

clean

FINDING JESUS
IN LEVITICUS

Content

Abby Noble, Allison Dykhouse, Anna Campbell, Caleb Baumann, Dawn Gentry, Gary Belknap, Isaiah Lackey, Joshua Lillie, Keaton Kleiner, Ken Dick, Marc Montanye, Mark Ashton, Mary Claire Johnson, Mary Lou Martin, Matt Johnson, Monika Baumann, Mykaila Norton, Rachel Vaughn, Reid Brown, Teresa Baumbach, Trinity Sessions, Victoria Shum, and Wendell Nelson

Editing

Chris Reikofski, Dawn Gentry, Joshua Lillie, Karl Pagenkemper, Leslie Feeney, Marie Dufour, Rachel Bebee, and Tim Anstead

Art Direction

Jed Logue, Jonathan Norton, Marie Dufour, and Mark Ashton

Wordmark & Layout

CreativeMarket.com contributor NEWFLIX; Jonathan Norton, Marie Dufour, and Rachel Bebee

Photographs & Illustrations

Photographs by Eric Wendt; Unsplash.com contributors Alecsander Alves, Curology, and Sincerely Media; and iStockphoto.com contributors Efetova, Shironagasukujira, and Photoguns

Tabernacle illustration on page 27 taken from the ESV® Study Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright ©2008 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Illustrations on page 15 created by Lightstock.com contributor Pearl and iStockphoto.com contributors AlonzoDesign, AnnaFrajtova, Exdez, Guru86, and ONYXprj

Bible Verses

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture is from the New International Version (NIV), Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica; accessed through BibleGateway.com

Published by Christ Community Church, © 2021
404 S. 108th Ave., Omaha, NE 68154
info@cccomaha.org | 402.330.3360 | cccomaha.org



Clean

FINDING JESUS
IN LEVITICUS

Clean

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction | 07

How to Use This Book	7
Book 2 Introduction	8

Week Seven | 11

Day One: Learn	12
Message Notes.....	12
Visual Aid.....	15
Days Two–Seven: Daily Rhythms	16
Meet (Discussion Guide).....	19

Week Eight | 23

Day One: Learn	24
Message Notes.....	24
Visual Aid.....	27
Days Two–Seven: Daily Rhythms	28
Meet (Discussion Guide).....	31

Week Nine | 35

Day One: Learn	36
Message Notes.....	36
Visual Aid.....	39
Days Two–Seven: Daily Rhythms	40
Meet (Discussion Guide).....	43

Week Ten | 47

Day One: Learn	48
Message Notes.....	48
Visual Aid.....	51
Days Two–Seven: Daily Rhythms	52
Meet (Discussion Guide).....	55

Week Eleven | 59

Day One: Learn	60
Message Notes.....	60
Visual Aid.....	63
Days Two–Seven: Daily Rhythms	64
Meet (Discussion Guide).....	67

Week Twelve | 71

Day One: Learn	72
Message Notes.....	72
Visual Aid.....	75
Days Two–Seven: Daily Rhythms	76
Meet (Discussion Guide).....	79

Conclusion | 82

What is Your Best Next Step?	82
------------------------------------	-----------

How to use this book:

This booklet contains a reading plan through the book of Leviticus to be read throughout the week. Additionally, this guide walks the reader through activities repeated weekly.

- **Day One: Learn.** Room for sermon notes and visual aids on a teaching from Leviticus.
- **Day Two: Think.** A devotional reflection building on the passage or theme.
- **Day Three: Study.** Tools to help you unpack a passage of the Bible for yourself.
- **Day Four: Pray.** A meditative, guided reflection through which you can communicate with God.
- **Day Five: Meet.** A guide for discussion with others—friends, family, or community group.
- **Day Six: Do.** A way to respond in obedience with compassionate gifts of time or resources.
- **Day Seven: Rest.** A thought or prompt to help you pause and rest in the Lord.

Work through each week in order or rearrange the prompts to fit your week as you journey through Leviticus.

For example, if you are a part of a group that meets on Monday nights, you may choose to substitute “Day 5: Meet” in place of a devotional. Likewise, you may choose instead to walk through a guided prayer in a group setting on any night of the week.

We pray that these resources help you discover Jesus in the book of Leviticus and respond in obedience through rhythms to encounter and become more like him.

FOR MORE RESOURCES, VISIT CCCOMAHA.ORG/CLEAN



Book Introduction

Welcome to the second book of *Clean*, our series on the book of Leviticus!

We're headed on an adventure together to connect the dots between Leviticus, the New Testament, and our lives today.

Many of you are joining us on Easter Sunday, and I want to extend a special welcome to all of you!

For the next six weeks, we will be engaging in passages that we rarely read but have a powerful influence on the way we should think about God, celebrations, morality, and giving.

So grab this guide, blow the dust off of Leviticus, participate every week in church, join a group, read a little bit every day, buckle your seat belts, and enjoy the ride.

Your lead minister,

MARK ASHTON





Week Seven

Day Two: Think

Read Leviticus 23:9-14 & Romans 8:23

REFLECT

Imagine that you have just moved into a new house. Your furniture is arranged, boxes are unpacked, and all that's left to do is fill the fridge and cupboards. After a quick trip to the grocery store, you get home, but instead of putting the groceries away, you start setting things aside. You open a box of pasta and take out about a quarter of the strands. You grab the ripest grapes out of the bag and put them into a bowl. This continues with your drinks, meats, and snacks, until all the best food you bought is set aside on your kitchen counter. Assessing your ingredients, you cook a fantastic gourmet meal. Then, you take all this food to the leaders of your church. You watch as they throw the very best of the food into a campfire and they gather their families to have a potluck with the rest. Joyfully content, you go home and eat whatever was left.

In Leviticus 23:9–14, God told his people to bring their firstfruits and best livestock to the priests as an offering after they had entered the Promised Land. The Israelites were not to eat any of their food until they had brought their offering to him. Though sacrifices and offerings may seem unrelated to modern believers, with perhaps the exception of giving away a portion of one's paycheck, God did not ask the people of Israel to give him their first and best as some arbitrary rule. He was inviting Israel to be like him. He was declaring that Yahweh is the God who gives away his first and best. God gave us his firstborn Son, Jesus. God has given us the Holy Spirit as the firstfruits of eternity. We don't need to burn our groceries, money, or animals on an altar to quench the appetite of an unreasonable God. We get to give away our very best because God lets us be like him.

PRAY

God, thank you for giving us your best and for giving us all that you are. Let us give you everything we are and everything we have. Amen.

Day Three: Study

Read Leviticus 21

SCRIPTURE

Read through Leviticus 21 several times. Write out verse 6 or another verse that sticks out to you.

OBSERVE AND INTERPRET

This passage might seem strange, but consider how it might relate to Jesus. For more help, read the following passages:

- Mark 3:31–35
- Matthew 9:18–19
- Matthew 9:23–25
- John 19:1–3
- Isaiah 52:14
- Romans 15:14–16
- Hebrews 7:11–28
- Revelation 1:6

Compare and contrast these passages with today's reading. Do any other scripture passages come to mind?

APPLY

How does Leviticus 21 point to Jesus? What might it mean for those of us who follow Jesus to be a "kingdom of priests" (Revelation 1:6)?

Rewrite things you've learned or new connections you've made between Leviticus 21 and the list of passages or any others you've found. Consider writing these in the margins of your Bible.

