

SUMMER 2024

YOU

**PROMISES WE
CAN COUNT ON**

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**MORE THAN
A SIDEKICK:
SERVING ALONGSIDE
OTHERS**

A PROMISE THAT WILL NEVER BE BROKEN

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It hurts when people break a promise. Some people make promises they have no intention of honoring. Others sincerely mean well, but circumstances interfere and they're unable to do what they said they promised they'd do.

God is not like us. When He makes a promise, He keeps it. Period. He is always faithful to His word. For example, He promises an abundant and eternal life to those who trust in His Son, Jesus Christ.

"If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.... For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Rom. 10:9,13).

But we don't automatically enjoy the benefits of this wonderful promise. We must understand and believe Jesus died on the cross, taking our sin upon Himself, and then rose from the dead, making a new, eternal life possible for us. As we believe, we also acknowledge His lordship, turning from sin and surrendering our lives to Him.

God's promise is for you. If you would like a new life in Christ, repent of your sins and put your faith in Him. Admit to God you are a sinner and ask Him to forgive you. Turn from the sin that has kept you from God and accept Jesus' gift of forgiveness. Confess your faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Express your repentance and faith by praying something like this:

"Dear God, I know I am a sinner. I believe Jesus died on the cross to forgive me of my sins. I ask You to forgive me. I now accept Your gift of eternal life. Thank You for Your love, forgiveness, and a new life in Jesus Christ. From this day forward, I choose to follow You. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Share your decision to follow Jesus with a pastor or those in your Bible study group. Get involved in a church that will help you grow in faith. Be baptized as an expression of your faith.

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ON THE COVER

For the past 15 years, Community Bible Baptist Church (CBBC) has been utilizing *YOU* as a valuable resource during our Sunday morning Christian Growth Hour, ever since its introduction to us at the renowned Black Church Leadership and Family Conference.

Pastor David L. Brown, Jr. is a dynamic and visionary leader who has dedicated his life to serving the spiritual needs of the congregation at CBBC. His commitment to biblical teaching, coupled with his compassionate nature, has fostered a vibrant and inclusive community within CBBC.

First Lady Creshell Brown is an influential figure within the CBBC family. First Lady Brown's compassionate heart and nurturing spirit extend beyond the walls of the church, as she actively engages in various outreach initiatives, ensuring that the love of Christ is shared with those in need. Under the dynamic leadership of Pastor David L. Brown, Jr. and the unwavering support of First Lady Creshell Brown, CBBC has experienced tremendous growth and impact within the Baton Rouge community. Their commitment to fostering spiritual growth, cultivating a spirit of unity, and addressing the holistic needs of the congregation has made CBBC a beacon of hope and transformation.



SUMMER 2024 +++ V o L . X V I N o . I V

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EDITORIAL

MARK CROSTON

We live life in community alongside others. Some of my running buddies over the years include John in elementary school; Stan in high school; Duane in college; Art at my first career job; Ken, Mike and Tony in seminary; Phil and Chris at church. I'm sure for you, like me, we have all had some great times and awesome achievements. Yet at times commitments are not always kept and we experience disappointment. It's part of what makes life meaningful, enjoyable, fulfilling, surprising, challenging and exciting.

This issue of the YOU Bible Study will dig into some helpful issues for relationships and our confidence. We will be studying *More Than a Sidekick: Serving Alongside Others* and *Promises We Can Count On*, with a special focus study on *Praying for Our Nation*. In addition to these studies, get extra insights and teaching tips from our **YOU Blog** at you.lifeway.com and listen to our Lifeway YOU Podcast on your favorite podcast app.

The **Black Church Leadership and Family Conference** is right around the corner. This is the one conference where you don't have to leave your family at home. There is a full program for every member of the family and all your church leaders! Join us for this all-in-one, equipping and energizing week, **July 22 through the 26, 2024**. I'm sure this year will be just the time of relaxation, refreshment, and revival we need.

Learn more at lifeway.com/blackchurchconference.

Thanks for joining me as we dig into this study. Now grab your Bible because you never know how God will speak through YOU!

Be Blessed!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dr. Mark A. Croston, Sr.

