder this pursuit?

“GETTING TO KNOW GOD: THE GOD WHO REVEALS HIMSELF”

LESSON 5 ■ For week ending Saturday, November 1, 2025

As we seek to know God more deeply, we discover that He is not silent or distant, but a God who lovingly reveals Himself to those who desire a relationship with Him. Throughout Scripture and history, God unveils His character, His purposes, and the depths of His compassion—inviting us to move beyond mere ritual and into genuine intimacy with Him. This lesson explores not only the many ways God has made Himself known, but also how these revelations invite us into a life transformed by faith and personal experience. With open hearts and minds, let us reflect on what God has shown and consider how we are called to respond to His ongoing invitation.

KEY TEXT: *“And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3 KJV).*

1. God reveals Himself through creation, Scripture, and above all, Jesus Christ.

- » Psalm 19 attests that *“the heavens declare the glory of God,”* yet God’s self-revelation does not stop at the beauty of nature. Through His Word—the living Scriptures—He discloses His will, character, and plan (2 Timothy 3:16). In the fullness of time, God revealed Himself most completely in Jesus Christ: *“He that hath seen me hath seen the Father”* (John 14:9). In the ancient world, gods were often unknowable and capricious, but the God of the Bible seeks personal relationship. How does the knowledge that God wants to be known affect your view of faith? How does Jesus’ incarnation change your understanding of God’s nearness?

2. Eternal life is defined by a relationship with God, not just knowledge about Him.

- » Jesus’ prayer in John 17 places knowing God at the very heart of salvation—making clear that eternal life is not simply about future hope, but about present relationship. Discuss Jesus’ conclusion in this prayer as you read verses 24-26. Distinguishing between knowing about God and truly knowing Him can be challenging, especially in cultures that prize doctrinal precision over experience. Reflect on your own journey: In what ways has *“knowing God”* gone beyond facts and creeds to shape your day-to-day living? What practices help move from head knowledge to heart knowledge? (See Philippians 3:10 for Paul’s own lifelong pursuit.)

3. God makes Himself known progressively—inviting us into deeper relationship.

- » Throughout biblical history, God unfolds His character and purpose, step by step. To Abraham, He was the Promise Maker; to Moses, the great I AM; to David, Shepherd and King; and through Christ, Savior and Friend. This progressive revelation was crucial in cultures overflowing with competing deities and philosophies. For early Christians, the claim that knowledge of God could grow and deepen was revolutionary. As Hebrews 1:1-2 affirms, *“God, who at various times and in diverse manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken unto us by His Son.”* For further reflection, consider Jeremiah 9:23-24. How have you experienced “progressive revelation” in your own walk—times when God revealed more of Himself as you matured in faith? What barriers sometimes hold us back from deeper understanding?

4. Knowing God transforms and compels us toward worship, service, and obedience.

- » As our understanding of God deepens, we find ourselves increasingly drawn to worship Him in spirit and in truth (John 4:24), not out of mere obligation, but with genuine awe and gratitude. This heartfelt worship naturally leads us to joyful service and wholehearted obedience, as Psalm 100:2 reminds us: *“Serve the Lord with gladness.”* When we embrace God’s love and revelation, our actions begin to reflect an inner transformation—where worship is expressed through daily choices, acts of kindness, and a spirit of humility. Consider how your concept of worship and service has evolved as you’ve come to know God more intimately. What practical steps could you take this week to serve God more intentionally in your home, church, or greater community? Reflect together on the dynamic relationship between knowledge and obedience, as illustrated in James 1:22-25, and how living out God’s truth shapes every aspect of our lives.

“GETTING TO KNOW GOD: LIVING IN THE LIGHT OF HIS PRESENCE”

LESSON 6 ■ For week ending November 8, 2025

The ultimate goal of knowing God is not simply increased understanding, but transformed living. When we truly know God, His presence becomes the guiding reality of our lives—shaping our choices, relationships, and hope. This lesson brings together all that we’ve explored, challenging us to move from hearing and believing, to walking daily in the light and love of our heavenly Father. As you reflect on the ways God has revealed Himself, consider what it means to live out this knowledge in practical, Spirit-filled obedience.

