

Christian MONTHLY

DEDICATED TO THE PROCLAMATION
OF THE WORD OF GOD

for Children



Psalm 119:105
Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path.

Summer 2013

A Chosen Vessel

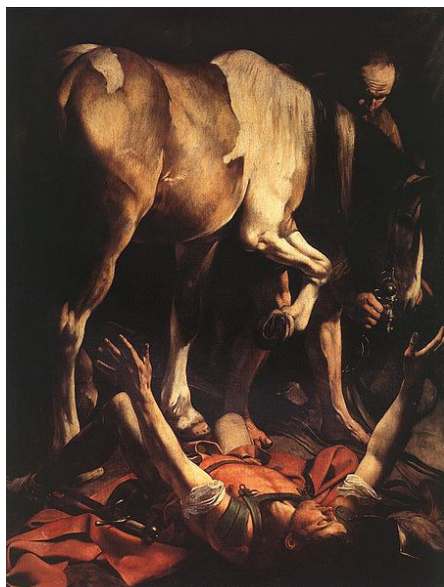
Acts, chapter 9

Saul of Tarsus was a young, devout Jewish man, born of the tribe of Benjamin. He studied with the greatest teacher of his time and tried to obey the Law perfectly. But Saul was not a Christian. In fact, he hated Christians. He watched as some of his friends stoned Stephen, the first Christian martyr, to death. Saul tried to destroy the Church, dragging men and women out of their homes and putting them in prison. He threatened to slaughter the disciples of the Lord. Finally, Saul went to the high priest and asked permission to go to Damascus and arrest anyone who believed in Jesus and bring them back in chains to Jerusalem.

But God had a different plan for Saul.

As Saul and his companions traveled the Damascus road, suddenly a bright light from heaven shone all around Saul. Falling to the ground, he heard a voice say, "Saul! Saul! Why are you persecuting Me?" Saul said, "Who are you, Lord?" The Lord answered, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting!" Shocked and shaking, Saul asked, "What should I do?" The Lord said, "Get up and go into the city. You will be told what you must do." Saul's friends stood there speechless, because they heard the voice but they didn't see anyone. Saul rose from the ground, but he was blind!

Saul's friends led him into Damascus. For three days Saul waited, and he did not eat or drink anything.



"The Conversion on the Way to Damascus" by Caravaggio

Ananias was a disciple in Damascus. The Lord called him in a vision, "Ananias!" He replied, "Here I am, Lord." The Lord said, "Get up and go to a house on Strait Street. Ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, because he is praying. He has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay hands on him so that he will regain his sight."

Ananias was dismayed and he said, "Lord, I've heard much about this man named Saul. He has done many evil things against Your saints in Jerusalem. He has permission from the chief priests to bind anyone here who calls on Your name!" The Lord answered Ananias, "Go! He is a chosen vessel to Me, to carry My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel. I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of My name."

So Ananias went to the house where Saul waited. Laying his hands on him, Ananias said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here has sent me so that you will regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes and he could see! He got up and was baptized. And when Saul had eaten some food, he was strengthened.

Saul spent several days in Damascus with the disciples, preaching in the synagogues that Jesus was the Son of God. Those who heard him were amazed, saying, "Isn't this the man who destroyed those in Jerusalem who called on the name of Jesus? Didn't he come here to bring them bound to the chief priests?" But Saul increased in strength and confounded the Jewish people who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ, the Anointed One of God.

God had chosen Saul to preach the name of Jesus in many lands. Rich and poor, strong and weak, kings and commoners, heard the wonderful Gospel of Jesus from the lips of Saul, whose name God changed to Paul. We call him "Apostle Paul." He wrote 13 books in the New Testament!

Toddlers

Through Three

Jesus—the Good Shepherd

Do you know what a *shepherd* is?

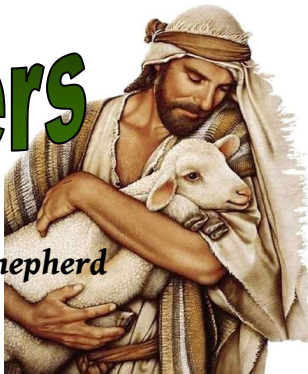
A shepherd takes care of sheep and lambs.

A shepherd gives food to his sheep and lambs when they are hungry. He gives them water when they are thirsty. He keeps them in a safe field so they can eat the green grass without fear of wild animals. He helps his sheep if they get hurt or sick.

Sheep and lambs trust their shepherd to care for them. They know that their shepherd will protect them from danger. They know that their shepherd will give them food and water.