YOU General Editor

National Director of Black Church Ministries

lifeway.com/BlackChurchLife

GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOU

YOU is a three-in-one learner and leader resource with inspirational and educational features to enhance Bible study that leads to spiritual maturity and life change. Here is information to help you get the most out of *YOU*.

LEARNER PAGES

The first half of *YOU* includes pages for personal study. These should be read by the learner and leader prior to group time. Included in each session:

Memory Verses encourage filling the mind with the Word of God to strengthen every aspect of spiritual life.

Keywords identify and define words or phrases to add clarity to the biblical text.

Digging Deeper provides a deeper look at a word, character, or other aspect from the session.

Did You Know? provides biblical truths and information to equip learners to boldly defend the truths of God's Word.

Live It sums up the session and offers applications points to challenge daily living.

DAILY READINGS

Included with each session are five devotionals to be read by the learner and leader. The benefits of a daily devotion are innumerable. Their primary purpose in this resource is to focus attention on the biblical content of each session for application of and conformity to the Word of God.

LEADER PAGES

The second half of *YOU* includes pages to guide the teaching of each session. Leaders can use the leader pages to guide learners through the passage and its key emphases as detailed on the learner pages. Here are suggestions on how to teach:

- Prior to the session, read and study the Bible passage, keywords, and learner pages.
- Plan teaching using the leader pages. Keep in mind that because of time, it may not be possible to use every teaching suggestion. Also the teaching suggestions are in sequential order for easy use.
- Features to use when teaching include: The Point, which is readily recognizable on the learner and leader pages; The Question at the top of the first page of each learner session; Keywords on the Scripture pages; "Digging Deeper"; "Did You Know?"; Pack Items* (see next page); "Object Lessons"; and Commentary at the end of each session on leader pages.
- Refine your teaching plans when necessary.

Get more teaching help at you.lifeway.com or scan the QR code.

PRAY

Because the Holy Spirit is the guide for your study, invite Him to show you how to "rightly divide the word of truth" as you teach your group. Read the Bible passage several times, asking the Holy Spirit to show you its meaning and application.



FOR THOSE WHO WANT TO GO DEEPER



The **Advanced Bible Study** is written for group members who desire more extensive commentary. It includes exposition of each session's Scripture passage, an examination of keywords, an introduction to the setting of the passage and biblical life and times, questions to guide the study, and interactive responses to help readers apply God's truths to their lives today.



The **Herschel Hobbs Commentary** is designed specifically for leaders and provides a comprehensive exposition of each session's Scripture passage. Specific attention is called to items in the biblical text that readers would miss without a commentary. This commentary is based on the King James Version but interacts with all major English translations.



The **YOU Leader Pack** is a collection of teaching aids designed to help leaders provide a visual and interactive experience for learners. Each pack contains posters, charts, maps, and handouts that can add another layer to teaching and engender needed variety that makes learning more interesting.

The **YOU Leader Pack** is located at lifeway.com/YOU



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YOU DISCIPLESHIP PLAN

The Pathway of Discipleship

Growing in Christ is a journey—a lifelong journey—but what does that look like? Lifeway’s research reveals eight markers consistently present in the lives of believers who are growing spiritually. Each year, *Bible Studies for Life* engages all eight of these areas. Following this intentional plan for discipleship ensures progress on the pathway to becoming more like Christ.

Visit BibleStudiesforLife.com for a fuller picture of this discipleship plan through 2024.

8 SIGNPOSTS	Fall 2023	Winter 2023-24	Spring 24	Summer 2024
Live Unashamed	Staying True in a World Far from God			
Share Christ	Confident in the Face of Hard Questions			
Seek God		A Name Like No Other		
Exercise Faith		Owning a Faith That Matters		
Obey God and Deny Self			It's All About Jesus	
Serve God and Others			Being an Authentic Church	
Engage with Scripture				Promises We Can Count On
Build Relationships				More Than a Sidekick: Serving Alongside Others

STUDY 1

PROMISES WE CAN COUNT ON

INTRODUCTION

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Engage with Scripture.

As we walk through the six covenants God established, we can simultaneously see God's ongoing relationship with us and the common thread that runs through the Bible of God's plan for us.

