

Good Morning Church & Happy Mother's Day!! For those of you who do not know me, my name is Martin Gunter and I am one of the Pastors here at Southland Church and it's my privilege to be here this morning to celebrate our mothers, dedicate some beautiful kids to the Lord, and while I am up here, share with you what the Lord has placed on my heart the last couple of weeks...

Mother's Day

So, let's start this off right, lets celebrate all our moms! That includes Biological Mothers, Grand Mothers, Birth Moms, Foster Moms, Adoptive Moms, Single Moms, Widowed Moms, Bereaved Moms, and I am probably missing some yet, but we want to say we love you, and we thank YOU for all the sacrifices you made. I would also like to acknowledge the moms who are in waiting, those of you who are desperately praying and waiting on the Lord to share in the joy of being a mom, we want to honor you, and pray that day comes soon.

This last week as I was praying for you moms there was a theme that kept coming up for me, is all the things you do that no one notices! Yes, this includes cleaning the house, and nobody notices, or the meals that are made we take for granted, but what REALLY struck me and where I want to say thank you, IS for the battles that you fight in silence, and in secret. Mom's I kept sensing in my spirit that the Lord is pleased that you are fighting the good fight, even if no one can see it. That you are praying for your kids, that you are standing in the way and asking the Lord for wisdom on how to parent in this post-Christian era we live in. A verse that came to mind is out of **Revelations 21:4-5** *"He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away. He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!"* Mom's I cannot begin to fathom the weight you carry and the battles you fight, but I do know that God sees it, and I pray that He will continue to strengthen you in the storms. Whether those storms are the tantrums that you have dealt with, the sleepless nights you endured, first as we were babies and then later on as teenagers, now with hormones flaring up, and sleepless nights turning into nights fighting through anxiety! Thank you! Thank you for the tears you have wiped, and the tears that you have shed for us. We commend you, and my prayer is that it will not be only for today that you will receive this honor, but for the rest of the year as well!!!

So church, I am hijacking the corporate prayer this week, and we are going to pray for our moms!! For those of you not familiar with this, here at Southland we pray out loud, and we pray together, you do not have to, but as for the rest of us, let's pray for our moms, let's thank the Lord for them now all together!! **Lets Pray Together!**

Child Dedication

OK, parents, kids, you can come in!! And while they are walking in, another way we can honor our moms is to show them some beautiful babies right! Children truly are one of the best gifts God gives us this side of heaven, even if it does not always feel like it after a couple of nights of no sleep, because parenting is one of the hardest things we will ever do. We are living in an age where it is harder than ever to live for truth: bombarded by a world set against God. The enemy knows his time is short and is working very hard to steal our kids from His truth. More than ever before, we need God's help to protecting and raising our children. Child dedication is a wonderful moment we get to share here with parents as they dedicate their children to the Lord just as Samuel and Jesus was dedicated. This morning

I believe we have 34 couples dedicating in both the 9am and 11am service, so we are going to show you a picture of the kids and you will now hear from the families introducing themselves and their children...

Dedicating our children to the Lord acknowledges God's sovereignty over our children, as we humbly come before Him and acknowledge that we cannot do this with Jesus guiding us. **Deuteronomy 6:4-7** Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Parents, it is our responsibility to teach and equip our children. You are the primary disciplers of your children, you have the most impact into their lives and they will be looking up to you and start imitating what you are doing and saying. Remember, when these young ones are looking at us, its usually caught way more than its caught with them. Let me also encourage you, its never too soon to get them expose to the Word. Whether you are reading to them at bed time, or sharing from what God personally shared with you that day, include them in your journey as you are growing closer to Jesus! But do not worry, we as a church is here to help you if you need it and we will walk this amazing journey with you. Together we will be that light in a dark place!

Soon we will read the covenant together, this is not something that we should take lightly or simply do it as a check box to say, look I have dedicated my kids... This Covenant is a foundation on how we can build a healthy family. Its simple in its content, but will take a lifetime to master, its not about being perfect, but practicing these principles daily and reminding ourselves what is really at stake here as we are given but a window into these kids lives...

I would like to invite any believing parent here and online to join me, I encourage you to renew your commitment along with these parents here today...Lets stand and re-affirm our covenant!

