



# CLOSER TO JESUS IN JANUARY



**A 31 DAY TOPICAL STUDY ON JESUS**

## Happy New Year!

Welcome to our transformative 31-day journey, an immersive spiritual experience dedicated to deepening our understanding and connection with Jesus Christ. Over the next 31 days you will be given reading assignment, prayer topics, reflections, and action steps to help you in your walk with Jesus. This journey is not just about acquiring knowledge but *about transformation*. By engaging with the readings, embracing prayer, and taking action, we open ourselves to being shaped and guided by the life and teachings of Jesus. Let's embark on this path together with open hearts and minds, ready to be changed and to make a change in the world around us. Ready, set, go!

Onward,  
Pastor Jim

January	
1	Set aside 15-25 minutes to pray about 2024; pray for wisdom, strength, peace, and ask for help in any area where you need it.
2	<b>Scripture Reading (Matthew 13:1-23):</b> The Parable of the Sower. <b>Prayer:</b> Pray for a receptive heart to God's Word.
3	<b>Scripture Reading (Matthew 5:1-12 - The Beatitudes):</b> Explore Jesus' foundational teachings. <b>Reflection:</b> Which beatitude speaks to you the most, and why? <b>Prayer:</b> Ask for the grace to embody the principles of the Beatitudes.
4	Read the inspiring story of George Mueller here <a href="https://guideposts.org/inspiring-stories/the-inspiring-life-of-george-muller">https://guideposts.org/inspiring-stories/the-inspiring-life-of-george-muller</a>
5	<b>Scripture Reading (Galatians 2:20):</b> Explore the concept of being crucified with Christ and living in Him. <b>Reflection:</b> In what ways can you practically live your daily life "in Christ"? Identify one aspect of your life where you can surrender more fully to Christ.
6	Watch a <i>Jesus Revolution</i> or invite someone to church.
7	<b>Scripture Reading (Matthew 26:17-30):</b> The Last Supper. Thank God for the sacrifice of Jesus. <b>Practical Step:</b> Share communion with your family and discuss it's

January	
8	<p><b>Scripture Reading (Colossians 3:12-17):</b> Delve into Paul's teachings on unity in Christ and the virtues that accompany it.</p> <p><b>Reflection:</b> How does unity in Christ impact your relationships with others?</p> <p>Reach out to someone in your community, showing the love and unity found in Christ.</p>
9	<p><b>Scripture Reading (Ephesians 1:3-14):</b> Discover the blessings and identity believers have in Christ.</p> <p><b>Reflection:</b> How does being "in Christ" impact your understanding of identity and purpose?</p> <p>Journal about your identity in Christ and thank God for specific blessings.</p>
10	<p>Go through a closet or dresser and set aside clothes to donate to a local goodwill, or thrift store. Set a date to drop</p>
11	<p><b>Scripture Reading (Matthew 25:31-46):</b> The Sheep and the Goats.</p> <p>Pray for a heart of compassion towards those in need.</p> <p><b>Volunteer</b> for a local charity and share your experience.</p>
12	<p><b>Scripture Reading: (Romans 6:1-14):</b> Understand the foundational concept of being "in Christ" through baptism and the significance of dying to sin.</p> <p><b>Reflection:</b> What does it mean to be baptized into Christ, and how does it impact our daily lives?</p> <p>Reflect on the areas of your life where you need to surrender to Christ's lordship.</p>


January	
13	<p><b>Scripture Reading: (Romans 8:1-17):</b> Explore the freedom and transformative power of being "in Christ" and led by the Spirit.</p> <p><b>Reflection:</b> How does the Spirit of God bring freedom and transformation in our lives?</p> <p>Spend time in prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to guide and transform you.</p>
14	<p><b>Scripture Reading (1 John 3:1-3):</b> Explore the profound love the Father has bestowed on believers, making them children of God.</p> <p><b>Reflection:</b> How does understanding your identity as a child of God impact your daily life and interactions?</p> <p>Begin each day by acknowledging your identity in Christ and thanking God for His love.</p>
15	<p><b>Scripture Reading (2 John 1:1-4):</b> Explore the theme of walking in truth and love.</p> <p><b>Reflection:</b> How does being "in Christ" influence our commitment to truth and love?</p> <p>Reflect on a situation where you can embody both truth and love in your interactions.</p>
16	<p><b>Scripture Reading (2 John 1:5-9):</b> Dive into the importance of abiding in Christ's commandments.</p> <p><b>Reflection:</b> In what ways can abiding in Christ's commandments be a safeguard against deception?</p> <p>Identify one area of your life where you can align more closely with Christ's commandments.</p>