KEY TEXT: *“That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death” (Philippians 3:10 KJV).*

1. A deep knowledge of God empowers us to live victorious, hope-filled lives.

- » Paul’s longing in Philippians 3:10 is intensely personal: to know Christ, to experience the power of His resurrection, and to share in His sufferings. In the context of first-century Rome, where Christians faced ridicule and persecution, this knowledge was more than theological—it sustained courage and joy. Consider also Ephesians 1:17-19, where Paul prays *“that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened,”* and Romans 8:11, which promises that *“the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you.”* Such passages remind us that God’s power and presence equip us to face trials, griefs, and moral challenges with confidence. Where have you seen God’s “resurrection power” at work in your own life or in your church? How can the hope of knowing God strengthen you in the face of adversity? Reflect also on II Corinthians 4:7-10 and Colossians 1:27 as you consider the ongoing reality of Christ alive within you.

2. Knowing God compels us to love others and pursue holiness.

- » John writes, *“He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love”* (1 John 4:8). The test of authentic knowledge is transformed character—expressed in sacrificial love and the pursuit of holiness (1 Thessalonians 4:7; Hebrews 12:14). In ancient Israel, holiness set God’s people apart; in the Early Church, radical love startled the Gentile world. How does knowing God affect the way you relate to family, colleagues, or community members? In what areas do you sense God calling you to deeper holiness or reconciliation?

3. God’s presence leads us into a life of continual growth and spiritual maturity.

- » The New Testament abounds with exhortations to *“grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ”* (II Peter 3:18). Just as a healthy relationship deepens over time, so our knowledge of God should expand in understanding, trust, and obedience. Early Christian believers devoted themselves to teaching, fellowship, and prayer (Acts 2:42)—patterns that nurture spiritual growth today. What spiritual habits have helped you grow closer to God? How does your church community support your journey? What might spiritual maturity look like, practically, this year?

4. Living in the knowledge of God gives us perspective, purpose, and future hope.

- » In every age, knowing God reorients our perspective about what truly matters. As God’s people in exile found hope by trusting in His promises, so we too are called to live as *“pilgrims and strangers,”* anchored by the certainty of God’s love (Hebrews 11:13-16; 1 Peter 2:11). With hope firmly in Christ, our lives become a testimony to others searching for meaning. How does knowledge of God change your plans, ambitions, or outlook on life’s uncertainties? What promise from God do you most need to hold onto in the coming week? Let the assurance of God’s faithfulness encourage you to act with courage and compassion, even when the path is uncertain. As you walk in the light of His presence, may you become a living example of grace, inspiring others to seek the transforming knowledge of the Lord.

“FROM CAIN TO CHRIST: BREAKING THE CURSE WITH FORGIVENESS”

LESSON 7 ■ For week ending November 15, 2025

In the aftermath of Eden, humanity’s first family was shattered by anger and violence. Cain, the firstborn of Adam and Eve, allowed jealousy to fester in his heart when God favored his brother Abel’s offering over his. Despite God’s warning that *“sin lieth at the door”* and Cain must master it, Cain chose the path of bitterness. The result was a tragic act of violence – the first murder – and a curse that reverberated through generations. Yet even in this dark beginning, the light of God’s mercy flickered, pointing forward to Christ’s forgiveness that would one day break every curse.

KEY TEXT: *“Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, **forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you**” (Ephesians 4:31–32 KJV).*

1. Resentment Unchecked Leads to Ruin

Cain’s failure began in his heart. He grew angry when God accepted Abel’s sacrifice but not his own, and he refused God’s counsel to repent. God cautioned Cain that sin was crouching at his door like a beast and he must rule over it, but Cain let jealousy dominate. He lured Abel to the field and **“committed the first murder”**, then defiantly answered God, *“Am I my brother’s keeper?”* Cain’s unchecked resentment shows how hatred can consume us (Matthew 5:21,22). What “crouching” sins – anger, envy, bitterness – must we recognize and master in our own hearts before they destroy relationships?