Covenant: Being called by God to raise Godly children, and believing in the principle of Proverbs 22:6, I commit myself to God, this church and my family to do the following:

1. I will intentionally pursue a personal relationship with Jesus Christ:
 - by spending time in God's word
 - by spending time in prayer and listening prayer
 - by submitting to Jesus Christ as functional Lord of my life
2. I will intentionally model a Godly marriage to my children:
 - by being faithful to my spouse and them alone
 - by loving and caring for my spouse in thought, word and action
 - by being committed to my spouse until death parts us
3. I will intentionally engage my family with this church:
 - by attending church with my family regularly
 - by encouraging my family to participate in groups for fellowship & service
 - by encouraging my family to pray with others and be held accountable
4. I will intentionally protect my family:
 - by interceding for each of my family members in prayer
 - by guarding my home from any and all forms of evil
 - by fighting for sexual purity in my life and in my home

This is my promise because my child is a gift from God, and one He loves with all His heart. No matter what anyone else does—as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. **Lets Pray!**

Back to the Bible!

Last week Pastor Stefan continued his series on Confident Faith and more specifically Knowing God for Yourself! Today we will continue on what he started with going over the basics because of the post Christian society we now live in where we cannot take anything for granted anymore. In preparing for this message I really felt the burden as well of going back to the basics especially when it comes to like he said knowing God for ourselves and not just simply knowing about God and giving our YES's to Him!!

I want to start the message with a couple of questions...AND they are NOT trick questions... How many of you desire to have a deeper relationship with Jesus? OK, how many of you desire to grow in discernment? How many of you desire to grow in hearing God's voice more? How many of you desire to walk more in freedom from sin?? Well, then I would like to start with a passage today out of **Luke 6:46-49**: *This is Jesus speaking: 46 "So why do you keep calling me 'Lord, Lord!' when you don't do what I say? 47 I will show you what it's like when someone comes to me, listens to my teaching, and then follows it. 48 It is like a person building a house who digs deep and lays the foundation on solid rock. When the floodwaters rise and break against that house, it stands firm because it is well built. 49 But anyone who hears and doesn't obey is like a person who builds a house right on the ground, without a foundation. When the floods sweep down against that house, it will collapse into a heap of ruins."*

So this is a very famous passage, and what always struck me about this passage is the fact that both these guys saw a need, and had the ability and time to do something about it... They built a house, the only difference is that they built it on different foundations. Now, this is partly because building on the ground is a LOT easier, and will go a lot faster, and maybe this could have been the reason, OH got to get this done quickly, I need this done NOW, so lets build on the ground... BUT building on the rock will take longer, and its much harder work, because you are not simply building on top of the rock, you are digging a foundation in ROCK!!! Have anyone here ever done that?? WITHOUT POWERTOOLS?? Its nearly impossible, but when that foundation is laid, its not going to move right... So this comes down to the fundamentals, and what foundation we build on. Let me tell you a quick story about fundamentals... Sorry moms, it's a football story, I was trying to find one that is more motherly, but I could not find one, and if its of any value, I do not really care much for football or sports either, but the story is good!

Back in 1960, the Green Bay Packers lost their championship game! They choked and lost, so the follow year in 1961 their coach, **Vince Lombardi** came to the first practice session and he started it with this simple, but now famous statement... *"THIS IS A FOOTBALL"* I can only imagine these guys looking at him in confusion... See Coach Vince Lombardi realized that the team in the final game where trying all these fancy plays and strategies, but their fundamentals of the game was lacking. Not that they where a bad team, they made it to the play offs! That's WAY better than what the Jets are doing to my understanding! All these men needed was to get their "houses" off the ground and onto some rock. So the coach was standing there, explaining the game of football to a team of very qualified atheletes that has been doing it for most of their lives, and he taught them how to pass, tackle, and play the fundamentals well, and you know what happened. IN the next 7 years, they won 5 championships, 3 of them in a row!