PRAY

Write out a prayer for yourself on how to understand and apply these ideas. Here's an example:

Lord, help me to see you as greater than any mediator that I put my faith in: parents, government, or other leaders. Help me to serve and love others as you did, even if I might see them as "unclean." Thank you for bearing my sin and shame. Because you were marred, I am holy. Amen.

Day Four: Pray

Read Leviticus 23:39-43

LEARN

The Feast of Booths, the feast referenced in this passage, was held at the end of the harvest season and lasted for seven days. Israel was instructed to build booths (temporary living spaces) to celebrate and reflect on God’s faithfulness during the harvest months. Additionally, this period of rest prompted Israel to remember Yahweh’s deliverance from their enslavement in Egypt.

REFLECT

Reflect on specific ways in which God has demonstrated his faithfulness and goodness to you in the last year. Take a few moments to celebrate and praise our worthy God by writing your praise here.

PRAY

God, thank you for your continued faithfulness and goodness to me. You are merciful, gracious, long-suffering, and abounding in goodness and truth (Exodus 34:6). I confess the ways in which I forget or choose to not reflect on your faithfulness. Help me to recall and remember your steadfastness and goodness. Your compassion never fails, and your mercy is new every morning (Lamentations 3:22–23). Great is your faithfulness! Amen.

Day Five: Meet

Read Leviticus 23:9-14

What rhythms or traditions remind you to give thanks to God? The firstfruits offering was a worship event the Israelites used to “mark the various stages in the agricultural year, celebrate harvests, and give both credit and a sacrificial portion back to God, who had provided their bounty.”¹ As the priest waved the offering before the altar, God’s attention was drawn toward the people who gave thanks for all God’s provision and promises.

As you gather with friends or a group, consider how your life’s offering can embody your thanksgiving to God, who provides all we need. Practice rhythms that draw you into God’s presence and provide reminders of what God has done.

DISCUSS

What traditions does your family have for Easter or Thanksgiving?

Read Leviticus 23:9–14 and discuss.

The festivals in Leviticus 23 were called “appointed times.” What are some of the “set apart” days or times on your calendar that draw you closer to God? How does scheduling affect your commitment and consistent practice of devotion to God?

There are practices in Leviticus that are a “perpetual statute” (NASB) or “lasting ordinance” (NIV). What are benefits of these repeated rhythms in a believer’s life?

Read 1 Corinthians 15:20–23 and discuss.

Jesus is described as the “firstfruits” of those who have died, because he was the first resurrected from the dead. How does this passage provide encouragement for the believer today?

The Lord’s Supper (or communion) reminds of Jesus’ body and blood, given for us (Luke 22:17–20). Similarly, water baptism is a picture of our death to sin and resurrection to life (Colossians 2:12–14). How do these ordinances serve as “festivals of remembrance” for you today?

PRAY

Thank God for providing rhythms that draw you closer to Jesus daily. Ask the Holy Spirit to convict you when your calendar fails to reflect your devotion to God.

¹ Walton, J. H., Matthews, V. H., & Chavalas, M. W. (2000). *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*. InterVarsity Press, p. 137.

Day Six: Do

Read Leviticus 23:9-14 & 1 Corinthians 15:20-23

When God taught the Israelites to offer the first of their produce back to him, it reminded them that all good gifts came from God's hands. God continually provided exactly what the Israelites needed and the Israelites showed they trusted his provision when they gave back this first portion to God.

Giving our "first" is hardest when we are addicted to or overly dependent on an item. Recognize that the principle of offering a sacrifice is meant to cost you something. How will you offer "firstfruits" to God this week?

Time:

- Set aside the first hour of each day for prayer, worship, and Bible study.
- Set aside the first day of the week as a Sabbath rest—no work, only worship, refreshment, and renewal.
- Set aside the first day of each month to volunteer for a worthy cause.
- Set aside your second Saturdays to serve. For more information about serving locally with CCC, use your mobile device to scan this code or visit urlgeni.us/serve.



Talent:

- Offering your talent isn't complicated. If you know how to make bread, change a tire, play piano, or coach sports, offer to teach someone else.
- What gifts has God given you to benefit others? Maybe that gift is hospitality (Guest Experience Team) or creative arts (Ministry Arts Team). Maybe it's cooking (Food Services Team) or gardening (Grounds Team). Schedule time to use that gift on a ministry team. Learn more about serving at Christ Community Church at cccomaha.org/serve.

Resources:

- Set up automatic giving online at cccomaha.org/give.
- If you already give regularly, consider a sacrificial gift this month to an international worker or resident.

PRAY

God, forgive us when we keep our time, talent, and resources to ourselves. Help us to recognize that every good gift comes from you, and we are only stewards of those gifts. Give us the grace and enthusiasm to use our gifts for others each week. Amen.

Day Seven: Rest

Read Leviticus 23:3 & Psalm 119:169-176

Hearing the voice of God not only enables us to experience the love of God, but to discern what he is doing in the world around us and in our lives so that we can join him. We can experiment with spiritual disciplines through Sabbath days and weekly rhythms. In this way, we stay hungry for more of the Spirit and the fruit that flows from life in union with Christ.

Sabbath focus: What might your ideal Sabbath look like this year? Use the following prompts to help you experiment with spiritual disciplines to grow your awareness of God's presence and help you listen to his voice.

- Begin your Sabbath by journaling, either immediately in the morning or beginning in the evening. A traditional Jewish Sabbath ran from sundown to sundown.
- Through prayer, turn everything that concerns you over to God and commit the next twenty-four hours to Sabbath rest.
- Consider not setting an alarm to wake up in the morning or rising when your body is ready for a new day.
- Read Psalm 116 or another psalm.
- Spend time in quiet and stillness. Practice listening, giving space for God to respond back to you.
- Read from a book that feeds your soul or aligns with the focus of something you are studying.
- Listen to music that fills you up and helps you connect with God.
- Connect with God over a meal.
- Co-create with God! Do something with your hands, such as gardening, landscaping, home projects, or baking.
- Prayerfully plan out your week at the end of your Sabbath day.



Week Eight

Visual Aid: The Tabernacle Tent

The tabernacle was not just a tent for worship, but was filled with symbolism that pointed to the future. Inside, there was a lampstand. Jesus said, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12) and is the one who walks among the seven lampstands in Revelation 1:12–16. Inside, there was a table of bread. Jesus said, "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35). Inside the Ark of the Covenant located within the Holy of Holies was manna (a reminder of God's provision), Aaron's budded staff (a reminder of miracle-working power), and the ten commandments (a reminder of the law). Jesus is God's provision, God's miracle-worker, and the fulfillment of the law. The tent was called the Tabernacle and John said in his gospel that Jesus was the "Word became flesh" who "made his dwelling [tabernacled] among us" (John 1:14). Maybe the Tabernacle isn't a *what*, but a *who*.

THE TABERNALE TENT

The entire tent was 45 feet (13.7 m) long, 15 feet (4.6 m) wide, and 15 feet (4.6 m) high. It was a wooden skeletal structure, overlaid with gold, with no solid roof or front wall (Ex. 26:15–29). Five wooden bars (overlaid with gold) passed through rings attached to each frame (Ex. 26:26–30).

The Most Holy Place was a 15-foot (4.6-m) cube, containing only the ark of the covenant (Ex. 25:10–22; 37:1–9). It was here that Yahweh would descend to meet with his people in a cloud theophany (divine appearance). The high priest could enter only once a year, on the Day of Atonement (see note on Heb. 9:7).