2. The Consequences of Sin – Curse and Separation

In judgment, God pronounced a severe penalty on Cain. *“And now art thou cursed from the earth... a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be”* (Genesis 4:11–12). Cain’s life of farming would become futile, and he would wander the earth in restless exile. Even worse, Cain went out *“from the presence of the Lord”* (Genesis 4:16), illustrating how unrepented sin creates alienation from God and others (Isaiah 59:2). Cain’s way led to isolation and despair – truly a living curse. How do the consequences Cain faced warn us about the seriousness of unrepented sin and its power to cut us off from God’s presence and peace?

3. Mercy Mixed with Judgment

Yet amidst judgment, God showed Cain unexpected mercy. Rather than allowing vengeance to take its course, *“the LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him”* (Genesis 4:15). This mysterious mark was both a protective sign and a perpetual reminder of his crime. It ensured that while Cain was punished, he would not be slain in turn – God’s justice was tempered with compassion. Even for a murderer, God did not abandon him entirely. The mark of Cain exemplifies how God’s mercy can still be found amid judgment, preserving life and giving opportunity for repentance (Lamentations 3:22). What does God’s merciful protection of Cain teach us about His character? When have you experienced God’s mercy even when facing the painful consequences of your own mistakes?

4. From Curse to Christ – Forgiveness Breaks the Cycle

The story of Cain highlights the curse that sin and hate bring, but it also points forward to the cure that comes through Christ. Humanity followed *“the way of Cain”* into violence and vengeance, but Jesus opened a new way of forgiveness and life. On the cross, instead of crying out for vengeance like Abel’s blood, Jesus cried, *“Father, forgive them”* for His murderers (Luke 23:34). By His sacrifice, *“the blood of sprinkling... speaketh better things than that of Abel”* – it speaks mercy and pardon. Christ bore the curse of our sin to break it: *“He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross”*, so that we could be forgiven and set free from the curse of death (Galatians 3:13). Forgiveness through Christ truly breaks the fatal cycle of hatred. In what ways does Jesus’ example and sacrifice challenge you to break cycles of bitterness or revenge with forgiveness? How can embracing God’s forgiveness in Christ help you extend forgiveness to others?

“SEVENTY TIMES SEVEN: THE GOSPEL THAT REVERSES VENGEANCE”

LESSON 8 ■ For week ending November 22, 2025

The desire for revenge runs deep in human history. In Genesis, a descendant of Cain named Lamech boasted to his wives that he had killed a young man for wounding him and declared, “*If Cain’s revenge is sevenfold, then Lamech’s is seventy-sevenfold*”. This proud pledge of unchecked vengeance exemplifies our fallen world’s cycle of escalating retaliation. Against this backdrop, Jesus Christ introduced a radically different way. When Peter asked how many times we should forgive someone who wrongs us – suggesting seven times as generous – Jesus answered, “*I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven*”. The Gospel calls us to reverse the cycle of vengeance with limitless forgiveness. In this lesson, we will explore how Christ’s teaching and example of mercy conquers the instinct for retribution and brings healing where revenge would only bring more hurt.

KEY TEXT: “*Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven*” (Matthew 18:21–22).

1. The Way of Vengeance – From Cain to Lamech

Human nature unaided by God tends toward revenge (Leviticus 19:18). Lamech, proud and unrepentant, exemplified this by claiming the right to avenge himself far beyond what God ordained. He invoked Cain’s divine protection (sevenfold vengeance on anyone who killed Cain) and boastfully magnified it to “*seventy-sevenfold*” for himself. This *protective curse of vengeance* shows the world’s mindset: strike back harder at those who hurt you. Such a path only multiplies violence. God had mercifully restrained vengeance in Cain’s case, but Lamech “took it upon himself to claim God’s protection” and bragged about retaliation. Why do you think revenge comes so naturally to us? What are the consequences when each person seeks to “*get even*” or escalate payback (Galatians 5:16)?

