



# the **GOSPEL** PROJECT

FOR STUDENTS

## THE GOSPEL PROJECT FOR STUDENTS LEADER GUIDE

### VOLUME 4

#### PRODUCTION AND MINISTRY TEAM

CONTENT EDITOR/AUTHOR: Alecia Bryant  
PRODUCTION EDITOR: Stephanie Cross  
MANAGER, STUDENT ONGOING STUDIES:  
Brett Buckland  
DIRECTOR, NEXTGEN MINISTRY: Chuck Peters

#### SEND QUESTIONS/COMMENTS TO:

Alecia Bryant  
The Gospel Project for Students  
Daily Discipleship Guide  
200 Powell Place, Suite 100,  
Brentwood, TN 37027  
or make comments on the Web at  
[www.lifeway.com](http://www.lifeway.com).

Printed in the United States of America

The Gospel Project® for Students Leader Guide (ISSN  
2163-0917; Item 005851952)  
is published quarterly by  
Lifeway Christian Resources  
200 Powell Place, Suite 100,  
Brentwood, TN 37027  
Ben Mandrell, President.

© 2025 Lifeway Press

For ordering or inquiries, visit [lifeway.com](http://lifeway.com), or write  
Lifeway Resources Customer Service, 200 Powell  
Place, Suite 100,

Brentwood, TN 37027. For bulk shipments mailed  
quarterly to one address, email [orderentry@lifeway.com](mailto:orderentry@lifeway.com),  
or write to the above address.

We believe that the Bible has God for its author;  
salvation for its end; and truth, without any mixture  
of error, for its matter and that all Scripture is totally  
true and trustworthy. To review Lifeway's doctrinal  
guideline, please visit [lifeway.com/doctrinalguideline](http://lifeway.com/doctrinalguideline).

Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible,  
English Standard Version® (ESV®), copyright  
© 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of  
Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All  
rights reserved. Scripture quotations marked (NIV)  
are taken from the Holy Bible, New International  
Version®, NIV®, Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011  
by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission of Zondervan.

All rights reserved worldwide. [www.zondervan.com](http://www.zondervan.com)  
The "NIV" and "New International Version" are  
trademarks registered in the United States Patent and  
Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.®

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## UNIT 10 A FALLEN KING

SESSION 1 • ALL THE OTHER NATIONS .....	6
SESSION 2 • WHAT HAVE YOU DONE? .....	14
SESSION 3 • TO OBEY IS BETTER.....	22
SESSION 4 • THE LORD SEES THE HEART .....	30
SESSION 5 • THE LORD IS WITH HIM .....	38

## UNIT 11 A KING AFTER GOD'S HEART

SESSION 1 • WITH A SLING AND A STONE .....	46
SESSION 2 • YOU WILL BE KING .....	54
SESSION 3 • A HOUSE FOR YOU .....	62
SESSION 4 • A BROKEN AND HUMBLING HEART .....	70

## UNIT 12 A WISE KING

SESSION 1 • A WISE AND UNDERSTANDING HEART ..	78
SESSION 2 • THE MOST HOLY PLACE .....	86
SESSION 3 • AN OCCASION FOR EVERYTHING .....	94
SESSION 4 • HE DELIGHTED IN YOU .....	102
SESSION 5 • IN ALL YOUR WAYS .....	110

[illegible]

The **Head/Heart/Hands** questions are designed to show how God's story connects with our own. We'll see how Scripture challenges the ways we think, feel, and live. While this certainly happens on an individual level, we do want to stress to you that this calling and mission to live differently is something all Christians share and pursue.

In addition to the group portions of this study, the **Daily Discipleship Guide** also includes five days of devotions following each session. As we journey through the storyline of Scripture over the course of three years, we won't have time to cover some sections of the Bible. These devotions will help with that, filling in the gaps in the biblical storyline and allowing more opportunities to cover biblical themes and insights not discussed during group time. These devotions help you know how to read and interpret the Bible for yourself. Symbols for the Seven Arrows reading method are provided at the beginning of each week's devotions as a reminder of common questions to ask about Scripture as you read each day. The devotion pages are perforated so that you can take them home with you.



## OF BIBLE READING



**What does this passage say?**



**What did this passage mean to its original audience?**



**What does this passage tell us about God?**



**What does this passage tell us about man?**



**What does this passage demand of me?**



**How does this passage change the way I relate to people?**



How does this passage prompt me to pray?