The framed structure was covered by four layers of cloth and skin (Ex. 26:1–14).

The table for the bread of the Presence (Ex. 25:23–30)

The Holy Place of the tabernacle tent was 30 feet (9.1 m) long, 15 feet (4.6 m) wide, and 15 feet (4.6 m) high.

The veil separating the Most Holy Place from the Holy Place was made from blue, purple, and scarlet dyed yarns woven with fine twined linen and embroidered with cherubim (Ex. 26:31–33). It hung on four golden pillars.

The altar of incense (Ex. 30:1–10; 37:25–29)

The golden lampstand (Ex. 25:31–40; 37:17–24)

The veil that formed the entrance to the tabernacle was similar to the veil separating the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place, except that cherubim were not embroidered on it. It was suspended on five golden pillars (Ex. 26:36–37).

Illustration taken from the ESV® Study Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright ©2008 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Day Two: Think

Read Leviticus 15 & Mark 7:1-23

READ

Through the recent COVID-19 crisis, we have learned a lot about hygiene and washing our hands. Leviticus, however, is not a reference to cleanliness habits. The theme of Leviticus is to be holy as he is holy. This theme is repeated in the book (Leviticus 11:44, 19:2, 20:7, 20:26, 21:8), and is even referred to by Peter (1 Peter 1:14–16). When we encounter a passage like this, the question is, “How does this apply to personal holiness?” Jesus answered this in Mark 7:1–23.

In verses 1–5, the Pharisees questioned Jesus as to why his disciples did not wash according to the tradition of the elders. It is important to note that the literal translation refers to “washing with a fist,” which is an addition by “the elders” to the original text of Leviticus. They wanted to know why Jesus’ disciples did not follow their traditions. Jesus quoted Isaiah and essentially said that they were caught up in the traditions of men, at the expense of the commandments of God. He went so far as to accuse them of voiding the word of God in their adherence to their own traditions.

Jesus explained that it is what comes *out* of a person that defiles them, not what goes into them. In verses 21–22, he listed some of the vile things that come from our hearts: evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness. This is but a sampling. In Matthew 12:34 (ESV), Jesus stated, “For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.” What was in the heart of the Pharisees was seen through their words and deeds.

REFLECT

1. Where are you caught up in following tradition instead of God’s leading?
2. What is in your heart? How is it expressed through your words and actions?

PRAY

Lord, help me to love you and submit to your word instead of my traditions. Help me to see you anew. Amen.

Day Three: Study

Read Leviticus 24:5-9, 1 Samuel 21:1-6 & Matthew 12:1-8

SCRIPTURE

Read the passages and note how they relate and build on each other.

OBSERVE AND INTERPRET

Leviticus stipulates always having the Bread of the Presence fresh upon the altar. This holy sacrifice was made from the offerings of the people. Bread played an important role in the lives and worship of the Israelites, demonstrated through the manna God provided in the wilderness and the unleavened bread in the Passover meal. This is underscored by Jesus’ words in John 6:35, “I am the bread of life,” and again when he shared the Passover with the disciples in Mark 14.

In Samuel, David and his men ate this bread due to their hunger, though they were not priests. This directly violated the Levitical practice, yet there was no sign of judgment on David for this act.

In Matthew, as Jesus and his disciples walked through the grain field on the Sabbath, they were hungry and plucked heads of the grain to eat. This violated the Pharisees’ tradition of not working on the Sabbath. Jesus referred to David’s eating of the Bread of the Presence and how the priests worked on the Sabbath, pointing out discrepancies in the Pharisaic law. He stated that “something greater than the temple” was with them (Matthew 12:6). He also pointed to the Pharisees’ hypocrisy by quoting from Hosea 6:6, that God desires mercy, not sacrifice.

APPLY

1. How do you cling to your traditions in place of clinging to the grace of God?
2. Where do you try to hold others accountable to your standards as opposed to God’s mercy?

PRAY

God, please open our eyes to see where we need to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with you day by day (Micah 6:8). Amen.

Day Four: Pray

Read Leviticus 23:15-22, Hosea 6:6 & Matthew 12:1-8

“For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings.” –Hosea 6:6

UNDERSTAND

Completing spiritual disciplines such as reading the Bible, prayer, and worship can take precedence over encountering and experiencing God through these disciplines. These actions become a checklist, providing a sense of accomplishment rather than intimacy, appeasement rather than delight, pride rather than relief. Jesus’ response reminds us to not place the law and actions above Christ, but instead to receive him fully and offer him the entirety of our hearts.

PRAY

Jesus, thank you for your reminder in scripture that you desire intimacy with me, not an endless list of sacrifices. I lay down all that I am trying to control in my own strength and give these things to you.

Confess whatever has taken precedence in your life over a relationship with God.

Jesus, you say that your yoke is easy and your burden is light. Please lift the burdens I feel, the pressure to appear perfect or the need to perform for you, rather than experiencing your life-giving friendship. Reveal any lies I believe that add to the pressure I place on myself and others.

Ask God to reveal ways in which you may have hurt someone by holding onto an unfair rule or unmet expectation.

Jesus, thank you for the way you take the broken and make it beautiful. Will you reveal something new to me about your love for me and for others? I say “Yes!” to a relationship with you, rather than a series of religious transactions. Help me to receive the fullness of your love. Remove obstacles that prevent me from experiencing the width and length and height and depth of your love. Thank you for desiring an intimate, vibrant relationship with me. I love you. Amen.

Day Five: Meet

Read Leviticus 24:5-9, 1 Samuel 21:1-6 & Matthew 12:1-8

CONVERSE

Leviticus 24 introduces some of the daily and weekly practices designed to bring remembrance to the people of God’s continual presence. However, the experience of God’s presence was not reserved for these daily and weekly practices.

What do you like best and least about Sundays? Why?

DISCUSS

Read Leviticus 24:5–9 out loud.

The recipe for this bread produced a loaf of considerable size. How did producing large loaves of bread and arranging them on a table help the people practice the presence of God? What symbolism would bring significance to this practice?

Read 1 Samuel 21:1–6 out loud.

What did David ask of Ahimelek? Given what we know of the Bread of the Presence, what was significant about the request?

Read Matthew 12:1–8 out loud.

What were the two laws the Pharisees accused Jesus’ followers of breaking? What was Jesus’ answer to these accusations?

How had the Pharisees neglected the meaning of “I desire mercy, not sacrifice”?

From this passage, how important are your needs to God? How important are others’ needs to God?

Where do you fall into the trap of offering sacrifice over mercy? How can you reverse that trend?

PRAY

Pray through Hosea 6:6, “For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings.” Ask the Lord to shape hearts to embrace mercy toward others. Share prayer requests in current situations and circumstances where you can demonstrate mercy toward others.

Day Six: Do

Read Leviticus 24 & John 6:25, 6:51, & 8:12

In Leviticus 24, two things stand out about the priest's work. One was the need to tend the lamps continually; don't let the light go out! It was a "lasting ordinance." The second was the provision of bread for the priests and the requirement to eat it in the tabernacle. The bread was for a select few at a specific time and place.

Both "light" and "bread" serve as metaphors for Jesus in the New Testament. In John 8:12, Jesus said, "I am the light of the world," and numerous texts remind believers to walk in light and not in darkness (Matthew 5:14–16, Luke 11:34, John 3:21, Ephesians 5:8–13). In John 6:35, Jesus told the crowd, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry..." Jesus' bread is for all people (for the "life of the world," John 6:51) and all times/places ("whoever" comes to Jesus, John 6:35).