So church, if I may steal some inspiration from this story: THIS IS A BIBLE! It's a collection of 66 books, written over 1500 years, by 40 authors. The bible was written in 2 main parts, the Old Testament, which was written mostly in Hebrew, with the exception of Ezra and Daniel that was written in Aramaic, and

the New Testament that was written in Greek. It is estimated that more than 2.5 billion copies have sold on paper and YouVersion reported that more than 500 million people downloaded it. The bible has influenced and shaped our world more than any other book, and it tells the Grand story of God's love for humanity. It's accurate, authoritative, inspired by the Holy Spirit and applicable to our everyday lives. AMEN! on our Website, if you look at our believes, you will see this there: *The Bible is God's unique revelation to all people. Under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit, human authors wrote it. As originally given, it is the infallible Word of God, and the supreme and final authority on all matters upon which it teaches. No other writings are vested with such divine authority.* **2 Timothy 3:16** *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,*

For most of you, this is nothing new! You know what the bible is, you probably own multiple versions of it, and you know what its suppose to do and what value it has for us right? But just like the story with the Packers, they knew what a football was, they made it to the Championship, and just like Luke 6 says about building your house, we need to ensure that we DIG DEEP into the fundamentals! Now I get it, most of you here in this building probably grew up with the bible, but maybe something happened:

- Maybe you never connected with it? It was written for the Jews, not us...
- Or maybe its simply too big, I mean where do you even start or too complicated?
- Or maybe you liked it, but man its confusing and you don't know what to do next...
- Or maybe you had a bad experience with a fellow believer that used the bible to hurt or belittle you.... AND if that happened to you, I am sorry!

My hope is to speak some truth to these questions, and come against some lies that the enemy has planted in our hearts to give excuse not to turn back to the bible every day.

In our society today, I think a lot of it can be related to the guy building his house on the ground. We want quick, we want it now, and we rarely take the time to invest or develop healthy fundamentals like bible reading, because we do not see the changes so instantly. **Recent studies from Barna** on the state of the bible has shown that 11% of Christians read their bible daily, and 13% read there bibles less than once a year and while 29% never even open their bibles outside church. These numbers should not surprise us, because I think we have gotten to place where we think, why do we need the bible?? This is no longer relevant to me today... But you know what, when they found the dead sea scrolls in 1947 and they compared them to our bibles today, they found that they are identical, nothing has changed, see God's Word is eternal and it has remained the same the last 2000 years, and it will remain unchanged forever! **Isaiah 40:8** - *The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.* Lets say its 2000 years from now, probably not, but I do not know, God knows, I will be gone, you will be gone, Southland Church and Steinbach will be gone, but the Word of the Lord will endure forever! I think where people get confused or not sure how to approach the Bible is because they either do not know how to do it OR they have tried, oh, that did not work, and simply gave up and walked away... Been there, tried that.... So what can we do about this... I think this can be a series in itself, but I will highlight 2 things this morning for you that can hopefully help you, abd the first is Method!

It comes down to Method! We all have a method on how we approach the bible. And what I mean with Method is that each on e of us have our methods, good or bad on how we approach parenting, or how we do dishes, or even how we have fun... *(Mother in Law Story with Gideon if there is time...)* Its no different when it comes to the Bible... Some of us prefer one translation above another, some of us read the bible in a year, and still we each have our method of approaching the bible. See even with

our unique approaches to the Bible, the important part is that we do not change or replace the Bible with something else, but we are totally allowed to change our methods of getting here. Let me give you one example... Some of us are visual learners, so reading works well, and we retain more and understand more by reading, so we read scripture naturally. My son is like this, we tried teaching the kid math... It did not go well, and then my BRILLIANT, AMAZINGLY BEAUTIFUL WIFE, that is so Intune with our kids, bought him a math book that he could read and would you know it, the kid does fractions now... But some of us get stuck on that and if you are an auditory learner like me, I will read, and remember nothing! I listen to books, and more recently realized then its OK to listen to the bible too. Let me explain, before the 1600's the most common way people could get into the Bible was by listening as a priest or monk would read it to them. Bibles where available before the 1600's but they where hand written and cost between \$10,000 to \$20,000 in todays currency. So in 1604 King James got 47 scholars and they started to translate the Bible to English so that it would be available to all the people, and not to mention, a lot more affordable, around \$200. But King James wanted the bible to sound good as they knew till that point the majority of people where still illiterate and would not be able to read. What a privilege we have today that the Bible is so readily available to us where we can both read it, and listen to it! Back in January during the prayer and fasting month, I felt God convicting me to redeem the small moments in my day by listening to His Word. So, I have this audio bible called "The Word of Promise" that I downloaded of Audible a long time ago, and when I drive, I will mostly listen to it, or when I am at home, I will turn it on, and I was amazed on how much scripture I got through and what all stood out to me. See and let me caveat this real quick, I still read my bible, and NO, driving to work and listening to my audio bible is not my devotional time! But as I was listening to the Bible and I was going through Genesis and the stories of Jacob and then Joseph, what always struck me when I read, because I only read a couple of chapters a time, would be the dreams that Joseph had, but this time, it was not that at all, it was how God redeemed him and his brothers and the whole family, and it really hit me, because less than an hour before I heard how Esau welcomed Jacob back!! God was redeeming the families, and I sat there almost in tears realizing again that God really cares about Family, and it turned into a moment of where I could thank Him for that because He cares about my Family! Now, just because I am an auditory learner, does not mean that I now go and say, oh well, no more reading for me... NO, **Luke 6:46-48: 46** *"So why do you keep calling me 'Lord, Lord!' when you don't do what I say? 47 I will show you what it's like when someone comes to me, listens to my teaching, and then follows it. 48 It is like a person building a house who digs deep and lays the foundation on solid rock...* I dig deep in my devotional times with the Lord! I will read, I will listen, I will do BOTH at the same time, I will write down and journal what the Lord has told me and I will change my methods so that I can dig deeper into my foundation with the Lord through His Word and then follow Him more closely!