VOLUME 4 | CSB

# FOOLISHNESS AND WISDOM



10.5

11.3

12.5

11.1

12.3

יהוה

12.1

12.2

10.4

**10.1** ALL THE OTHER NATIONS

**10.2** WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

**10.3** TO OBEY IS BETTER

**10.4** THE LORD SEES THE HEART

**10.5** THE LORD IS WITH HIM

**11.1** WITH A SLING AND A STONE

**11.2** YOU WILL BE KING

**11.3** A HOUSE FOR YOU

**11.4** A BROKEN AND HUMBLER HEART

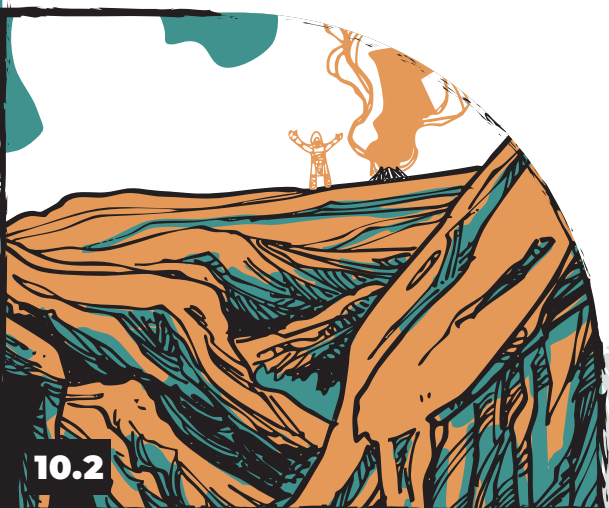
**12.1** A WISE AND UNDERSTANDING HEART

**12.2** THE MOST HOLY PLACE

**12.3** AN OCCASION FOR EVERYTHING

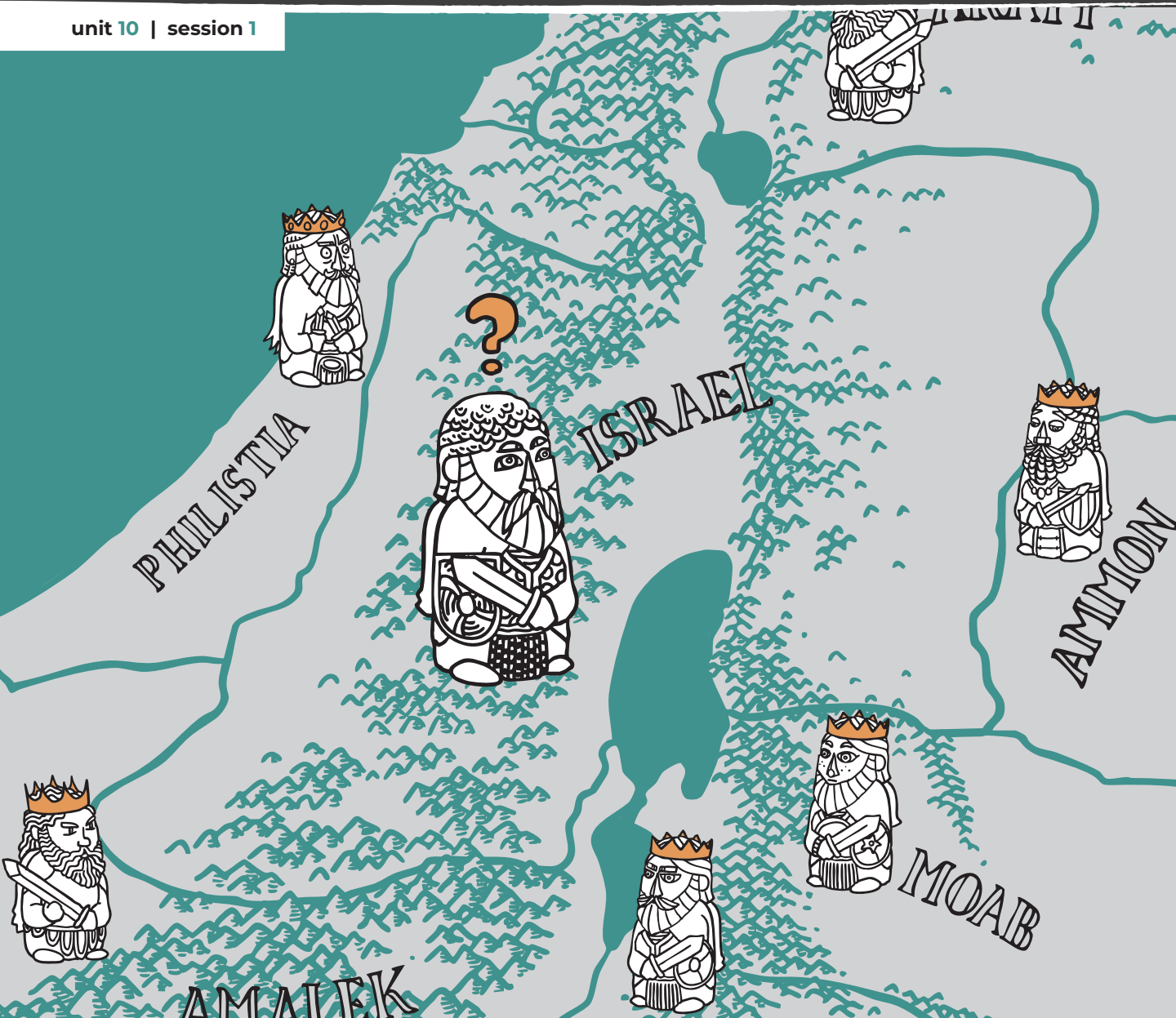
**12.4** HE DELIGHTED IN YOU

**12.5** IN ALL YOUR WAYS



# ALL THE OTHER NATIONS

unit 10 | session 1



## CHRIST CONNECTION

Christ is our example in all things. He displayed what it looks like to live in the world yet not be of the world. Although Jesus walked among sinners, He lived a sinless life. He represented the kingdom of God and kept His gaze fixed on the Father.

# **DISPLACED TRUST**

This week, we're covering the passages and main points below. But we encourage you to dig in and read all of the content on this timeline.

## **1 Samuel 7—1 Samuel 10**

### **LOOKING LIKE THE WORLD IS TEMPTING**

#### **1 SAMUEL 8:1-8**

1 When Samuel became old, he made his sons judges over Israel. 2 The name of his firstborn son was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judges in Beersheba. 3 Yet his sons did not walk in his ways but turned aside after gain. They took bribes and perverted justice. 4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah 5 and said to him, "Behold, you are old and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations." 6 But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." And Samuel prayed to the LORD. 7 And the LORD said to Samuel, "Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them. 8 According to all the deeds that they have done, from the day I brought them up out of Egypt even to this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are also doing to you.

### **LOOKING LIKE THE WORLD COMES WITH CONSEQUENCES**

#### **1 SAMUEL 8:9-21**

9 Now then, obey their voice; only you shall solemnly warn them and show them the ways of the king who shall reign over them." 10 So Samuel told all the words of the LORD to the people who were asking for a king from him. 11 He said, "These will be the ways of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and appoint them to his chariots and to be his horsemen and to run before his chariots. 