Choose one of the below practices to remind you of Jesus as "light" and "bread."

LIGHT

- Choose a safe place in your home or office for a candle to burn all day.
- Light the candle first thing in the morning with a short prayer: *Jesus, help me live as a "light of the world" today.*
- Each time you pass by the candle, ensure that the wick is a safe length (tend the lampstand) and repeat the prayer.

BREAD

- Invite someone to "break bread" with you today. This can be a shared meal or a simple communion celebration with pieces of bread and juice.
- As you break bread together, share some examples of how Jesus has provided "everything [you] need for life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3, BSB).

PRAY

Jesus, thank you for being the light of the world and for showing us how to walk in the light of your example. Thank you, also, for being our bread of life, our provision of all things. Help us not take your example for granted. Amen.

Day Seven: Rest

Read Leviticus 24:1-9

Sabbath focus: Pursue meaningful conversations and activities with your family or friends this Sabbath.

Here is an example from Dan Allender:

Sabbath is a day my wife and I read to each other from texts that have touched us during the week. These passages are the incarnate bread we feed each other. How do I know what is sparking life in my wife unless we create space to light up the world? These are gifts we offer to those with whom we celebrate Sabbath.²

John Mark Comer, his wife, and their children make their evening meal a priority by delighting in their favorite foods while sharing a highlight from their week.³

Discuss with your family or friends how you might foster deeper conversations with your closest of relationships this Sabbath.

² Allender, D. B. (2009). *Sabbath: The Ancient Practices*. Thomas Nelson, p. 129.

³ Comer, J. M. (2019). *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*. WaterBrook, p. 173.



Week Nine

Visual Aid: Sexual Ethics in the Bible

PROHIBITED IN LEVITICUS 18

**Sexual relations
with parents**

Leviticus 18:7–8

PROHIBITED IN NEW TESTAMENT

**Sexual relations
with parents
(e.g., stepmother)**

1 Corinthians 5:1–2

REPEATED

Incest

Leviticus 18:6, 9–16

Sexual immorality

1 Corinthians 6:18

REPEATED

Adultery

Leviticus 18:17–18, 20

Adultery

*Matthew 19:18,
Hebrews 13:4*

REPEATED

Homosexuality

Leviticus 18:22

Homosexuality

*Romans 1:26–27,
1 Corinthians 6:9,
1 Timothy 1:8–11*

REPEATED

Bestiality

Leviticus 18:23

Sexual immorality

Galatians 5:19–21

REPEATED

Day Two: Think

Read Leviticus 18:24-30 & Proverbs 6:25-27

READ

While many of God's rules and expectations about sex are easy to agree with (incest, affairs, or other rules listed in Leviticus 18), most of the time we try to separate him from our sexuality. It is uncomfortable to think of God being present in the bedroom while you are intimate with your spouse. Or you do not want him cramping your style when it comes to things you find arousing but he says are sinful. The problem is that the further we isolate sex from God, the more likely sex is to control us (Romans 1:25–27) and actually work to kill us (James 1:14–15). Without God, sexual depravity is the natural state of humanity (Leviticus 18:24–30), and you and I are no exception to this.

God intentionally created sex for us (Genesis 2:22–25). Many of us have a simple belief about sex locked into our brains which says that God created sex primarily for procreation. Therefore, since most of our sexual experiences are not about procreation, we quietly, but firmly, separate God from sex. You have permission to stop believing this (if you have had sex then you know it is not predominantly about making babies) and begin inviting God back into your sexuality. God wants us to thrive sexually (Proverbs 5:15–19), but this is only possible with him. God sets sexual limits and boundaries because he loves us.

REFLECT

Do you trust God with your sexuality? Believing that God wants to bless you sexually means offering him control of this in your life. It is likely that this will mean you sacrifice something in order to live closer to what he intends for you sexually. I encourage you to let him set you apart, because you know that he is trustworthy.

Day Three: Study

Read Leviticus 18:7-30 & Romans 1:24-27

SCRIPTURE

In today's world, we face the complete degradation of biblical sexuality. Acts of sexual immorality that would have been loathed only a few decades ago are now so acceptable that they are celebrated in many corners of Western civilization. Reflecting on Leviticus 18, it's clear that when the behaviors listed (Leviticus 18:7–23) become common place or acceptable, the people become defiled.

God calls us to a sexuality that is much greater than the idolatry many people have given themselves over to. He calls us to “be holy, because I am holy” (Leviticus 19:2, 1 Peter 1:16), encouraging us to reject and defend ourselves and others against the “sinful desires” of our flesh. When people glorify the flesh, they glorify themselves, rather than God, to whom all honor and glory are due (1 Timothy 1:17). In these passages, God calls us to put our hope in him, not in our fleshly desires. We are to be holy, set apart as pure in Christ and separated from evil (1 John 3:3).

OBSERVE AND INTERPRET

When it comes to sexual purity from the perspective of holiness, what does the Bible teach? When it comes to holy or healthy sexuality, how does the Bible encourage us rather than focus on what *not* to do?

APPLY

Regardless of your relationship status, God's Word encourages you to pursue Christlikeness. In your study of healthy biblical sexuality, what did you learn and how might you apply what you learned to your own life? Did your search provide hope or hurt? If you are experiencing hurt, please reach out to a trusted friend, mentor, or minister for further discussion in the hope of redeeming the hurt.

PRAY

As these passages relate to you and your situation, pray for God's will to be done in your life. Call on the name of Jesus and his angel armies to keep you from any of Satan's unholy attempts to separate you from the love of Christ.

Day Four: Pray

Read Leviticus 18:1-5 & Romans 12:1-2

LEARN

After rescuing the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, the Lord began forming the culture and identity of his people. He was preparing them to enter and conquer the promised land of Canaan. God's design for his people is that they reflect his holiness in all areas of life, including sexuality. In Christ, we are chosen and called to be set apart from the patterns of thinking and living that plague our culture, no matter how popular or acceptable these sinful behaviors and mindsets appear. God's ways are better and always lead to life!

Read the scripture passages slowly several times, asking the Holy Spirit to speak and lead you to truth. Take note of any words or phrases that catch your attention.

REFLECT

Reflect and respond in a personal dialogue with God using these prompts:

- If a word or phrase emerges as meaningful, how does it connect with my life right now?
- Are there any areas of disobedience in my life, especially related to God's standards for sexuality?
- Based on what I've read and experienced, what is my response to God?
- What is God's invitation for me?

Next steps could include worship, confession, repentance, or reaching out to a trusted friend, mentor, or minister for accountability and support.

Day Five: Meet

Read Leviticus 18 & Proverbs 5:18-19

Discuss the things you have heard, read, studied, and prayed about this week with friends, family, or a community group. Feel free to use other days or exercises from this week.

DISCUSS

Despite the common perception that Christians preach that sex is bad—and though many Christians have even taught this idea—the Bible says that sex is *good*. In fact, it is *very good*. In Genesis 2:25, Adam and Eve were naked and unashamed. Proverbs 5:18–19 states, “...rejoice in the wife of your youth, a lovely doe, a graceful deer—may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be intoxicated with her love.”