2. Jesus’ Call to Unlimited Forgiveness

Jesus utterly reversed this pattern of vengeance with His teaching. Peter asked if forgiving someone seven times was sufficient, perhaps thinking of Lamech’s boast or the old law’s limits. But Jesus replied, “*Not seven times, but seventy times seven,*” meaning **FORGIVENESS WITHOUT KEEPING COUNT**. In contrast to Lamech’s seventy-sevenfold revenge, Christ commands seventy-times-seven mercy – essentially, *limitless* forgiveness. This doesn’t mean literally 490; it means we must not place a cap on forgiving others (Colossians 3:13, 1 Corinthians 13:4,5). Jesus teaches us to forgive a “*limitless number of times*”, just as God continually forgives us. Such grace was unheard of. What challenges do you face in forgiving repeatedly or unconditionally? How does Jesus’ standard of “*seventy times seven*” push you beyond your comfort zone in showing mercy?

3. Breaking the Cycle – Overcoming Evil with Good

The Gospel calls us to end the cycle of vengeance by trusting God with justice: “*Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord*” (Romans 12:19). Instead of retaliating, we are urged, “*Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good*” (Romans 12:21). Jesus modeled this by forgiving His enemies, showing that forgiveness, not revenge, breaks the chain of hatred. By responding to wrongs with grace, we open the door for healing and transformation—both in ourselves and others (Proverbs 15:1, Isaiah 50:4, Matthew 5:9). Can you recall a time when forgiveness, rather than revenge, changed a situation for the better?

4. Living the 70×7 Life – Marked by Mercy

Jesus not only preached forgiveness—He embodied it, praying for His executioners and continuously offering mercy. He calls us to do likewise: “*Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful*” (Luke 6:36). Holding onto unforgiveness only breeds bitterness, while forgiveness, grounded in God’s boundless grace to us, brings freedom (Ephesians 4:32). The gospel empowers us to forgive—even those who don’t deserve it—because we ourselves have received undeserved mercy. Who do you need to forgive today, and how might remembering God’s mercy help you let go of vengeance?

“THE BETTER BLOOD: MERCY IN THE SHADOW OF MURDER”

LESSON 9 ■ For week ending November 29, 2025

The first murder in human history cast a long shadow. When Cain killed his innocent brother, Abel, the Lord said, *“The voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto me from the ground”* (Genesis 4:10). Abel’s blood symbolically cried out for justice – a cry that represents all innocent suffering and unanswered wrongs in our world. Throughout the ages, the *shed blood* of victims seems to demand vengeance. Yet in the fullness of time, God answered that cry not by multiplying wrath, but by sending His own Son to shed **better blood** on our behalf. Jesus Christ’s blood, poured out at the cross, speaks a message of **mercy and forgiveness** that is far more powerful than Abel’s blood cried for retribution. In this lesson, we contrast Abel’s blood and Christ’s blood – justice and mercy – and find hope that even in the darkest shadow of human sin, God’s grace prevails.

KEY TEXT: *“...Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel”* (Hebrews 12:24).

1. **Abel’s Blood Cries Out – Justice Demanded**

Abel was a righteous man who became the first martyr at the hands of his brother. After Abel’s murder, God said to Cain, *“What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto Me from the ground.”* (Genesis 4:10). Abel’s spilt blood figuratively “cried out” for justice – it exposed the grievous wrong that had been done. This imagery set a precedent: innocent blood “haunts” the guilty and calls for accountability (compare Genesis 9:5-6). In Abel’s case, the cry was answered by God’s judgment on Cain. Abel’s blood is a shadow of the law: it highlights guilt and demands that wrong be addressed. It reminds us that God notices every injustice. In today’s world we often hear the figurative “cry” of innocent blood through victims’ voices. How do you feel knowing that God hears the cries of injustice and does not ignore them?

2. **The Blood of Christ Speaks Mercy – A Better Word**

Jesus is *“the mediator of a new covenant,”* and His blood “speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.” While Abel’s blood called for justice, Christ’s blood calls for grace and forgiveness. At the cross, Jesus prayed, *“Father, forgive them,”* demonstrating mercy where vengeance once reigned. Hebrews teaches that Christ’s sacrificial blood has atoning power beyond Abel’s, bringing forgiveness and reconciliation with God (1 Peter 1:17-21; Colossians 1:20). Each drop shed at Calvary proclaims that mercy triumphs over judgment. What does it mean to you personally that Jesus’ blood “speaks” for you? How does His mercy address the guilt and shame our sins deserve?