12 And he will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and some to plow his ground and to reap his harvest, and to make his implements of war and the equipment of his chariots. 13 He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. 14 He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive orchards and give them to his servants. 15 He will take the tenth of your grain and of your vineyards and give it to his officers and to his servants. 16 He will take your male servants and female servants and the best of your young men and your donkeys, and put them to his work. 17 He will take the tenth of your flocks, and you shall be his slaves. 18 And in that day you will cry out because of your king, whom you have chosen for yourselves, but the LORD will not answer you in that day." 19 But the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel. And they said, "No! But there shall be a king over us, 20 that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles." 21 And when Samuel had heard all the words of the people, he repeated them in the ears of the LORD.

## MAIN POINT.

When we trust Jesus, we won't desire to look like the world.



## THEOLOGY CONNECTION




### CHRIST AS KING

God has always been King over His creation, whether in heaven or on earth. Yet some of His creatures in both realms have rebelled against Him, leaving destruction in their wake. To heal His broken world, God promised a King who would deliver His people and restore all of creation. The promise of a coming King finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ and looks forward to its perfection when Jesus returns for His bride, the church.

# DISCUSSION


## LOOKING LIKE THE WORLD IS TEMPTING

1 SAMUEL 8:1-8

-  • What was a king's role? Why do you think Israel wanted one?
-  • What does Israel's desire for a king help you understand about the nation's relationship to God?
-  • Why do we desire to look like the world if we know the things of this world will fade away?

## LOOKING LIKE THE WORLD COMES WITH CONSEQUENCES

1 SAMUEL 8:9-21

- What consequences would Israel face for requesting an earthly king?
- Why would God allow Israel to have a king if it wasn't good for the people?
-  • What are the "kings" in your life—anything other than Christ that you're tempted to serve or trust?



WHAT DOES IT SAY TO OTHERS WHEN YOU CHOOSE TO BE LIKE THE WORLD? HOW CAN YOU CHOOSE DIFFERENTLY?