We have many methods available to us, to give you another one from my life, and Ill be transparent with you here... I do not like the Psalms! I know, its in the Bible and I have to like it... But man, I have had a TOUGHT time getting through there... First off, I felt like I read one, the next 30 are the same and also I felt like it was written by an emotional person who could not decide from one moment to the next if they should be happy or sad... This was a problem for me, so I took it prayer, I listened to it, NOPE, I just fell asleep... So I did some research! Talked with Godly people, and I bought myself a Chronological Bible, which is this one. And what it does is it gives me some context for some of the Psalms written and why David was lamenting or rejoicing. When I realized that there was a reason for the Psalm, it changed my outlook on that, and I really enjoyed going through them and many other books of the bible like reading the Gospels together OR seeing that Jeremiah, Daniel and Ezekiel all lived during the same time!

Lets not get stuck in our methods!! If I can make another recommendation, if you are starting out do not start in Matthew, you'll get through it, move on to Mark, then Luke, and when you finally get to John, you have read it 3 times already and then people just give up. Maybe start in Matthew, and then go to Acts, you can always come back, OR if you are just starting out, try out the EASIANS! And NO, its not a new book of the bible, its just some of my favorite parts and they are easy to read, like Ephesians, Philippians, Corinthians, Galatians... EASIANS! OK.... But coming back to Method, there are many different methods and tools out there and SMORP is a popular one we use here at Southland. Church Renewal developed the Way and in there it will train you how to use SMORP as well as a bunch of other tools to help you in different Methods on how to Abide and read our bibles, but unfortunately I do not have the time to explain it fully today...

The second thing I want to bring up after our method, is how can we read the Bible, which again, there are many ways, but I am of the very STRONG belief that regardless of the method you use, we all need to do this one thing when we spend time in the word, whether its SMORP, listening, reading, writing, and if I can sum it all up in one word on how to read your bible, **its HUMBLY!** If you take one thing away from this message, I pray that it's this: Are you Humbly reading your bibles? So much of our misinterpretations, impatience, and lack of instant gratification flees when we choose to humble ourselves before His word. **James 4:6b** *"God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."* I am of the firm belief not only because I have seen it in many peoples lives, but I have witnessed it in my own life as well, that when I come with an agenda to scripture, to prove someone wrong, or when I have an idea to take a verse and dare I say twist it to fit my situation, and fully knowingly ignore other verse that I know speak against it, so I can justify my ego in it. But when we come and we choose to humble ourselves, and ask the Lord to examine our hearts, and we start to dig deep, to listen, and ask the Lord, what is your truth in this situation?