3. **Mercy Triumphs Over Judgment – The New Covenant**

The contrast between Abel and Christ reveals the shift from the old covenant’s justice to the new covenant’s grace. As James 2:13 says, *“mercy triumphs over judgment.”* Through Christ’s “better blood,” God made it possible for repentant sinners to be saved by grace rather than condemned by the law. Jesus, *“the propitiation for our sins”* (1 John 2:2; Romans 3:26), satisfies divine justice so God can be just and the justifier of those who believe. Mercy fulfills justice at a higher level—Hebrews 12:24 calls Jesus the Mediator, bridging the gap between God and humanity through His own blood. Abel’s blood highlighted guilt; Christ’s blood cleanses it (1 John 1:7), reconciling us to God. Can you rejoice that “mercy triumphs over judgment” in your own life? How does Christ’s atonement give you confidence before God?

4. **Living Under the Blood – Sharing Mercy**

Forgiven by Christ’s blood, we are called to extend that same mercy. As 1 John 3:16 says, *“He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.”* God’s grace frees us from demanding strict justice, since we ourselves received undeserved mercy. While Abel’s blood cried for justice, Christ’s blood calls us to overcome evil with forgiveness and love. This divine mercy, limitless in scope, challenges us to forgive others and ourselves, and to reflect Christ’s compassion in a world marked by violence. In showing such mercy—even to those who may not deserve it—we “speak a better word” and point others to the hope found in Jesus. How can you put Christ’s mercy into practice through forgiveness or help, especially toward those who seem undeserving? In what ways might this reveal Jesus to others?

“MARKED BY MERCY: GOD’S ANSWER TO A WORLD OF WRATH”

LESSON 10 ■ For week ending December 6, 2025

Our world is filled with wrath and violence – just as it was in the days of Cain. After Cain killed Abel, he feared the cycle of revenge: “*everyone that findeth me shall slay me*,” Cain lamented (Genesis 4:14). Indeed, in a society bent on vengeance, Cain expected to be hunted down. **Yet God’s response to a world of wrath was stunningly merciful: He placed a mark on Cain to protect him.** Rather than let violence continue unchecked, God essentially said “*Not so!*” – anyone harming Cain would face divine vengeance sevenfold. The “**mark of Cain**” was not a curse as often assumed, but a *sign of mercy* in the midst of judgment. In this lesson, we explore how God’s mercy provides an answer to human wrath. From Cain’s mark to the Cross of Christ, God “marks” His people with mercy to stop the spread of wrath. We’ll also consider how we, as followers of Christ, are called to be marked by mercy in a vengeful world.

KEY TEXT: “*And the LORD said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him*” (Genesis 4:15 KJV).

1. The Mark of Cain – Mercy in Judgment

God’s response to Cain after Abel’s murder reveals a balance of justice and mercy. While Cain is punished as a fugitive and wanderer, God also gives him a protective mark, shielding him from violence by others. The exact nature of the mark is unknown, but its purpose is clear: Cain, though punished, is spared the fate he inflicted on Abel. Divine justice, then, does not focus solely on retribution but also aims to preserve life and allow space for repentance (Ezekiel 33:11). By marking Cain, God sets a boundary on human wrath and demonstrates mercy even toward wrongdoers. What does God’s merciful mark on Cain reveal about His heart? How might this shape your view of those who “deserve” punishment?

2. A World Filled with Violence

Throughout history, following the way of Cain has led to increasing violence, as seen in Lamech’s boast of extravagant vengeance (Genesis 4:23–24). By Noah’s era, “*the earth was filled with violence*” (Genesis 6:11), which grieved God and led to the Flood. This legacy of disobedience, envy, and resistance to God’s correction still echoes today, fueling cycles of anger and retaliation. Yet, God consistently responds with mercy—protecting Cain, sparing Noah’s family, and promising after the Flood not to destroy humanity again in the same manner. Scripture shows that God’s answer to a violent world is patience and grace (II Peter 3:9), not immediate judgment. Where do you see violence in our world today, and how does God’s patient mercy shape your understanding of His character?