Paul goes so far as to state that husbands and wives should not deprive each other of a sexual relationship. “Do not deprive each other except perhaps by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control” (1 Corinthians 7:5).

In reading these or other passages on healthy sexuality, what stands out to you? Does your current worldview on sexuality differ from that of the Bible? If so, in what ways does it differ? Have you explored what God desires for you as it relates to sexuality?

PRAY

If Jesus is clear about anything, it is that we should pray (Matthew 26:36–44, Luke 5:16, Luke 11:1–13, 1 Thessalonians 5:17, and James 5:16). Give thanks for the things related to the topic you discussed. Pray for those things the group or individuals found difficult in your discussion. Finally, ask Jesus for his protection concerning sexuality, as well as for his guidance.

Day Six: Do

Read Leviticus 19:1-18

We live in a world where sexual trauma creates significant challenges for masses of people physically, emotionally, and relationally. Research from the Center of Disease Control and Prevention claims one in five Americans were sexually molested as a child, that one in four children were beaten by a parent to the pain of a mark being left, and one in three couples engage in physical violence.⁴

People experience trauma from events and comments beyond sexual molestation. However, sexual molestation or abuse is one of the primary factors in fractured relationships as it makes it difficult to trust, especially if the abuse took place among family or extended family. If you have experienced sexual molestation or abuse, it likely impacts your ability to trust God, your spouse, and others. The good news is that Jesus came to redeem, set free, heal, restore, and reconcile!

Christ Community Church's Care Network offers opportunities to heal from trauma, to find freedom from sexual addiction, and to seek restoration of fractured relationships. Consider joining God in his redemptive work in your life or in the life of a friend.



For more information about the CCC Care Network, use your mobile device to scan this code or visit cccomaha.org/care.

⁴ Van der Kolk, B. (2014). *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma*. Viking Penguin.

Day Seven: Rest

Read Leviticus 19:19-37

Lust refers to any inordinate desire, or a “sexual desire that is too impatient or too self-centered, or both, to properly respect the object of that desire.”⁵

Purity of heart is the opposite of lust. “To be pure of heart is to see others as God sees them and to love them with their good, not our own, in mind.”⁶ Regarding sexual desire, purity does not stifle, but rather “lets our sexual energies flow out in a more life-giving way.”⁶

Sabbath focus: This Sabbath, focus on purity of heart rather than deadening restraint. Rest, play, and delight in the Lord. If you are married, delight in your spouse spiritually, emotionally, or physically as you are able. You can also be a life-giving presence in anyone’s life by delighting in them as God does.

Discuss with your closest friends how you might be more of a life-giving presence in their lives.

⁵ Van Rolheiser, R. (2014). *Sacred Fire: A Vision for a Deeper Human and Christian Maturity*. Image, p. 92.

⁶ Van Rolheiser, R. (2014). *Sacred Fire: A Vision for a Deeper Human and Christian Maturity*. Image, p. 93.



Week Ten

Day Two: Think

Read Leviticus 24:10-23 & Matthew 5:38-48

“Anyone who takes the life of a human being is to be put to death...”
–Leviticus 24:17

READ

When someone hurts us, especially when it wounds deeply, we want justice for that wound. The words of Leviticus present the justice we desire: “life for life...eye for eye, tooth for tooth” (Leviticus 24:18, 20). Not only do we want the punishment to fit the crime, but we also want restitution. The other person should pay for the hurt they’ve caused. The laws in Leviticus provide justice. If someone killed a person, they were put to death, or if someone caused permanent injury, “the one who has inflicted the injury must suffer the same injury” (Leviticus 24:20). This seems right, not just back in Moses’ day, but if we are honest, we desire this justice today.

However, Jesus challenged us to a different course of action. When we are wronged and wounded, instead of seeking retribution, Jesus called us to forgiveness. Jesus said that instead of an eye for an eye, we are to turn the other cheek. “If anyone slaps you on your right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also” (Matthew 5:39). This may feel impossible. Jesus knows it is extremely difficult, but if we are God’s children, we need to do the hard things, such as forgiving the person who has wronged us. This is only possible through the grace of God.

REFLECT

How do we do forgive, especially when the wound is deep? We ask our Father to give us the strength, courage, and ability to forgive. If we are willing to take it one step further, Jesus calls us to “love [our] enemies and pray for those who persecute [us]” (Matthew 5:44).

Day Three: Study

Read Leviticus 24 & Matthew 5

SCRIPTURE

Read through the passages several times or in different translations. Write out a verse or several verses that resonate with you.

OBSERVE AND INTERPRET

Focus on Leviticus 24:10–23. Though you may be familiar with the saying, “an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,” you may not understand the context where this appears in Leviticus. Beginning with verse 10, examine the scene for this discussion of the law. It starts with the punishment of stoning for a person who has blasphemed God. Does that seem fair or extreme?

Look up the words *justice*, *vengeance*, *revenge*, *retribution*, *restitution*, and *vindication*. How was justice applied in Leviticus? Which word would you use to describe the examples in Leviticus 24?

Consider the word *justice*. Leviticus 24 describes justice according to the law in the time of Moses in cases of blasphemy, killing of an animal or another human being, or inflicting of injury upon someone. Using either BibleGateway.com or a Bible concordance, look up other instances of justice in scripture. Write your observations in your notes or journal.

APPLY

Read Matthew 5:38–42. Jesus gave a new instruction regarding the “eye for an eye” restitution of Leviticus 24. What did Jesus call us to in this passage? How do Jesus’ words challenge you? Do you see him calling you to say or do something about a personal situation in your life?

PRAY

Jesus, when we see or experience something that seems wrong, we want an eye for an eye, but you call us to turn the other cheek and to love our enemy. We cannot do this on our own. It is only possible by your power. Give us the strength we need to give others the grace we have so freely received from you. In your holy name, Amen.

Day Four: Pray

Read Leviticus 24:1-4 & Matthew 5:28-29

LEARN

In Leviticus 24, the Israelites were commanded to provide oil (Leviticus 24:2) for the lamp in the tabernacle. As everything that was to be used in God's service, this oil had to be pure. The olive oil would have been beaten and probably double-strained to ensure its purity and quality. In the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5, Jesus taught that adultery can be committed in the heart, not just in the physical body. Jesus' teaching was not telling us to mutilate our bodies, rather showing us how critically important it is to eliminate sin from our lives.

REFLECT AND PRAY

What sin are you committing that is preventing you from giving God your best or living how God intended you to live?

This may be a sin you find yourself committing again and again. Often, sins are committed because of a false belief you have about yourself or your situation.

After identifying the sin, reflect on the following questions:

- Do you sense any resistance or hesitancy at not committing this sin?
- What would happen if you were to not commit this sin?
- What is the reason for committing this sin?
- Take the answer from the previous question to the Lord for his perspective.

Day Five: Meet

Read Leviticus 24:10-23, Matthew 5:38-42 & Luke 6:27-36

Discuss the things you've heard, read, studied, and prayed about this week with friends, family, or a community group. Feel free to use other days or exercises from this week.

Read Leviticus 24:10–23 out loud.

Verses 10–16 give the punishment for a person who has blasphemed the name of the Lord. Verses 17–24 elaborate that whatever injury one person inflicts on another is the injury that he or she should receive back. Equal discipline was the punishment for murder because it defames God, as we are made in his image. When we treat others poorly, we treat God poorly.

Why did Moses include the punishment for harming someone when discussing the punishment for blaspheming God's name?