I'll share this story with you, and they will remain nameless. It's a couple that started to see me, and when they came in, it was a torrent of scriptures they threw out at me and each other on how they felt they should be treated, because that is what we Christians do right, we buy big bibles to through at one another so they can feel the weight of our ego's, I mean arguments, I mean, God's word... So if any of you have ever come into my office, **I have this sign up there that says** "I am not a counsellor, but we can go to Jesus together" Just trying to manage expectations, I don't have the smarts for that! So with the couple I ask the question I ask everyone: What's your personal devotional life like? Oh we read our bibles all the time, and the problem is my wife that is not living according to God's word in Ephesians 5 and Proverbs 31... OK!... So I encouraged them to spend time with Jesus.... humbly, and instead of coming with an agenda, let the Lord speak... Well that got dismissed... But after a couple of months I got a phone call from the husband and asked if he can come see me alone. I said sure, he came in, and when he sat down, he wept, and wept... I thought his wife left him... I asked, what's up, he said, how they reached their end, and one night he grabbed his bible, he was reading in Matthew 23 and this is what he read: **Matthew 23:13** *"But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut the kingdom of heaven in people's faces. For you neither enter yourselves nor allow those who would enter to go in.* He said, I am a hypocrite for holding my wife to a standard, I am not willing to go to, I was hiding behind God's word like a coward... I asked him what's next? He went on and he started going through scripture humbly, asking the Lord how he can love his wife and Fear Him, and he started to dig deep! He went to and applied Romans 12 to his life and their marriage started to transform!! So what does humbly reading scripture look like? Here is a couple for you:

1. **Humble Reading is quick to obey** - *Philippians 2:8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross!* Jesus humbled himself on the cross and obeyed! When we read something in God's perfect word, we know we can take this and go practice, or try to right. So when it says, go and forgive! Lets be quick and go forgive... I know this can be scary, but there are so many examples of scripture where we can just go and obey, like in 1 Cor 13 in the Love Chapter or Gal 5 with the Fruit of Spirit, etc. I have heard this, people say, I don't know what to obey... OK, Matthew 22:36-40 and Exodus 20...
2. **Humble Reading is complete dependence on God** - *Isaiah 66:2 But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.* This is where I might ruffle some feathers... Humble reading is not me listening to this Podcast, and reading this book by the new amazing author, OH, another podcast... Please hear me out, Podcast and books are not wrong, but do they take the place of God's Word in your life and now your dependence is on an author instead of THE AUTHOR!? Its God's Word first, this is the authority on what we base our faith on. Even here, when its me, especially me speaking here, if its not in scripture or I speak contrary to the Bible, please come talk to me! Everything that is said here is weighed against the word of God. AMEN!
3. **Humble reading is being teachable** - *Proverbs 13:10 Pride only breeds quarrels, but wisdom is found in those who take advice.* When you do not understand a verse, or something in here is very complicated, come and ASK! I will probably not know either, but we can go to Jesus together and find out, or we can look at commentaries together and figure it out, but the point is that we are teachable and not stuck the way we have always done it. But something else we can do is look at the part you are struggling with and compare it to the Bible as a whole, see how the Canonical story of the entire bible lines up with the issue you are having! **Proverbs Lady**
4. **Humble Reading is putting others' interests before yours** - *Philippians 2:3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.* Well, I just told you the couples story, but do not go through scripture trying to fix others, instead you can ask, Lord, how can this encourage someone, or even better....
5. **Humble Reading is checking on YOUR heart** - *Psalms 139:23-24 Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! ²⁴ And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!* The World will tell us, just follow your heart, do what is right by you, and its contrary to scripture as we know our hearts are most deceptive!! Humble reading is when we sit with our bibles and we confess... Lord, I am broken, help me, please direct me in your word today, show me where I can confess and grow closer to you.
6. **Humble Reading is leaving Margin to grow** – This is directly out of Pastor Stefan's message last weekend, so thank you for point 6 Pastor Stefan! Another danger we should we careful of is not us simply trying to get through the bible, but get the bible through us! Its not just sitting down and reading it and then do nothing, but to leave margin to grow!! You need margin to read the Word humbly! its not just about reading the Word. The Pharisees did that! The Devil knows what is written... Probably better than any one of us here.... BUT its about HUMBLY READING THE WORD. Again, looking at *Luke 6:47: I will show you what it's like when someone comes to me, listens to my teaching, and then follows it.* See when we squeeze the bible into our lives, we do not give Jesus a chance to speak, or to reveal His revelation to us. So many times I have heard people say, its OK, I listen to the bible and do my devotions while I drive, and this is my challenge to you! Great!! Listen to the Word, I do the same, but I make sure that I spend focused

time, leaving margin with God first, before I go out! Let me put it this way for you, when I spend quality time with my wife, its not when I am driving with her, we get to spend time together yes, but I spend quality time with her at home where I can give her my focused attention, getting the Word of the Lord through me, instead of me just simply trying to get through it and do nothing...