3. Marked by Mercy as God’s People

God responds to a wrathful world by marking believers—not with a visible sign like Cain’s, but with hearts changed by the Holy Spirit. Our identity is shown through love and mercy: “*By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another*” (John 13:35). Mercy sets Christians apart, calling us to be peacemakers amid vengeance. Like those marked in Ezekiel 9:4, grieving over violence, we should mourn sin and show compassion. As one writer says: “Master the ‘crouching beast’ of sin by catching jealousy and anger early. Be your sibling’s keeper—choose love, offer forgiveness, trust God’s mercy.” In this way, our lives are truly marked by mercy. Do others see your life marked by mercy? How can you practically show compassion, forgiveness, and peacemaking in difficult moments?

4. Mercy Triumphs over Wrath – Our Mission

God’s mark on Cain broke the cycle of revenge, showing that His response to wrath is always mercy. In Christ, the ultimate answer to human violence was found at the cross, where mercy overcame wrath. As those marked by such mercy, we are called to extend grace in a world that expects judgment. James 2:13 declares, “*mercy triumphs over judgment.*” By forgiving where others might retaliate and showing kindness in the face of anger, we reflect God’s greater reality—mercy overcoming wrath through Jesus. Until the final day when God marks His people for deliverance (Ephesians 4:30; Revelation 7:3), our calling is to make His mercy visible so others may turn from wrath to salvation. Where in your life can you respond with God’s mercy to break the cycle of anger and reflect His character?

“THE WAY OF CAIN VS. THE WAY OF CHRIST”

LESSON 11 ■ For week ending December 13, 2025

Throughout this series we have traced two diverging paths: the way of Cain, marked by unbelief, pride, hate, and judgment – and the way of Christ, marked by faith, humility, love, and mercy. In the New Testament, Jude warns of false people who *“have gone in the way of Cain”*, and 1 John tells us not to be like Cain but to follow Jesus’ example of love (1 John 3:11-16). The contrast could not be more stark. Cain, the first murderer, embodies what happens when we live for self and reject God’s voice. Jesus, our Savior, shows us what it means to lay down self and obey God. One path leads to **curse and death**, the other to **blessing and life**. In this closing lesson, we will compare key aspects of Cain’s way versus Christ’s way. As we do, let the Holy Spirit search your heart and lead you in “the Way” everlasting – the way of Christ.

KEY TEXT: *“We know that we have passed from death unto life, **because we love the brethren**. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever **hateth his brother is a murderer**, and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. **Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us**: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren” (1 John 3:14–16).*

1. Heart Attitude – Hate vs. Love

- *“Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother” (1 John 3:12).* Cain’s way was driven by envy and hatred, letting sin rule his heart and leading to murder. In contrast, Christ’s way is love: He laid down His life for His “brethren” (1 John 3:16). While Cain took his brother’s life, Jesus gave His own for others. Cain’s hatred led to death; Christ’s love brings life. John is clear—hating others means walking in death like Cain; loving sacrificially shows new life in Christ. Is there anyone you hold bitterness toward? How can you move from Cain’s attitude of hate to Christ’s attitude of love in that relationship?

2. Relationship to God – Rebellion vs. Obedience

Cain’s story is marked by pride and resistance; even after God’s warning, he refused to turn back and chose his own path, ultimately leaving God’s presence (Genesis 4:16). In contrast, Jesus modeled perfect obedience, always seeking to please the Father (John 8:29) and humbling Himself in obedience to death on the cross (Philippians 2:8). Cain sought his own will and was cursed; Christ submitted to God’s will and was exalted (Philippians 2:9). The way of Cain is rebellion—“my will be done”—while Jesus prayed, “Thy will be done.” Which path do you choose? In what areas do you struggle between your way and God’s way, and how does Christ’s humble obedience encourage you to surrender?

3. Response to Wrong – Vengeance vs. Forgiveness

- When Cain felt wronged by God’s rejection of his offering, he chose vengeance, killing Abel. This path, echoed in Lamech’s boast of greater retaliation, perpetuates cycles of harm. In contrast, Christ models forgiveness: when reviled, He did not retaliate but trusted God’s justice (1 Peter 2:23). On the cross, Jesus prayed for His executioners: *“Father, forgive them.”* The way of Christ breaks the cycle of retaliation by extending grace instead of harm, calling us to *“forgive as you have been forgiven.”* Each conflict offers a choice—will we respond like Cain or like Christ? When hurt, do you seek revenge or choose forgiveness? What would embracing Christ’s patient forgiveness look like in a conflict you face now?