Read Matthew 5:38–42 and Luke 6:27–36 out loud.

In the ancient world, it was common for people to love those close to them and hate their enemies. The way of justice was equal punishment. Jesus taught that true justice is self-sacrifice, breaking the endless cycle of hatred and revenge.

How did Jesus' words differ from Moses' words? What did Jesus address?

Using this scripture passage, share examples of how we can love our enemies.

How can a sinner love in the same way that a believer can love (Luke 6:32–34)? How does a believer's love distinguish itself from a sinner's love?

Who received the punishment for sin in Leviticus versus the New Testament?

Who is an enemy you can love this week? Who can you love without expecting anything in return?

PRAY

Have you experienced conflict this week with someone whom you consider an enemy? Pray that Christ's love will fill you so that you can love your enemies. Pray a blessing over your enemies.

Day Six: Do

Read Leviticus 24:17-23 & John 8:1-11

READ

We've focused on how Jesus fulfills ancient and modern ideas of justice in a radical way. We also have some fairly radical and hard-to-apply teachings on how we should act in response to this.

Consider the woman caught in adultery (John 8:1–11). There was an expectation of justice placed on her—whether justly or unfairly—that Jesus alleviated.

RESPOND

Consider ways that you can tangibly respond in the next few days.

- Though difficult, think of someone who wronged you in the past with whom you have not found closure. If possible, write or reach out to them graciously to make amends or provide encouragement. If this isn't feasible, talk to God about the situation and forgive them in your heart.
- Do some research to educate yourself on mass incarceration. See how you might be able to support a local jail and prison ministry or contribute to criminal justice reform.
 - » Email Marc Montanye, CCC Director of Counseling, at MarcM@cccomaha.org.
 - » Connect with the Omaha branch of Good News Jail & Prison Ministry (goodnewsjail.org) by emailing Merlyn Klaus at merlyn.klaus@goodnewsjail.org.
- Remain faithful to your spouse and other relationships or commitments.

Day Seven: Rest

Read Leviticus 25:1-7

Slowing down to be alone with God has great power and influence over our hearts.

Henri Nouwen wrote:

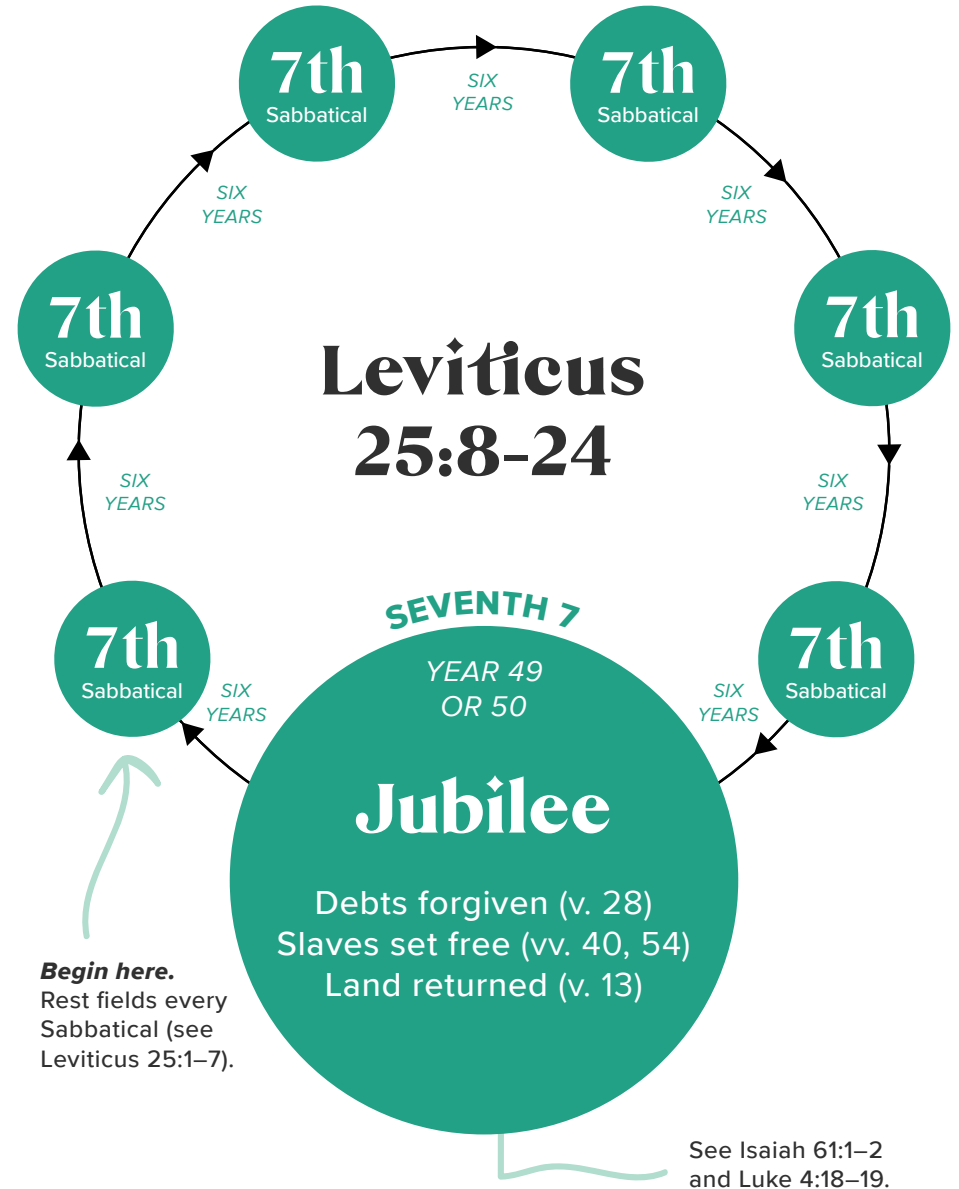
Solitude is the furnace of transformation... in a world that victimizes us by its compulsions, we are called to solitude where we can struggle against our anger and greed and let our new self be born in the loving encounter with Jesus Christ. It is in this solitude that we become compassionate people, deeply aware of our solidarity and brokenness with all of humanity and ready to reach out to anyone in need.⁷

Sabbath focus: Set aside some time for solitude this Sabbath. Ask the Spirit of God to reveal any compulsions that you have picked up living in our broken world, especially those that make it challenging to love others. Dream with God about what role he might have you joining him in fostering life-giving justice and mercy in our broken world.

⁷ Nouwen, H. J. M. (1981). *The Way of the Heart: Desert Spirituality and Contemporary Ministry*. Seabury Press, p. 25.

Week Eleven

Visual Aid: The Jubilee Cycle



Day Two: Think

Read Leviticus 25 & Psalm 24

“The Lord said to Moses at Mount Sinai...‘The land is mine and you reside in my land as foreigners and strangers.’” –Leviticus 25:1, 23b

READ

Americans like to sing, “This land is your land; this land is my land,” but is it?

In Leviticus 25, the Lord told the Israelites that they were to observe a Year of Jubilee every fifty years, a year of rest and restoration of the land. A trumpet would sound to proclaim the year as a time to return to one’s land, family, and property, to redeem land and houses, and to provide for the poor among them.

In the United States of America, we sound our own trumpets during ceremonies, such as the presidential inauguration. In January 2021, this sounding was accompanied by the song “Amazing Grace” and a call for much-needed unity and peace across the land.