I want to start closing off with The Story of Hien Pham, he was an interpreter for some evangelists in Vietnam. After the Vietnam war, he was caught and put in prison because of his work and his Christian beliefs. He was not allowed to read English or have anything to do with anything coming out of the west, especially that Christianity that they have over there and he was given literature to read and to only read communist propoganda. The deal was that if you would simply confess that you are now a communist, then you can go and the conditions in the prisons where terrible, and with only the propoganda in front of him, he said it felt like his mind was being poisoned with lies and Hien Pham decided one day that tomorrow he is going to stop praying, and he is going to confess. Because he started to doubt, Lord, are you really real? Was what those Evangelists talked about really true, or are you just a part of my imagination.... The next day arrived and he was told that for today he is on latrine duty, which was the worst job in the prison because their toilets where in buckets and its his job to clean it out. As he was carrying the buckets to where he was going to clean the,, he saw a piece of paper in one of them, covered in excrement. But what caught his eye is that it was written in English, and he has not seen anything written in English in so long, he grabbed it, clean it off to the best he could and while the piece of paper was still wet he read the top of the torn page, he placed it in his pocket, and went to his room. That evening he carefully took it out, and on top it said Romans 8, and this is what he read:

Romans 8:31-39 ³¹ *What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?* ³² *He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?* ³³ *Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.* ³⁴ *Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.* ³⁵ *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?* ³⁶ *As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered."* ³⁷ *No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.* ³⁸ *For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers,* ³⁹ *nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

As he read, he said he wept, and wept like a child, and he prayed, Lord, you are Faithful, I will not stop praying, and I will not renounce you. The next day Hien Pham asked to be on latrine duty again, and they put him on it, and sure enough, he found Romans 9 that day. See the jailers where using the confiscated English literature as toilet paper and Hien Pham would take them, wash them, and do his devotions every night! AS time passed, he was let out of prison and him and a bunch of other prisoners where planning to escape the country in a boat they secretly made, and as they where on the brink of doing so, 4 Vietcong guards came and asked him, are you planning to escape, we heard some rumors about it. And Hien Pham responded with NO, we are not trying to escape, the guard asked him a second time, are you lying, and he said no, I am telling you the truth we are not trying to escape, because he was afraid to go back to prison. So the guard left, and Hien Pham fell on his knees saying, Lord, I am sorry, what have I done again, here I am, trying to take life into my own hands again... So he prayed, Lord, if you can please send that guard back to me again, I will tell him the truth! The next morning, moments before their

departure, the 4 guards came back, and threatened him again and he responded, yes, it's the truth, we are trying to escape... The guards asked, can we come with you? So they fled together a storm hit them on the sea and if it was not for the experience of the 4 Vietcong guards, the ship would have gone down with them.

Church, why do we humbly read the bible everyday? Even someone like Hien Pham when the bible was taken away from him, it only took some time before the enemy started to poison his mind, but when he got it back, in pieces, it renewed him, it built his strength and sustained him! And this is not just for him, but for all of us, the Word it is a lamp for my feet as I walk through this dark world, it lights my path as Psalm 119 says. It teaches us to discern, and inclines our ears to hear His voice, it empowers us through the storms because our eyes are fixed on Him. **Luke 6:47-48:** *I will show you what it's like when someone comes to me, listens to my teaching, and then follows it. It is like a person building a house who digs deep and lays the foundation on solid rock. When the floodwaters rise and break against that house, it stands firm because it is well built.*

My challenge to you all as we move into the summer season is to dig deep in the Word of God! Whether you are going to start listening to it more, reading more, doing BOTH more, but come HUMBLY before the Lord and study His word. Not because you HAVE to, but so you do not miss an opportunity for the Lord to speak to you through His word! So I want to pray for you and ask the Lord to lay on your heart where do you start? Are you going to start in the EASINS, is it Genesis? Maybe you already have a plan, awesome! Does God want to change your method perhaps? If you have questions, please, come talk to me or another staff member here, or to your cell leader, we can do this together! What is your next step, I will pray for you and give the Lord a moment to speak to you... **PRAY**

Thank you for joining us this morning, if you need any prayer, you can go for after service prayer or email us at prayer@mysouthland.com and if you need a helping hand, please contact us at care@mysouthland.com. God Bless....