January	
17	<p><b>Scripture Reading (2 John 1:10-13):</b> Reflect on the call to discern and guard against false teachings.</p> <p><b>Reflection:</b> How can being "in Christ" help us discern truth from deception?</p> <p><i>Commit to being vigilant against influences that may lead you away from the truth in Christ.</i></p>
18	<p><b>Scripture Reading (Revelation 2-3):</b> Examine the letters to the seven churches and their call to remain faithful "In Christ."</p> <p><b>Reflection:</b> How do the messages to the churches speak to your own spiritual journey and being anchored "In Christ"? <i>Identify areas in your life where you can deepen your commitment to Christ.</i></p>
19	Text 3 people and ask how you can pray for them today.
20	<p><b>Scripture Reading (Luke 5:27-32):</b> Witness the transformative power of Jesus' call to Levi, a tax collector.</p> <p><b>Reflection:</b> How does Jesus' interaction with Levi inspire us to embrace those society might reject?</p> <p><b>Practical Step:</b> Reach out to someone you might have overlooked or judged.</p>
21	<p><b>Scripture Reading (Luke 8:22-25):</b> Experience Jesus's authority over nature as He calms a storm.</p> <p><b>Reflection:</b> How does this event reveal the disciples' growing understanding of Jesus' power?</p> <p><b>Practical Step:</b> Identify a "storm" in your life and seek Jesus' peace in prayer.</p>

January	
22	<p><b>Scripture Reading (Luke 10:25-37):</b> Delve into the parable of the Good Samaritan and Jesus' teachings on compassion.</p> <p><b>Reflection:</b> How does this story challenge your attitudes towards those different from you?</p> <p><b>Practical Step:</b> Perform a random act of kindness for someone in your community.</p>
23	<p>Thank 2 people for the positive role they have played in your life.</p>
24	<p><b>Scripture Reading (James 3:1-12):</b> Reflect on the power and responsibility of words.</p> <p><b>Reflection:</b> How can you use your words to build up rather than tear down?</p> <p><b>Practical Step:</b> Be intentional about speaking words of encouragement and kindness.</p>
25	<p><b>Goal for the day; (Colossians 4:6)</b> Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.</p>
26	<p><b>Scripture Reading (1 Corinthians 1:18-31):</b> Explore how the message of the cross might seem foolish to the world but is the power of God.</p> <p><b>Reflection:</b> How does the wisdom of the cross challenge worldly notions of success and power?</p> <p><b>Practical Step:</b> Consider one area of your life where you can apply the counter-cultural wisdom of the cross.</p>

January	
27	<p><b>Scripture Reading (1 Corinthians 12:12-27):</b> Reflect on the analogy of the body of Christ, emphasizing unity and diversity.</p> <p><b>Reflection:</b> In what ways can recognizing the diversity of gifts within the body of Christ foster unity?</p> <p><b>Practical Step:</b> Reach out to someone in your community who has a different spiritual gift than you and appreciate their unique contribution.</p>
28	<p><b>Scripture Reading (1 Corinthians 13):</b> Delve into the famous "love chapter" and its emphasis on the supremacy of love.</p> <p><b>Reflection:</b> How does the definition of love in this chapter challenge and inspire your relationships?</p> <p><b>Practical Step:</b> Choose a specific way to express love to someone today.</p>
29	<p><b>Scripture Reading (1 Corinthians 15:12-58):</b> Explore the significance of Christ's resurrection and its implications for believers.</p> <p><b>Reflection:</b> How does the hope of resurrection shape your perspective on life and death?</p> <p><b>Practical Step:</b> Spend time today thanking God for the victory over sin and death through Jesus.</p>
30	<p><b>Scripture Reading (1 Corinthians 16:1-24):</b> Consider Paul's final instructions, including generosity, watchfulness, and steadfastness.</p> <p><b>Reflection:</b> How can these practical instructions guide your daily Christian living?</p> <p><b>Practical Step:</b> Identify one specific area in your life where you can apply Paul's closing exhortations.</p>