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A STUDY ABOUT THE PROMISES OF GOD

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Throughout our lifetime we will likely experience broken promises from parents, family, friends, employers, politicians, and within intimate relationships. Fess up. Along the way, we all have likely broken a promise or two ourselves, whether intentional or not. In the process, we let someone down. The truth is, there is One who does keep promises. Through this study, we will see that God makes and keeps His promises. He established covenants in various ways with His people. God's covenants date back to the beginning of time as noted in the book of Genesis. They impact all of us even today through the promise and fulfillment of the "New Covenant" through Jesus Christ.

God not only makes and keeps the promises to His creation that extend generation to generation, but in His faithfulness, He desires a personal relationship with each of us.

Biblical characters such as Adam and Eve, Noah, Moses, Abraham and Sarah, David, Jeremiah, and yes—Jesus—all have something in common. Spoiler alert: they all have a covenant relationship with God. Throughout this study, dare to lay aside any preconceptions about promises. Remember, "God is not a man, that he might lie, or a son of man, that he might change his mind" (Num. 23:19). "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, (*which are often questionable and unreliable*) and your ways are not my ways" (Isa. 55:8, *emphasis added*).

As we walk through the six covenants God established, we can simultaneously see God's ongoing relationship with us and the common thread that runs through the Bible of His plan for us. Throughout Scripture, God promises fruitfulness, preservation, blessing, and the establishment of a Holy Nation, a King, and a New Covenant. God's promises stand.

SESSION 1

GOD'S PROMISE OF FRUITFULNESS

Leader Pages on pp. 102-105

THE POINT:
GOD CALLED
HUMANITY TO RULE
OVER HIS CREATION.

GENESIS 1:26-30, 2:16-17, 3:16-19

MEMORY VERSE

^{1:26} Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, the whole earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth."

²⁷ **So God created man in his own image; he created him in the image of God; he created them male and female.**

²⁸ God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it. Rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and every creature that crawls on the earth."

²⁹ God also said, "Look, I have given you every seed-bearing plant on the surface of the entire earth and every tree whose fruit contains seed. This will be food for you,

³⁰ for all the wildlife of the earth, for every bird of the sky, and for every creature that crawls on the earth—everything having the breath of life in it—I have given every green plant for food." And it was so.

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.....
^{2:16} And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree of the garden,

¹⁷ but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for on the day you eat from it, you will certainly die."

.....
^{3:16} He said to the woman: "I will intensify your labor pains; you will bear children with painful effort. Your desire will be for your husband, yet he will rule over you."

¹⁷ And he said to the man, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'Do not eat from it': The ground is cursed because of you. You will eat from it by means of painful labor all the days of your life.¹⁸ It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. ¹⁹ You will eat bread by the sweat of your brow until you return to the ground, since you were taken from it. For you are dust, and you will return to dust."

KEYWORDS

Let us . . . in . . . according to our (v. 26)—The doctrine of the triune nature of God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) is not explicitly developed in the Old Testament. However, aspects of the cooperation between the members of the Trinity in creation can be seen.

I have given you (v. 29)—God is the all-sufficient Provider. God blessed humanity with His image; He blessed them with purpose; and now He blessed them with provision.

All the days of your life (v. 17)—The damage done by sin would follow Adam for the rest of his life, and affect his descendants.

HOW DO WE LIVE IN GOD'S PROMISE OF FRUITFULNESS?

God created you on purpose for a purpose. Think for a few moments about the implications of that statement. What if life does have purpose? What if I have a purpose, a specific purpose? What if there truly is a God who has created me to fulfill His purpose, and if so, what is that purpose? People have responded to questions like these in various ways:

- "Life has no lasting purpose, so I'm just doing me."
- "I'm going to devote myself to a particular purpose to make the world a better place."
- "My purpose is my ministry. It is a calling from God, and I find joy in doing His will."

I once heard someone say, "Many people spend more time planning their vacations than they spend planning their lives." Indeed, some individuals arrive at the end of life disappointed they didn't live more purposeful lives. They regret missed opportunities.

In the book of Genesis, we read the biblical perspective on God's purpose for humanity. God created us in His image and gave us dominion over all the earth and everything in it. Although sin has marred God's image in us, His purpose for us remains. Oh, what a blessing it is that we can represent God and His purposes on Earth!