## CULTURAL CONNECTION

How can you tell if you really trust God? Because if we're honest, it feels like the right thing to say—that we trust Him. But how can we tell if we really do? When you trust others, you take what they say as truth. You believe they'll do what they say they'll do. And think about it: you're probably more relaxed with the people you trust. You aren't anxious; you don't worry if they'll betray you or hurt you. You feel safe with them. The same is true of trusting the Lord. When we trust Him, then we believe His Word is true. We believe He'll do exactly what He says. We feel safe knowing He is in control and that Jesus has promised to always be with us (Matt. 28:20). Trust between you and a person triggers a physical response in your body, causing you to relax. When you trust the Lord, you'll also have peace in your spirit because even when life feels unsteady, you know you're secure in His hands (Phil. 4:7).



## DAY ONE

# MATTHEW 6:19-21; 1 JOHN 2:15-17

Have you ever wanted something so badly but were disappointed when you got it? Think back to when you were a child. Maybe you saw an advertisement for a toy and had to have it, but once you finally got it, you realized the ad was deceiving. Everything about the ad was designed to lure you into desiring the toy, but in real life, it didn't measure up. Sometimes, even events, trips, and relationships can be this way. We build them up, but they end in disappointment. We're fooled into desiring something that can't measure up.

On a much deeper level, we fall into a similar trap of desiring things that will one day dissolve into nothing. Satan has a way of dressing up worldly distractions so that they appeal to us. We're often fooled into chasing after and storing up earthly treasures even though we're warned they'll be destroyed by rust and moths and stolen by thieves. What are those things? Popularity, worldly success, money, the perfect image, and so on. We're fooled into thinking these things can sustain us, when in reality, they'll always fail us. What can we desire instead? We can store up treasures in heaven. When we invest in prayer and reading God's Word, when we invest in pointing people to Christ and in serving others in love, when we invest in growing in our relationship with the Lord, then we are storing up treasure in heaven. Nothing can rob us of these things, and they'll never fall short.

- **WHAT EARTHLY TREASURES ARE YOU TEMPTED TO CHASE AFTER? WHY ARE THEY APPEALING?**
- **HOW CAN YOU INVEST MORE IN HEAVENLY TREASURES?**

## PRAY

**GOD, I SOMETIMES CHASE THINGS THAT WON'T LAST. I SEEK WORLDLY TREASURES EVEN THOUGH I KNOW THEY WILL FAIL ME. HELP ME TO SEEK YOU AND TO TREASURE YOU ALONE.**





## DAY TWO

# ROMANS 1:18-25

In the lesson this week, Israel begged for an earthly king even though the Lord was the only King they needed. They were so insistent that God granted their request. But Israel's demand for a worldly ruler wasn't best for them. In fact, it would eventually lead them to some really bad places as a nation. The people chose to imitate the pagan nations surrounding them by following an earthly king just like the ones who led those nations. They wanted to be like and look like everyone else.

How often do we desire this too? If we're willing to be honest, many of us often desire the same things the rest of the world desires. We want to be like and look like everyone else instead of standing out because of our faith in Christ. We want to blend in with culture because it's more comfortable. Though we know God's power and goodness, we chase after lesser things. Our thinking becomes "futile" and our hearts are "darkened" (v. 21). We claim to believe the truth of God's Word, but we exchange wisdom for foolishness (v. 22). The truth is that what we desire sometimes isn't in our best interest. It's part of our sin nature to desire things that are opposed to the Lord. This is why we must surrender all of our desires to Him and ask Him to guide us so that our desires are in line with His will for us.

- **IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU SOMETIMES WANT TO BE LIKE EVERYONE ELSE?**
- **WHY DO YOU THINK GOD SOMETIMES GIVES US OVER TO THE DESIRES OF OUR HEARTS (V. 24)?**

## PRAY

**GOD, I CONFESS THAT I OFTEN DESIRE TO BLEND IN AND LOOK LIKE EVERYONE ELSE. I KNOW YOU'VE CALLED ME TO LIVE DIFFERENTLY. HELP ME TO SURRENDER MY DESIRES TO YOU.**



## DAY THREE

# 1 SAMUEL 9:1-2,14b-21

Sometimes we look at people and make assumptions about them based on their outward appearances. Maybe you saw someone with an athletic build and assumed he was a great athlete. Or maybe you saw someone dressed in expensive clothing and assumed she was wealthy. In both situations, the person just seemed to fit the part. This works in the reverse too; we often assume less of others based on outward appearances, but appearances can be very deceiving.