Jesus is sometimes called the Good Shepherd. Jesus cares for you. Jesus feeds and protects you. He gave you parents to love you. He wants you to trust Him to care for you every day.

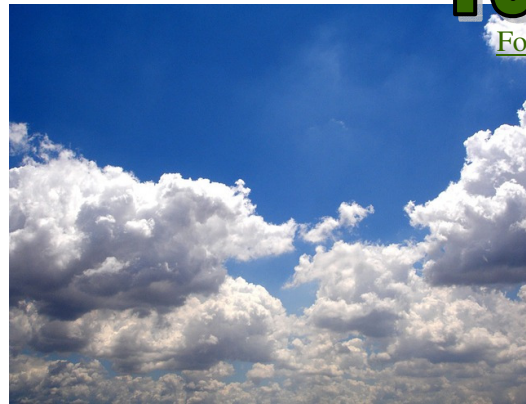
Jesus is the BEST SHEPHERD of all!



For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. Isaiah 55:9

Tots

Four-Six



God's Ways and Thoughts Are High Above Ours

The sky is sometimes called the *heavens*. When we look up into the sky on a sunny summer day, the bright blue stretches farther than we can see. The sky is so much higher than the earth. Just as the sky is higher than the earth, God's ways and thoughts are higher than our ways and thoughts.

God is filled with grace and love for people. People may not always forgive when someone says they're sorry for doing wrong, but God always forgives sinners who repent and come to Him. God calls all sinners to repent—to be sorry for their sin and to turn to Him. He wants people to turn away from sin. When they do, He will have mercy and compassion on them. He will forgive their sin.

People may not always be merciful, but God is always merciful to sinners who turn away from sin.



Tykes

Ages Seven-Ten

King David wrote these words in a psalm, which we call a song:

I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD.

Psalm 122:1

Are you always glad when your parents say that it's time for church? It can sometimes be hard to sit quietly for a long service. You may not understand everything the preacher says, and you may not know all the songs. Ask your parents and grandparents if they have been glad every single time they went to church. You may find that they thought it was hard to sit still and listen, too. There may have been times they didn't understand everything the preacher said.

Even when you don't "feel" like going to church, remember that God is calling you to hear Him and to worship Him. He has given His Word so that you can know Him. His love for you is extreme and intense and deep, an everlasting love. He died to save you from your sin. That's true love! You may feel that you ought to be glad to go to church, since God loves you so much and gave Himself to save you. But even though you know that you should, you may not always feel glad to go to church. And even if you don't "feel" like it, you go anyway, because God wants you to hear His Word and worship Him. Your feelings change from day to day. God's Word never changes. What you "feel" may be different than what God's Word says. So you go to worship Him, even when you don't "feel" like it. And your love for Him becomes greater.

You begin to love Him more because you realize His Word is true when it says that He loves you. As the stories of Jesus and His love are spoken into your heart, as you learn more of Him, as you begin to understand what the preacher is saying, you will want more and more to worship Him. Your parents and grandparents want to go to church more now than they did when they were children. You will love Him more and more because you will know how much He loves you. The Bible says you love Him because He first loved you! (1 John 4:19)

Tweens

Eleven-Twelve Years

Do you have a nickname?

James and John, the sons of Zebedee, were fishermen. One day while they were mending their nets with their father, Jesus called them to follow Him. Immediately they left the ship and their father and followed Jesus. James and John were impetuous and fiery-natured. They earned a nickname, given to them by Jesus.



Jesus was traveling through Samaria on His way to Jerusalem. He sent some of His disciples ahead to find a place for them to spend the night, but the Samaritans would not give them lodging when they learned that Jesus and His disciples were going to Jerusalem. The Samaritans and the Jewish people were not friends. They worshipped God in different cities and they had nothing to do with one another.

When James and John saw that the Samaritans would not let them stay in their village because they were going to a city in Judah, they were upset. They asked Jesus, "Do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just like Elijah did?" Jesus turned to James and John and spoke sharply, "You don't know what kind of spirit you have. The Son of Man came to save men's lives, not destroy them!"

Once John told Jesus, "We saw someone casting out demons in Your name and we tried to stop him, because he doesn't follow with us." Jesus told John, "Don't forbid him. Whoever is not against us is for us!"

Maybe because of their quick tempers and fiery natures, or maybe because they were so impulsive, Jesus nicknamed James and John the **Sons of Thunder**.

Although they were called the Sons of Thunder, James and John were beloved disciples of Jesus. They were a part of the inner circle of three disciples who were the very closest friends of Jesus, and they became powerful apostles in the early Church.