January	
31	<p><b>Scripture Reading (James 2:14-26):</b> Explore the connection between faith and works.</p> <p>Reflection: How does your faith manifest in your daily actions?</p> <p><b>Practical Step:</b> Identify one action today that aligns with your faith.</p>
	<b>FINISHED</b> 

## **Who is Jesus: God the Son:**

Jesus Christ: He is the Mediator, the only 'go-between' for God and man. Jesus declared himself as the exclusive way to God, prompting a crucial question: Are there many paths to God, or is there only one true way?

### **I. The Eternal Son**

God the Son, existing eternally with the Father, played a pivotal role in creation. Jesus declared his pre-existence, stating, 'Before Abraham was, I AM.' He not only participated in creation but also governs it. Demonstrating lordship over nature, disease, demons, and life itself, Jesus exemplifies the power and authority of the eternal Son.

### **II. God Became Man**

God's deep concern for humanity's sinful state led to the incarnation of God the Son as Jesus Christ. Jesus, fully God and fully man, lived a sinless life, faced temptations, and experienced human struggles, including hunger, thirst, and death. His sacrificial death and triumphant resurrection became the means of deliverance for believers.

### **III. The Mediator Between God and Man**

Sin caused a separation between humanity and God, requiring a Mediator to bridge the gap. Jesus Christ, the sinless Son, took on human form, lived a perfect life, and paid the price for all sins through his death and resurrection. As the ultimate Mediator, Jesus restores the broken relationship between God and man.

### **IV. Priest, Prophet, and King**

Jesus fulfills various roles as the Ultimate Office Bearer. He serves as Priest, cleansing the heavenly temple through his sacrificial death and making

intercession for believers. As Prophet, he reveals God's Word and declares the Good News while warning of judgment. Jesus is also the King, crowned by God the Father, and holds authority over heaven and earth.

#### V. The Obedient Son

Even in his youth, Jesus displayed remarkable understanding and obedience. Despite his divine nature, he submitted to earthly parents and grew in favor with God and others. Jesus' obedience extended to prayer, seeking the Father's will, and culminated in willingly facing death on the cross to fulfill God's purpose.

#### Application:

Explore Scriptural evidence of Jesus' co-equality with the Father and his humanity. Consider how Jesus' obedience to the Father can apply to your own life. Memorize John 14:6 and share it with those who may believe in diverse paths to God.

#### Conclusion:

While various claims have been made about paths to God, Jesus unequivocally asserted, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life.' The truth lies in recognizing Jesus as the Mediator sent by the Father, providing the only way to reconciliation, reality, and resurrection life.

## Life in Christ 21 Days of Fasting & Prayer

I would like to invite you join us as we fast and pray for our church. At the beginning of each year we seek God for direction through prayer and fasting for 21 days, starting January 2nd. This is a powerful time for individuals and for LICF. Fasting in January is much like praying in the morning to establish the will of God for the entire day. When we put God first in our lives, in our families, in our finances – in everything – I believe that He will bless and multiply those areas. If we will pray and seek God and give Him our first and best at the beginning of the year, He will honor that sacrifice and bless our ENTIRE year!

How it works is simple - we have list of topics that we would like you to pray for daily, in addition we ask that you pray for our leadership team.

How you fast is entirely up to you. Normally my family follows a Daniel fast (vegetable based) for 21 days. Some people choose to fast from TV, games etc.

**How you chose to fast is up to you.** Honestly, the fast is what scares people - to the point of excuses. But here is what a fast does - **it changes your focus.** It removes the normal focus from ourselves (our flesh, our cravings, and desires) and resets it to the spirit. When you join us you become more invested in LICF at a different level - you become more rooted.

I encourage you to take a risk if this is your first time considering a fast. Would you fast and pray with us? What is there to lose?

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to reach out.

Onward,  
Pastor Jim