For those of us in the United States, there has been much fighting about our visions for the future, yet so much is out of our control.

But we know *who* is in control, and we can think carefully about how we will respond to the troubles that are sure to come, and how we can go forward to live for Christ. We can remember what God has told us in Psalm 24:1: “The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it, the world and all who live in it.”

We can choose to trust God and pray, or we can panic and grow bitter.

REFLECT

Just as the land is the Lord’s, we are his and do not belong to ourselves. In Leviticus 25:18, God promised: “Follow my decrees and be careful to obey my laws, and you will live safely in the land.”

God still commands us to obey him, to care for one another, and to help the poor as he did in his commands to Israel. We are to be motivated by a healthy fear of he who is truly still in charge of all things.

Day Three: Study

Read Leviticus 25:8-24

SCRIPTURE

Using these verses, write out a scripture verse that either resonates with your soul or to which you experience some resistance.

OBSERVE AND INTERPRET

Write out an observation about what this chapter says about the heart of God, what is unique about the faith community that God was forming in Leviticus, or how this text intersects with your life.

APPLY

How might the Spirit want you to respond to the verse that your soul resonates with or the verse where you experienced resistance?

PRAY

Write out a prayer on how this text stretches you, where you need God’s grace and wisdom, for God to empower you to apply this text, or about your desires to reflect the heart of God.

Day Four: Pray

Read Leviticus 25:35-38

REFLECT

Do you know a believer around you who is in need spiritually, emotionally, physically, or financially?

What are the things (or circumstances) from which God has delivered you? Did a believer come around you during one of those times? How did your perspective of God change because of that experience?

Is God the God of your life? If not, what stands in the way?

Read Luke 4:18-19

REFLECT

Is the spirit of the Lord upon you? How has the Holy Spirit been working through you recently?

Do you feel anointed or prepared to share the good news? If not, why not? What is holding you back from sharing the good news?

Who are the poor among you? Are these people spiritually, emotionally, physically, or financially poor?

Have you witnessed a miracle? If so, when? What does a miracle look like to you?

Who are the oppressed in your life? How could you be specifically praying for them?

Do you believe yourself to be in the Lord's favor? What does it look like for the Lord's favor to be upon you?

PRAY

Jesus, give me eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to fully know. I love you. Thank you for loving me. Amen.

Day Five: Meet

Read Isaiah 58:6-12, 61:1-3 & Luke 4:18-19

DISCUSS

Share an experience in your life when you or someone you know experienced injustice.

From these passages, how would you describe God's heart for the oppressed, the poor, or those overwhelmed with life?

How did Jesus live out this mission or vision with his life and ministry throughout the gospel accounts?

Read Leviticus 25:8–55 out loud.

How do the passages in Isaiah and Luke relate to the Year of Jubilee? What imagery is similar?

How might we join Jesus as a church, a community group, or as individuals in reflecting the heart of God and mission of Jesus in our broken world?

PRAY

- Ask for eyes to see and a heart to care about the things that break God's heart in our world today.
- Ask for wisdom on how you might join God as a group in his redemptive mission of mending the brokenhearted, setting captives free, giving sight to the blind, and proclaiming good news to the poor.
- Ask for God's healing, freedom, restoration, and reconciling work in the lives of each group member.

Day Six: Do

Read Leviticus 26:1-13

If you have a friend, coworker, or neighbor struggling in a marriage or relationship, with addictive behavior, or with anxiety, consider joining God in his redemptive work by helping them get connected to CityCare Counseling or to Christ Community Church's Care Network. Our struggling friends and acquaintances may be more likely to get the help they need if someone invites them.



For more information about the CCC Care Network, use your mobile device to scan the code to the left or visit cccomaha.org/care.

For more information about CCC Renewal Groups, use your mobile device to scan the code to the right or visit cccomaha.org/renewal.



God also desires his people join him in caring for the poor and oppressed in our community. There are a number of tangible ways we can join him through our partnerships in Omaha:

- Sign up for Second Saturday Serve, an opportunity to bless our neighbors in Village One.
- Bake cookies, brownies, or other desserts to donate to our Lighthouse families in North Omaha.
- Gather with the CCC Missions Team and other believers over Zoom for prayer for our local and global missionaries.



To learn more about and sign up for these opportunities, use your mobile device to scan this code or visit urlgeni.us/servelocal.

If you'd like to speak with a CCC staff member about global or local missions opportunities, email Craig Walter, Director of Missions, at CraigW@cccomaha.org, or Eva Brandt, Assistant Director of Missions, at EvaB@cccomaha.org.

Day Seven: Rest

Read Leviticus 26:14-46

The Sabbath, the Sabbath years, and their culmination in the Year of Jubilee were an act of obedience for Israel. Unfortunately, there is no historical indication that the Israelites ever actually celebrated such a year. Similarly, there are many ways in which we have failed in obedience to the Lord.

Take heart, for in Jesus there is freedom! A repentant heart is beautiful in the sight of the Lord.

Sabbath focus: Cease from your labor and rest this Sabbath, confessing to God for yourself or others (Leviticus 26:40–45).

- Confess things that burden you—whether for yourself or for others.
- Process about forgiving yourself and/or others with God.
- Spend time reflecting on your identity as a loved follower of Jesus and on all the ways he has provided for you.
- Walk slowly to notice colors, the breeze, the sounds of birds, and all the things we tend to miss when engaged in work.
- Eat slowly, delighting in the gift of taste and of the texture of the food.
- Express your delight through dance, games, looking at old family photographs, or visiting a museum or gallery—celebrating how God is faithful to remember and restore us.

Week Twelve

Day Two: Think

Read Leviticus 27:1-8 & Mark 12:41-44

“If anyone making the vow is too poor to pay the specified amount, the person being dedicated is to be presented to the priest, who will set the value according to what the one making the vow can afford.” –Leviticus 27:8

READ

God is gracious. Leviticus 27 focuses on special vows that people make to the Lord, emphasizing the value of keeping our word or promise. These vows were purely voluntary and were made above and beyond the regular requirements of the time. They came from a place of thankfulness and gratitude towards God.

However, God knew the nature of humanity. He knew how rash humans can be with words or promises and that we would struggle to keep them. God created a way for promises to be fulfilled and not lose the person, property, or animal that was needed and loved and still give the gift desired. It was more costly, but allowed for an Israelite’s word to hold firm and the item to stay in their care.

Further still in Leviticus 27:8, God made an allowance for the poor to honor him. Even if they could not pay the set wage, they would go to the priest who would make a price work with the means they had. God looks at the heart of the giver, not the amount of the gift. In Mark 12:41–44, Jesus affirmed a woman who gave only two pennies and said that she has given the most sacrificially.

Many people desire to give, but feel that they cannot give a large amount or that it would not be much of a gift. From the book of Leviticus to gospels, God shows us that it is not about the amount given, but rather the heart of the giver.

REFLECT

Have you ever wanted to give more to the church or to a person? Most of us probably don’t think of dedicating land, animals, or people, but what about a year-end bonus or a month’s sale? Is there something God is calling you to dedicate to him?

Day Three: Study

Read Leviticus 25:18-22 & Malachi 3:10

SCRIPTURE

Read several paragraphs before and after these verses or the whole chapter. Use these questions to discover the context of the passage.

- What are some main ideas of this section or chapter?
- How do these specific verses connect to other parts?
- Who wrote this book and for what purpose?
- What barriers deter me from understanding what the author says?