James is thought to be the first apostle to be put to death for the name of Jesus. His martyrdom is the only one recorded in the New Testament.

John took care of Jesus' mother after Jesus was crucified. John encouraged Christians to love one another and became known as the Apostle of Love. He wrote the Gospel of John, the three epistles* of John, and the Revelation. He was the only apostle who lived to be an old man.

*For more about *epistle*, see page 4.

Disciple: learner or student

A disciple follows his master, studies and learns his teachings and devotes himself to his master and teacher.

Jesus was sometimes called *Rabbi* by His disciples, which means *Master* or *Teacher*. Large groups of people followed Jesus, listening to and learning from Him. There were smaller groups within the great multitude. Seventy were sent out to tell of the coming kingdom of God and to heal the sick in the cities that Jesus would visit. Twelve of the disciples were especially close to Jesus, and of those twelve, three were even closer.

The three best friends of Jesus were Peter, James and John. This "inner circle" shared some special occasions with Jesus. They watched the Transfiguration, and they went further in the Garden of Gethsemane with Jesus on the night of His betrayal than the other disciples did.

The first disciples of Jesus had the privilege of walking with Jesus, talking with Him and learning directly from their Rabbi, the Master Himself. Even after Jesus had ascended, though, the number of disciples increased by the preaching of the apostles. In the book of the Acts of the Apostles, believers who had never met Jesus are called disciples.

Which means you can be a disciple, too.



Apostle: sent one or messenger

An apostle is a representative or ambassador sent out to proclaim the message that he is instructed to deliver.

The apostles of Jesus had the distinct office of being SENT. Jesus told them to go out into all the world and preach the Good News of salvation to people.

Jesus had many fewer apostles than disciples. The apostles were eye-witnesses of the resurrected Lord; they saw Jesus alive with their own eyes after He had risen from the dead. Jesus even appeared to the Apostle Paul after He had ascended to heaven!

The apostles were elemental in the spreading of the Gospel and the building of the early Church. God used them in a mighty way to begin to grow His Church on earth. According to Christian tradition, all of the apostles except John were martyred—put to death—for the sake of the name of Jesus. They were SENT and they obeyed, even unto death.

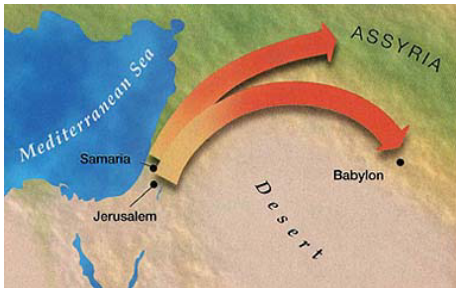
There are many preachers of the Gospel today, but they are not apostles. There are no apostles alive now because there are no more eye-witnesses to the resurrected Lord. The office of the apostles was especially for that time, when the Church was in its infancy.

Jesus still calls people to follow Him, to learn of Him, and to tell others of Him. Which you can do, even though you are not an apostle.

Teens

The Dispersion

The *Dispersion* was the scattering—or the dispersing—of the Jewish people away from their homeland into the neighboring nations.



When God brought the people of Israel out of slavery in Egypt (the *Exodus*), they lived in the land of Israel, the land that God had promised to Abraham and his descendants. The Jewish people began to follow the practices of the ungodly nations around them. God sent prophets to speak to the people, to call them back to God. The prophets said that they would be conquered by their enemies unless they repented and turned to God. But the people didn't listen, and they were conquered. Many of them were taken to Babylon and Assyria as slaves. As the Jewish people were scattered, they brought their religion with them. They established synagogues and maintained their worship practices. They believed in ONE God, and their captives believed in MANY gods.

Some Jewish captives earned positions of high honor. These Biblical characters were part of the *Dispersion* or were born in captivity in a foreign nation:

- ◆ Daniel was a governor in Babylon under King Darius.
- ◆ Esther was a Jewish orphan girl who became queen of the Persian empire.
- ◆ Nehemiah was the cup-bearer of King Artaxerxes in Persia.

When the New Testament age began and the apostles preached the Gospel in areas outside Israel, the first place they would usually go was to the Jewish synagogue. There were plenty of synagogues around because of the *Dispersion*. The people of Israel had been scattered through the surrounding nations.

Fun Facts:

Monotheism is belief in ONE God.
Polytheism is belief in MANY gods.
The *Dispersion* is also called the *Diaspora*.

What is an *Epistle*?