Enjoy and Steward His Creation

// Genesis 1:26-30

Genesis 1 describes how God created everything through His spoken word. He created the world from nothing—a concept theologians call creation *ex nihilo*. Everything exists because God determined it would (Rev. 4:11). The lyrics of *Awesome God* by Helen Baylor make this point, "When the sky was starless in the void of the night . . . He spoke into the darkness and created the light." God created the world, and God sustains the world (Col. 1:16). Our God is indeed an awesome God!

The first twenty-five verses of Genesis describe the unfolding of God's creative plan:

- Light and darkness (vv. 3-5)
- The sky (vv. 6-8)
- The seas, the dry land, and vegetation (vv. 9-13)
- The heavenly luminaries: sun, moon, and stars (vv. 14-19)
- Water creatures and birds (vv. 20-23)
- Land animals (vv. 24-25)



THE POINT: GOD CALLED HUMANITY TO RULE OVER HIS CREATION.

All creation was wonderful and good, but God wasn't finished yet. His highest creative purpose remained: the creation of humanity. Verse 26 begins, "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness.'" Some might wonder how we could possibly be made in God's image when He's so majestic and powerful and we're not! However, God has in fact made us in His image and that image includes four aspects:

- **Intellect.** God has created us as rational beings. We have minds that can reason and draw conclusions.
- **Emotion.** People are capable of emotional responses such as happiness, sorrow, anger, and more. So is God.
- **Volition.** God has created us with a will, and we are able to make choices and choose the paths we take.
- **Dominion.** The second half of verse 26 clarifies this point: "They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, the whole earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth."

As children of God, we are earthly representatives over His creation. As quoted from the Spider-Man franchise, "With great power comes great responsibility." We have been given this authority and are responsible for being good stewards. As God's image-bearers, we are to reflect His characteristics as we walk in our God-given authority managing those things that God has created and blessed us with.

WHAT ARE SOME ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS OF A GOOD STEWARD?

The text described how humanity was to have dominion over the rest of creation—fish, birds, livestock, everything. God had put everything in our care. God initially gave seed-bearing plants and fruit trees as food sources not only for people but for animals and birds. This arrangement allowed all creation to live in harmony.

Sin's entry into the world changed the relationship of humanity with the animal kingdom (Gen. 9:2-3). The animals now would fear people, and people were free to eat the animals as they chose. Even so, God provided stipulations on the preparation of that food (Gen. 9:4). This protocol again emphasized the people submitting to God's plan of stewardship. Meaning, we could not just live any old kind of way.

God valued all His creation and had expectations for us on how to conduct our lives and operate in His will. The prophet Isaiah pointed to God's coming kingdom as he announced a day when peace in nature again would prevail (Isa. 11:6-9; 65:25).



DIGGING DEEPER FASHIONED BY GOD

The creation of humanity is the crowning event of Genesis 1. In Genesis 2:7, the Hebrew verb translated as "formed" is used elsewhere in the Bible to describe the potter's profession (Jer. 18:4; Zech. 11:13); God acts as the divine potter, skillfully fashioning **man out of the dust from the ground**. But the Bible makes it clear that people are more than just material beings. It was only when God **breathed** into the man's **nostrils the breath of life** that Adam became alive.¹ God is Spirit (John 4:24); thus, when God breathed into him, Adam and all later humans became a mix of the physical and the spiritual. The Hebrew phrase translated as "living being" is used elsewhere in Genesis to describe other types of living beings (1:20, 24,30; 9:12,15-16). Nevertheless, humans are considered in a class by themselves since they alone are made in God's image.

What does it mean to you, knowing you are formed in the image of the Almighty God?

Listen to His Voice // Genesis 2:16-17

God expects obedience and loyalty. Sometimes Christians get confused over the concept of obedience because they have learned that they become Christians by grace through faith alone, apart from any works they do (Eph. 2:8-9). Salvation is a gift from God, and we can do nothing to earn it.

At the same time, God has created us to do good works (Eph. 2:10). Our obedience testifies to our relationship with Him and shows the world the life God calls us to live. We don't obey God to earn "kingdom points," we obey God because we love Him and want to please Him! Doing things God's way yields the best possible results in our lives.