4. Outcome – Death vs. Life

- Ultimately, each path leads to a distinct end. Cain’s way results in alienation and despair—he becomes a cursed wanderer, his legacy fading in judgment (Jude 11). In contrast, Christ is *“the Way, the Truth, and the Life”* (John 14:6). To follow Him is to pass “from death unto life” (1 John 3:14), restored to fellowship with God. Where Cain’s story ends in restless wandering, Christ welcomes us, “Come unto Me...I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). The dividing line is clear: those persisting in Cain’s path face judgment, but those choosing Christ receive everlasting life (Matthew 25:31-34,41). As you reflect on your journey, are you moving closer to God? What step can you take today to embrace the way of Christ—faith, obedience, love, and mercy leading to life?

“GOD'S ABOUNDING LOVE”

LESSON 12 ■ For week ending December 20, 2025

As the year draws to a close, hearts are naturally inclined to reflection—on God’s faithfulness throughout the winding paths of the past months, and on the ways we ourselves have mirrored, or failed to mirror, His steadfast love. This lesson focuses on the nature and depth of God’s abounding love, as revealed especially in Exodus 34:6–7, where God Himself proclaims His character as *“abounding in lovingkindness.”* This is not a fleeting affection, but a covenant love—unbreakable and overflowing, even in the face of human failure. As we reflect on the year behind us, let us attend to this love, receive it deeply, and consider how we might embody such love toward others, day by day.

KEY TEXT: *“And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, unto the third and to the fourth generation” (Exodus 34:6–7 KJV).*

1. God’s abounding love is the very foundation of His character, proven through covenant faithfulness and overflowing mercy.

- When God revealed Himself to Moses on Sinai, He described not just His power but His heart—declaring Himself *“abundant in goodness and truth”* (Exodus 34:6). The Hebrew HESED (steadfast love)—expresses loyal, promise-keeping devotion. God’s love for Israel was constant, rooted in covenant, not dependent on their faithfulness. Even after Israel’s idolatry, God proclaimed His mercy, patience, willingness to forgive, and justice. In reflecting on such resilient love, how does this shape your view of God’s work in your own wilderness moments? Where have you seen God’s steadfast love in your life over the past year?

2. The Hebrew concept of HESED (steadfast love) is not mere emotion, but action: a covenant commitment that persists through human failure.

- In Old Testament tradition, covenants were solemn, lifelong commitments. When God binds Himself to His people, His HESED (steadfast love) is proven in action: delivering from Egypt, providing daily, and extending forgiveness despite repeated failures (see Psalm 86:15; Deuteronomy 7:9). This mercy endures *“for thousands,”* reaching far beyond the consequences that touch *“the third and fourth generation”* (Exodus 34:7). As the year closes, consider: What does it mean to live out steadfast, covenant love, not just feel it? Where have you witnessed HESED (steadfast love) in your life or community?

3. God’s steadfast love shapes how we relate to failure—both our own and others’; His mercy invites honest reflection, repentance, and restored relationship.

- God’s mercy is inexhaustible, even in the aftermath of failure. When Moses pleaded for forgiveness on behalf of Israel, God revealed Himself as *“forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin”* (Exodus 34:7). Though His forgiveness requires repentance and does not clear the guilty without it, His compassion remains unending. Psalm 103:8 beautifully echoes this truth: *“The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.”* As the year draws to an end, let this assurance inspire you to embrace a fresh start, reflect on God’s lovingkindness, and freely share His mercy with your family, church community, and all those you encounter.

4. To receive and reflect God’s steadfast love, we are called to remember, give thanks, and prepare our hearts for renewed covenant living in the year ahead.