You may have heard the term *epistle* used when speaking of some of the books of the Bible. *Epistle* means *letter*. The epistles are letters. Some were written to churches, and some were written to individuals. Thirteen of the epistles were written by the Apostle Paul, and they are called the *Pauline* epistles. The rest of the epistles are the *general* epistles.



“Saint Paul Writing His Epistles”—An Artist’s Rendition

This oil on canvas is thought to have been painted by *Valentin de Boulogne*, a French artist who lived from 1591-1632.

The *Pauline* Epistles:

Epistle to the **Romans**—to the Christians in Rome
First Epistle to the **Corinthians**—to the church at Corinth
Second Epistle to the **Corinthians**—to the church at Corinth
Epistle to the **Galatians**—to the churches of Galatia
Epistle to the **Ephesians**—to the Christians at Ephesus
Epistle to the **Philippians**—to the Christians at Philippi
Epistle to the **Colossians**—to the Christians at Colosse
First Epistle to the **Thessalonians**—to the church at Thessalonica
Second Epistle to the **Thessalonians**—to the church at Thessalonica
First Epistle to **Timothy**—to Timothy, Paul’s “son” in the faith
Second Epistle to **Timothy**—to Timothy, Paul’s dearly beloved “son”
Epistle to **Titus**—to Titus, Paul’s “son” after the common faith
Epistle to **Philemon**—to Philemon, Apphia, Archippus and the church in his house

The *General* Epistles:

Letter to the **Hebrews**—Author Unknown, written to Jewish Christians
Letter of **James**—James, to Jewish Christians who had been scattered in the *Dispersion**
First Epistle of **Peter**—Peter, to Christian exiles scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia
Second Epistle of **Peter**—Peter, to Christians everywhere
First Epistle of **John**—John, to Christians everywhere
Second Epistle of **John**—John, to the elect lady and her children
Third Epistle of **John**—John, to the beloved Gaius
Epistle of **Jude**—Jude, to Christians everywhere

*For more on the *Dispersion*, see box to the left.

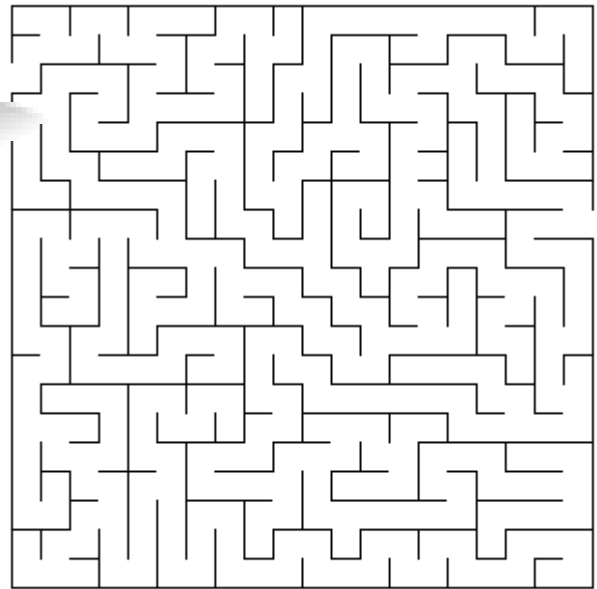


Find the words in the list.

Q	M	T	H	U	N	D	E	R	Q
S	O	N	C	E	O	E	N	J	E
H	N	E	L	P	I	C	S	I	D
E	O	S	N	I	S	I	U	E	C
P	T	O	L	S	R	V	C	L	A
H	H	H	F	T	E	R	S	T	L
E	E	C	N	L	P	E	A	S	L
R	I	E	D	E	S	S	M	O	E
D	S	N	M	U	I	M	A	P	D
V	M	E	T	T	D	J	D	A	B

APOSTLE	DAMASCUS	SENT
CALLED	DISPERSION	SERVICE
CHOSEN	EPISTLE	SHEPHERD
DISCIPLE	MONOTHEISM	THUNDER

 Help blinded Saul get to Damascus.



Answer Key: page 7

A Chosen Vessel

Puzzle Fun



Doublet!

Bread Making
101

Change the word **FLOUR** into the word **BREAD** in five links by changing a single letter in each step, so that each link in the chain is a valid word.

For example, to change **MORE** into **LESS** with 3 links:

MORE, lore, lose, loss, **LESS**

FLOUR



BREAD



How many pairs of sunglasses are on this page?