God created man and placed him in a garden He had created—the garden of Eden, a delightful place with every kind of fruit tree. God gave man the task of tending the garden (Gen. 2:8,15). Work provided Adam (the first man) the opportunity to steward a portion of God's creation.

Two other trees also stood in the garden—the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:9). God told Adam he was free to eat from any tree in the garden except for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If he ate of this tree, he would die. God gave Adam only this one prohibition; beyond that, he had freedom to manage God's Garden. After God created Eve as Adam's partner (Gen. 2:18-23), earth's first couple shared the responsibility of living by God's command together in the garden.

This one command—not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil—tested Adam and Eve's trust, obedience, and loyalty.

IN WHAT WAY DO OUR REACTIONS TO GOD'S RULES REVEAL OUR HEART TOWARD GOD?

Sometimes Christians believe salvation by grace means they are free to explore the limits of their liberty. Some excuse their behavior by saying, "I can go this far and still be a Christian," or "I'll ask forgiveness later." Such thinking misrepresents grace and is self-deception. Understand, grace sets us free to serve God, not to serve ourselves. The apostle Paul challenged the idea that since we're saved by grace through faith, it doesn't matter how much we sin (Rom. 6:1-2).



We have died with respect to our old way of life; why would we want to continue to live that way?

Indeed, our call to steward God's creation is not without limits. There is a familiar saying, "stay in your lane." In this case, however, we stay in God's lane. Our responsibility comes with God-established parameters, and we are free to manage within those parameters. But going outside those "lanes" brings sin and failure.

Keep His Commands //

Genesis 3:16-19

Sin is a serious matter. Many people rationalize their sin by saying, "I'm better than most people," or perhaps they excuse sin by claiming, "Everyone does that. It's no big deal." Some people even rank sin by saying, "I may do this, but I don't do that." What they may fail to realize or accept is that sin is sin, and it hinders our relationship with God and our ability to fully thrive as God intends.

When Adam and Eve sinned by disobeying God's command (Gen. 3:1-6), several things happened:

- They immediately felt shame (Gen. 3:7).
- They hid from God (Gen. 3:8-10).
- They blamed others for their sin (Gen. 3:12-13); Adam blamed Eve and God, and Eve blamed the serpent.

Adam and Eve's sin had serious consequences. First, however, God provided a word of hope and grace in Genesis 3:15. One day, the seed of the woman would crush the serpent's head. Many

THE POINT: GOD CALLED HUMANITY TO RULE OVER HIS CREATION.

scholars see God's words as predicting the coming of Jesus. By His death and resurrection, Jesus would strike the serpent's head—that is, He would destroy Satan and his evil works once and for all.

God's plan for us to serve as stewards over His creation has not changed. However, our ability to fulfill that plan is more difficult due to sin.

Another way sin made stewarding God's creation more difficult related to the earth itself. Sin brought a curse on the ground, which would produce thorns and thistles alongside the nourishing plants being cultivated. Humanity would have to work harder for its food. If we look at the state of our world, we see land that is not producing crops and nations where the people are starving. The effects of sin in the Garden of Eden are still impacting us collectively today. The Hebrew word for "ground" (v. 19) is *adamah*, a play on words related to Adam's name. God created Adam from the ground (Gen. 2:7), and Adam would return one day to the ground in death.

Within the story of Adam and Eve, clearly there are lessons to be learned about how poor stewardship and disobedience led to sin and the consequences for humankind.

HOW HAVE YOU SEEN UNRESOLVED SIN IN THIS WORLD CAUSE TREMENDOUS PAIN FOR OTHERS?

DID YOU KNOW?

In Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s sermon *Man's Sin and God's grace*, he points out what he terms "the gone-wrongness of human nature." He writes, "There is something wrong with human nature, something basically and fundamentally wrong. A recognition of this fact stands as one of the basic assumptions of our Christian faith."² Dr. King references the fall of man starting with the disobedience of Adam to Judas selling out for a few silver coins. The sermon eloquently details our sin nature and the grace we can experience through Jesus Christ. Dr. King quotes *Amazing Grace* emphasizing how grace keeps us safe through the dangers of this world and will guide us to our eternal home in heaven. The grace of God is our covering. "Oh God, our gracious heavenly Father, help us to see the meaning of this grace, and help us to realize that in our sinful lives there is some hope, there is a way out through Thy powerful and ever-flowing grace."³

Biblical Truth: God's grace is sufficient to meet our every need.