OBSERVE AND INTERPRET

Leviticus 25:18–22 talks about how the Lord provided for the Israelites on each seventh year when they were not to harvest food from the fields.

- What did God promise?
- What does this say about God’s character?

Read Malachi 3:10. How does this passage relate to the passage in Leviticus?

Throughout Scripture, God provided for his people. What other instances in the Bible can you think of when God miraculously provided for someone?

APPLY

It took much trust for the Israelites to not harvest food from the fields. Do you trust God to provide for you now? Is there anything you hold back from God? Ask Jesus to take care of it and put it at his feet, trusting him to use it as he wants.

PRAY

God, we praise you because you are a good God who provides for us. Even in the midst of troubles, you promise to be with us. Help us trust in you in all areas of our life so that we may know and understand you more. Show us what you want us to do and lead us where you want us to go. Your will be done. Amen.

Day Four: Pray

Read Leviticus 27:14-21

“If the one who dedicates their house wishes to redeem it, they must add a fifth to its value, and the house will again become theirs.” –Leviticus 27:15

REFLECT

Chapter 27 of Leviticus contained instructions about optional offerings for anyone who wanted to step into deeper faith and commitment to God. People could dedicate their possessions to the service of God by donating them to the temple.

However, if anyone wished to take back what they dedicated to God—to revoke their vow—they would not only have to buy it back from the priests at full price, but they would also have to pay an additional fifth of its price. That means it would cost them a total of 120% of its actual value to get back after initially giving it away at no cost.

Though this may seem unfair at first glance, this instruction was designed to stress the importance of keeping ones' vows to God. Promising something to the God of the universe is not to be taken lightly. Ultimately, God still allowed people to purchase back things they had dedicated because God isn't interested in stuff that he already owns. God wants our hearts dedicated to him.

MEDITATE

Is there anything in your life that looks like it is only partially dedicated to God? Is there something that you might say is dedicated to God right up until conflict or hardship arise and then its true status becomes apparent? Is there any behavior or religious habit/ritual in your life that seems only half-hearted? Take some time to journal about it.

PRAY

God, I know you are good to me. I want to draw closer to you. However, I don't want to make empty promises or vows. Help me to accurately evaluate myself and avoid deceiving myself, others, or you with half-hearted practices. I love you, God. Please take me as I am!

Day Five: Meet

Read Leviticus 27:14-21, Mark 12:41-44 & Luke 11:37-41

DISCUSS

Leviticus 27 concludes with God's instructions to Moses on how to lead people in the practice of dedicating items to God's service. How do you feel when asked to round up a purchase toward a cause while checking out in a store?

Read Leviticus 27:2, 9, 14, 16 and 22 out loud.

What were the items that people could dedicate to the Lord? What was revealed in the heart of the giver who dedicated these items to the Lord?

Read Mark 12:41–44 out loud.

What point did Jesus make with this comparison of givers? In what situations is *more* actually *less*? When a *little* is a *lot*? Why do you think Jesus was touched by the widow's gift?

Why do you give to God's work? What are some things that you give to God besides money?

Read Luke 11:37–41 out loud.

With whom did Jesus dine? What surprised the host of the dinner?

What did Jesus make the focus of in the conversation? Why is focusing on the “inside” so difficult today? Why do we put so much emphasis on the “outside” of our lives?

How does being generous to the poor reflect a clean *inside*? In what ways could you bless the poor around you?

PRAY

Whatever is happening on the outside of our lives comes from what is happening on the inside. Thank God for the cleansing power to change us on the inside. Think of some behaviors (the outside) that need changing and invite Jesus to clean your heart.

Day Six: Do

Read Leviticus 27:30-34 & Psalm 89

Leviticus 27:31–32 provided clear lines of what belonged to the Lord and how much he expected his people to give. Has one-fifth or one-tenth ever felt like a lot to give? Maybe that's one-fifth of what you could've used to go on vacation or one-tenth less time you had to invest into your hobbies. Think about what it is you're giving!

Psalm 89:11 states, “The heavens are yours, and yours also the earth; you founded the world and all that is in it.” God has given you one hundred percent of what you have! That's five-fifths and ten-tenths! It is all his and he is asking you to do his will with it.

Yet God doesn't want you to give out of obligation. He wants our hearts to be poured into it as well—“for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:6–7). What if we came to realize the things we've stored up for ourselves were actually the Lord's gifts, given to us to be given away again? I think this change of perspective could help us go from obligation to cheerful giving.

What things do you have trouble giving away? Is it time, money, or possessions?

Think about which resource always feels like it runs short. Try seeing it as a gift given to you. The best part about God's gifts is they never run out! Don't worry about giving it away because God will provide.

Some ideas this week:

- Pay for the person in line behind you!
- When you say “hi” to someone, stop and listen to how their day is going.
- Instead of canceling those plans tonight, try following through, knowing rest will still be there afterwards.

Ask yourself if you miss that resource. Do you regret giving some away? Did you feel cheerful in doing this? Though the results may not be perfect, continue to incorporate these changes to mold your heart into being a cheerful giver.

Day Seven: Rest

Read Leviticus 27

As a working mom of three kids under seven, our house is always full of activity. There are places to go and chores to complete.

This past year, I felt a wrestling in my heart to slow down. I started hearing more about Sabbath. I knew it was a command from God, but it was one that didn't seem as imperative in this day (unlike not murdering, lying, stealing, etc.). Yet God included Sabbath for a reason.

In response, I began learning more about the Sabbath. I read books, studied scripture, listened to podcasts, and talked to other believers. I've discovered Sabbath is not about *doing*, but it is a time for rest and worship. It will look different in each season of life, even from week to week.

Sabbath is a practice. It won't go perfectly every time, and there is no formula for what it has to look like. Sabbath is not about rules, but about freeing our souls to remember God.

My goal for this year is to start small. I asked myself: What brings life to our young family? Walks, going to the park, reading and playing games together, taking turns with my husband for alone time, family dinners, and intentional conversations are all on my list.

Not on the list are laundry, dishes, work, a lot of screen time, or grocery shopping. I am hopeful that starting small and creating a plan each week will allow my family to experience Sabbath and grow each year in how that looks for us.

God commands us to observe the Sabbath for a reason. He knows slowing down on a regular basis is good for our body, mind, and soul. Where are you along the Sabbath journey? What can you implement this week? What do you need to stop doing so you can begin to rest?

The perfect season will never come. Start small from where you are and trust God to lead you into his rest.

This entry was written by Mykaila Norton

What is your best next step?

Thank you for joining us as we unearthed how the book of Leviticus points towards the gospel of Jesus.

Take a moment to reflect on what you've learned throughout this series. Ask what your best next step towards Jesus might be.

Here are a few ideas:

- Download *Clean: Book One* and go through the first part of the series again. Visit cccomaha.org/clean.
- Share what you've learned with family or friends.
- Find other ways to serve or contribute. Text "**MADEFORTHIS**" to **94000** to serve with CCC.
- Get connected with CCC by scanning the QR code below or by visiting cccomaha.org/connect.



Jesus' sacrifice
makes us clean.
It gives us peace
with God, brings
forgiveness, and
offers healing
for brokenness.



**CHRIST
COMMUNITY
CHURCH**

404 S. 108th Ave. / Omaha, Nebraska / 68154
cccomaha.org / **402.330.3360** / info@cccomaha.org

CCCOMAHA.ORG/CLEAN