The Twelve Apostles

Word Scramble

See Matthew 10:2-4 for help

_____	IMOSN	The Zealot
_____	EMJSA	A son of Zebedee
_____	DHTSAEUD	Surname of Lebbaeus
_____	LAMOHTOWEBR	Sometimes called Nathanael
_____	TSHAMO	The doubting one
_____	MASEJ	Son of Alphaeus
_____	HTTWAEM	A tax collector
_____	NWREAD	The brother of Peter
_____	MSNIO TPREE	Denied Jesus
_____	PLHIPI	Told Nathanael about Jesus
_____	NJOH	The brother of James
_____	SJAUD IATOC SIR	Betrayed Jesus



A Picture to Color

**Saul heard a voice from heaven saying,
“Saul! Saul! Why are you persecuting
Me?”**

Jesus Called The Disciples

Jesus called people to follow Him. Each disciple answered His call and left what they were doing to follow and learn from their Master. Jesus calls us to follow Him today! This song about the disciples is sung to the tune of "Jesus Loves Me."

Jesus called them one by one,
Peter, Andrew, James and John,
Next, came Philip, Thomas, too,
Matthew and Bartholomew.

James the one they called the less,
Simon, also Thaddeus,
Twelfth disciple Judas made;
Jesus was by him betrayed.

Matthias then took Judas' place,
To preach to men of every race;
Paul three preaching trips did make
And went to Rome for Jesus' sake.

Chorus:

Yes, Jesus called them,
Yes, Jesus called them,
Yes, Jesus called them,
He called them one by one.

Author Unknown



Dear Father God,

Thank You for Apostle Paul and the other apostles who preached the Gospel of Jesus to people. Thank You for the words that You gave to Apostle Paul to write down in the Bible. Thank You that Your ways are higher than our ways and your thoughts are higher than our thoughts. Thank You for Your mercy and grace to sinners who repent. Thank You for Your love that never ends.

Give us eyes that see, in a small way, as You see. Give us hearts that love as You love. Let us show mercy and grace to those who sin against us.

Father, Your Word is true and right. Let us always turn to Your Word for guidance and let us trust the promises written in the Bible. Let us share the Gospel with those around us. Let our lives reflect the Light of the World, the Good Shepherd Jesus.

In His name we pray, Amen.

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The Twelve Apostles

Simon, James, Thaddeus, Bartholomew, Thomas, James,
Matthew, Andrew, Simon Peter, Philip, John, Judas Iscariot

Puzzle Answer Key

Q	M	T	H	U	N	D	E	R	Q
S	O	N	C	E	O	E	N	J	E
H	N	E	L	P	I	C	S	I	D
E	O	S	N	I	S	I	U	E	C
P	T	O	L	S	R	V	C	L	A
H	H	F	T	E	R	S	T	L	
E	E	C	N	T	P	E	A	S	L
R	I	E	D	E	S	S	M	O	E
D	S	N	M	U	I	M	A	P	D
V	M	E	T	D	J	D	A	B	

**How many
sunglasses?
There are 12 pairs of
sunglasses on the
puzzle page.**

Double!

FLOUR
FLOOR
FLOOD
BLOOD
BROOD
BROAD
BREAD

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For Parents:

After Jesus washed the disciples' feet at their final Passover meal together, He asked them if they knew what He had done. He said, "You call me 'Master' and 'Lord,' and you are right, for so I am. If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you."

What does it mean to wash one another's feet? What did Jesus actually *do* when He washed their feet?

Peter's reaction to the foot-washing gives us a little insight. First Peter questions, "Lord, do YOU wash MY feet?" The words 'you' and 'my' are emphatic and in strong contrast in the Greek. Peter was horrified that his Lord, his Master, would do the job of a lowly servant. When Jesus responds that he will understand later, Peter flatly states, "You will NEVER wash my feet!" This was not a job for his Rabbi, his beloved Teacher.

Jesus was teaching His disciples about *service*.

There is great opportunity for service in parenting. The natural and spiritual preparations begin even before the birth of the child. Caring for a newborn requires *service*, as any parent of a newborn can tell you. Training a toddler to become a civilized member of society requires *service*. And on it goes, through adulthood and beyond. This service may not be appreciated or even noticed by the child who is served.

Jesus served His disciples by washing their feet, but, ultimately, He served all of mankind to much greater lengths. His service was to death on a cross. For the fussy newborn and the selfish toddler. For the rebellious teen and the impatient parent. For you. For me.

Service is not without its reward. There is joy and blessing in the service of parenting. Jesus proclaims that we will be happy if we know and do these things. So press on in service, parent, though sometimes the task is difficult! Jesus has given us His example.



If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

John 13:17