- Throughout the Scriptures, remembering God’s mighty acts and steadfast love is essential for trust and obedience (see Psalm 118; Lamentations 3:22–23). As the year closes, gratitude serves as both an act and a safeguard: it shields our hearts from cynicism, helps us recall God’s faithfulness, and inspires renewed dedication. This past year’s journey—through all its ups and downs—bears witness to the God who is *“good; His mercy endureth for ever”* (Psalm 136:1). How will you mark God’s faithfulness as 2026 begins? What simple practices—prayer, reflection, or giving thanks—might help your family or congregation start the year grounded in God’s abounding love?

“MIRRORING GOD’S STEADFAST LOVE—SPIRITUAL RESOLVE FOR THE NEW YEAR”

LESSON 13 ■ For week ending December 27, 2025

As 2026 beckons, followers of Christ are summoned not just to receive God’s steadfast love, but to mirror it—allowing that abundant love to transform relationships, priorities, and spiritual aspirations for the year ahead. The pattern of Scripture affirms that God’s people are called to be a living reflection of His HESED: steadfast in love, generous in mercy, and bold in forgiveness. The Cross of Christ stands as the ultimate demonstration: God “*so loved the world*” that He gave His Son (John 3:16)—and calls us to love in the same sacrificial, covenant way. Let us shape our spiritual resolutions not around self-empowerment, but around this holy calling: to “*be imitators of God... and walk in love*” (Ephesians 5:1-2).

KEY TEXT: “*Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour*” (Ephesians 5:1,2).

1. God’s people are called to imitate His abounding love, living as children who reflect the Father’s heart in every relationship.

- Paul’s command—“*Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children*” (Ephesians 5:1)—reaches back to the Old Testament calling and the example of Jesus. The Greek term *mimētēs* means “imitator” or “mimic,” conveying not mere external copying, but a transformation of character and action. To be God’s child is to love as He loves—sacrificially, mercifully, steadily, and without calculation (see Matthew 5:44–48; 1 John 4:7–11). As a community or family, what does it mean to make God’s HESED (steadfast love) your spiritual DNA? How will you “walk in love” in 2026, not just feel loving emotion but exercise steadfast kindness and faithfulness?

2. Mirroring God’s steadfast love requires tangible acts: forgiveness, generosity, and peacemaking that go beyond convenience or preference.

- The love God demonstrates is always action-oriented. Christ “*gave Himself for us*” (Ephesians 5:2), and His followers are urged to extend practical mercy—feeding, forgiving, serving, welcoming the stranger, and seeking reconciliation (Matthew 25:35–40; Luke 6:36; Colossians 3:13–14). Steadfast love is tested not in moments of comfort, but when relationships strain or personal sacrifice is required. In what specific ways can you, your household, or your local congregation respond to those in need, mend broken bonds, or extend help to the marginalized in the year ahead?

3. Steadfast love, grounded in the Cross, empowers spiritual resilience and hope for the journey ahead, even in uncertainty or adversity.

- God’s HESED (steadfast love) is not diminished by hardship; in fact, Scripture repeatedly connects steadfast love to endurance through trial (Romans 8:35–39; Lamentations 3:22–23; Psalm 136). Christ’s love, displayed on the Cross, assures us that nothing can “*separate us from the love of God*” (Romans 8:39). As we face both opportunities and untold challenges in a new year, hope is found not in circumstance, but in the surety of God’s unchanging love and the calling to love likewise. What practices—such as intentional gratitude, daily reflection, or persistent prayer—will help you to both rely on and express steadfast love through changing seasons?

4. Spiritual resolve for the new year is measured not by perfection, but by humble commitment to grow in the likeness of Christ’s covenant love.

- New year’s resolutions in the Christian faith are not self-powered attempts at moral improvement, but responses to grace. The commitment to “walk in love” is worked out daily, step-by-step, in faith and weakness, often amid setbacks. Scripture affirms that God’s Spirit empowers us to “*be conformed to the image of His Son*” (Romans 8:29), a life-long transformation. Courage to start again, forgive ourselves, and pursue reconciliation is rooted in the assurance that God’s love is unwavering. As you set spiritual goals for 2026, what steps can you take to cultivate a heart that loves as God does—patiently, steadfastly, and sacrificially? How will you lean on the Spirit and your church community for support?