Saul was going to be Israel's first king. He looked the part. He was a tall, strong man with a commanding presence. But at the same time, he didn't come from the most powerful tribe. He came from the least important clan in the smallest tribe—the tribe of Benjamin. Those factors didn't disqualify him though. While Saul seemed to fit the description of a strong king, he didn't come from an important family or a distinguished heritage. Here's what this means for us: our appearance, our background, and our family connections don't qualify or disqualify us in God's eyes. We see only the visible factors and make judgments about others' capabilities—even about our own capabilities. Maybe because of this, you've felt limited by your circumstances, but you need to know that God isn't limited by them. He can use you whether you "fit the part" or not because He is mighty in you.

- **WHEN HAVE YOU MISJUDGED SOMEONE BASED ON APPEARANCES OR EXTERNAL CIRCUMSTANCES?**
- **HOW HAVE YOU BELIEVED THE LIE THAT YOUR OWN APPEARANCES OR CIRCUMSTANCES EITHER QUALIFY YOU OR DISQUALIFY YOU FROM BEING USED BY GOD?**

## PRAY

**LORD, I OFTEN JUDGE PEOPLE AND EVEN MYSELF  
BASED ON APPEARANCES AND CIRCUMSTANCES.  
WHEN I DO THIS, I LIMIT YOU. HELP ME TO  
REMEMBER THAT YOU SEE THE HEART AND AREN'T  
LIMITED BY THESE FACTORS.**



## DAY FOUR

# 1 SAMUEL 10:1-22

Can you imagine going about your daily life, and then one day, someone arrives and explains that you've been selected as king or queen? It's like a scene out of a movie! When Saul received word from Samuel that the Lord had chosen to make him king over Israel, he must've felt completely caught off guard. It just didn't make logical sense. Samuel assured Saul that this was the Lord's will by explaining several signs that would occur. He even told Saul that the Lord's presence would come mightily on him. All of this happened just as Samuel said. We might assume that Saul would rush home to tell his family, but he did the opposite. He told no one. And when the time came for Samuel to formally select Saul in front of the people, Saul hid among the supplies. The Lord Himself had to point out the future king's location!

Maybe Saul experienced doubt. Maybe he questioned if what happened was real. Maybe he felt fearful. We can't know for sure, but many of us can probably identify with his actions. God often speaks to us and calls us out for a specific purpose. His Spirit is with us. He even confirms His purpose through prayer, His Word, and words of affirmation from others. Yet, we still doubt. We may even run and hide because we're fearful or hesitant. We may realize that following God in this new way will lead to huge changes in our lives. But God is so kind to seek us out. He is kind enough to call us out of hiding and to use us for His glory.

- **WHEN HAVE YOU BEEN SURPRISED OR FEARFUL ABOUT SOMETHING GOD LED YOU TO DO? HOW DID YOU RESPOND?**
- **IN WHAT WAYS HAS GOD KINDLY SOUGHT YOU OUT EVEN WHEN YOU TRIED TO HIDE?**

## PRAY

**LORD, WHEN YOU SPEAK TO ME, HELP ME TO RESPOND IN FAITH. HELP ME TO BELIEVE YOUR WORD IS TRUE. HELP ME NOT TO RUN FROM THE PURPOSES YOU HAVE FOR ME.**



## DAY FIVE

# 1 SAMUEL 12:13-25

Almost immediately after Saul was chosen as Israel's king, he dealt with an outside threat. God's Spirit empowered him to defeat the Ammonites in a fierce battle (1 Sam. 11). The people quickly celebrated and embraced Saul as king. In all of the celebration, they so easily forgot that their request for a king displeased the Lord.

In the passage today, Samuel spoke some hard truths. He reminded the people that their request for an earthly king showed they didn't completely trust the Lord to be their King. Samuel called down thunder and rain as a sign of the great evil they'd committed. As a result, the people realized they'd added to their sins by begging for a king, and they were overcome by fear. But God's response was basically this: "Don't be afraid. Don't turn away from Me. Don't turn to worthless things and worship them. Worship Me. Walk with Me. I won't abandon you because you're Mine." Samuel warned the nation to follow God's commands and to remember the great things He had done. If not, God would sweep them away. Even though they were hard to hear, these words were critical for Israel's survival. And they're critical for ours as well.

- **HOW DO WE SOMETIMES GET CAUGHT UP IN CELEBRATING EARTHLY WINS?**
- **HOW DO YOU THINK SAMUEL'S WORDS IN THIS PASSAGE CAN APPLY TO US TODAY?**

PRAY

**GOD, HELP ME TO HEAR THE WARNING IN THIS PASSAGE. HELP ME TO FEAR ONLY YOU, TO WORSHIP ONLY YOU, AND TO CONSIDER ALL THE GOOD THINGS YOU'VE DONE.**