How can you demonstrate a proper response to God's grace in the way you live?

LIVE IT

How can we be the fruitful stewards God called us to be?

Adam and Eve were given instructions by God but chose to do their own thing. Their story unfolds much like the plots on the reality shows and drama series on TV. The lies, deception, and the fall all because they failed to live in obedience to God's direction. As a result, sin entered in the world and is something that we still contend with today. Reflect on the differences between good and bad stewardship and the impact of sin. Then consider the following action steps:

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- **Exercise your God-given stewardship.** God gave us the responsibility to steward His creation. How does your life display that stewardship?
- **Demonstrate obedience and loyalty to God.** How does your level of obedience demonstrate your loyalty to God? Identify an area of your life where you need God's help to be more faithful.
- **Repent of sin in your life.** Ask God to reveal any sin in your life. Confess the sin(s) and ask for forgiveness. Do this regularly so that your relationship with God is not hindered.

DAILY READINGS

1. THE ULTIMATE CREATOR // GENESIS 1:1

Humans create things. We make, build, and create daily. We even have a patent system to trademark original creations and reserve rights for a set time. Man's creativity can lead to a false sense of our rights and ownership of ideas and things. Genesis 1 reminds us that God is the original creator. We and everything in the world are His creation. Take a moment and list things you have created or own. Then, remember that God is the original creator of it all. Reflecting on God's creation keeps us from pride and leads us to worship the one true creator.

Remember that the most significant inventions and creations of man are nothing compared to God's creation.

2. LOOK BEFORE YOU FALL // GENESIS 1:29-30

In Genesis 1:29, God speaks to Adam and Eve and commands them to "look." He directs them to look at all that He has given to them. He points out His gifts of seed-bearing plants, trees, and wildlife. God did not give them a plot of land. He gave them "every seed-bearing plant on the surface of the entire earth." How can we choose sin when such great blessings from God surround us? Yet, many choose to live contrary to God's Word. Before we walk into sin, it would benefit us to remember God's words to Adam and Eve. We should look at everything around us that God created. Then, thank God for the general blessings given to mankind and the specific gifts God has placed in our lives.

May we stand in awe of God's creation and draw our hearts to him.

3. GIFTS WITH RESTRICTIONS // GENESIS 2:16-17

What would you think of someone who gave you a gift but then put restrictions on how you could use it? We operate from a general understanding that when someone gives us a gift, we are free to use it as we please. Ownership passes from the gift giver to the gift receiver. We don't expect restrictions on how we can use it. In Genesis 2:16-17 God names

the gift of freedom that he has given mankind. Before he tells man of His freedom, He begins the conversation with a command not to eat from the Tree of Knowledge. God's restrictions are not like ours. He gave them rules to serve as boundaries so they could truly enjoy their freedoms.

When we live within God's boundaries, we experience true freedom.

4. PRESERVATION COMES IN STRANGE WAYS // GENESIS 47:5-6

Have you ever refused to believe something you did not like? In Genesis 37, Joseph's brothers are angry at the idea that they would have to bow down to their brother and plot to get rid of him. Years later, Joseph's position in Egypt preserves Jacob, his sons, and their families. In Genesis 47, Pharaoh invites Joseph's family to have the best parts of the land. The family had no idea that God's plan to save them would require them to bow down to Joseph. The brothers were blinded by jealousy and sinned against their brother. Life will not always be fair. We must trust God's plan and refrain from taking things into our own hands.

Put away fear, anger, and pride to trust that God will keep you.

5. THE PLAN REMAINS THE SAME // GENESIS 9:1

Adam and Eve sin against God and lose the gift/privilege of living in the garden. While God removed them from the garden and issued consequences, He did not change His mind about the purpose of mankind. In Genesis 9:1, again, God tells man to be fruitful and multiply. Furthermore, He lists the gifts He has given man and provides a boundary. He tells them not to eat meat "with its lifeblood in it." After the flood, Noah and his family were starting over. God lets them know they are not starting over again alone. He is still with them and providing them. This is a great demonstration that God's plan for humanity remains true even after the penalty of sin.

God will not abandon us. When He forgives, He restores.