LET JESUS DISCIPLE YOU

Let Jesus Disciple You “Living By the Book”

Becoming a People Passionate about the Word of God

SPEAKER	LaNette Lathem
DATE	Sunday, October 25, 2026
PASSAGES	2 Timothy 3:14-17; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Luke 24:44-45; Luke 4:16-21; 2 Peter 3:14-16; Isaiah 55:10-11; Hebrews 4:12-13
MESSAGE	Begins at 1:07:00 in the service

THE BIG IDEA

Jesus knew the Scriptures, lived by them, taught them and came to fulfill them. If we are genuinely letting him disciple us, we will be people of the word too. Not on a prescribed schedule or a required program — but deliberately, for life.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- When Jesus said “the Scriptures,” he meant the Tanakh — Torah, Prophets and Writings — and he named all three categories, not just the law. He reaches back to them at least twenty-five times in the Gospels.
- He knew the text well enough to catch Satan twisting it, and well enough to find the right place in the Isaiah scroll and read it aloud as his own job description.
- Peter already called Paul’s letters Scripture, and in the same breath warned that unstable people distort them. Having the book has never been the same thing as handling it rightly.
- All Scripture is *theopneustos* — God-breathed — and it is useful in four distinct ways: teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness.

- The point of all four is equipment, not information. Verse 17 aims at being capable for the good works God has already prepared.
- God's word works even through mixed motives. LaNette studied Joshua, Judges and Ruth to win a competition, and God is still using that study in her life today.
- There is no single right method. The mix of devotional reading, memorization and systematic study shifts with the season of life; the real danger is formulaic legalism.

▶ 1:07:00

LaNette Lathem described her assignment plainly: to share her passion that we be people of the word, to challenge the room to be faithful in spending time with Jesus in the Scriptures, and to hand out a few tools for the things that trip us up along the way. She is, by her own description, both an academic and a creative — someone who loves research and deep study — and she was quick to add that not everyone is wired that way. "Try raising ten children or even just being married and you'll very definitely see that's true."

▶ 1:10:55

She had the congregation read aloud a passage Jesus and his contemporaries would have known in their bones:

> "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. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates."
>
> DEUTERONOMY 6:4–9 ↗ (NIV)

Then she put the same text back on the screen reformatted — indented, columned, colored — and left it there a moment without explaining. She would come back to it.

What Jesus meant by "the Scriptures"

▶ 1:12:41

> "Now He said to them, 'These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.' Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures."
>
> LUKE 24:44–45 ↗ (NASB 1995)

Law, Prophets, Psalms — all three named. A few verses earlier, on the Emmaus road, he had done the same thing in practice, beginning with Moses and all the prophets and explaining to Cleopas and another follower the things concerning himself in all the Scriptures. That is the Tanakh — a Hebrew acronym for *Torah* (instruction), *Nevi'im* (the prophets) and *Ketuvim* (the writings). Our Old Testament holds the same content, organized differently. LaNette pointed the room to the BibleProject's poster and video on it as a visual aid that has been very helpful to her.

▶ 1:15:58

Knowing it was not an academic accomplishment for him. In the wilderness he knew the text well enough to recognize when Satan was twisting it. In the synagogue at Nazareth he knew exactly where in the scroll to look:

> "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord." … And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."
>
> LUKE 4:16–21 ↗ (NASB 1995)

He found the place, read the portion, handed back the scroll and sat down. That happens, by LaNette's count, at least twenty-five times across the Gospels — Jesus reaching back into the Tanakh or speaking of fulfilling it. The conclusion she drew is the hinge of the whole message: if he placed that kind of priority on knowing and living out Scripture, and we are letting him teach us how to live, so must we. "This isn't to earn brownie points. Rather, it's to participate cooperatively as citizens of the kingdom of God."

The letters were Scripture while the ink was still wet

▶ 1:18:00

The New Testament gives us history, letters and prophecy — and at least some of its writers already knew what they were handling. Peter refers to "our dear brother Paul" and then says his letters contain things hard to understand, "which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other

Scriptures, to their own destruction.” Paul’s letters, called Scripture, with a warning about mishandling attached.

And the content of what the apostles preached matches what Jesus opened to them: the Christ would suffer and rise on the third day, and repentance for forgiveness would be proclaimed to all nation — the same content Paul summarizes in 1 Corinthians 15:3–4, “according to the Scriptures,” a passage Matt had pointed to two weeks earlier.

Continue in what you have learned

▶ 1:21:14

Paul’s second letter to Timothy sets up the central text. Timothy learned his faith from his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice; Paul charges him to teach others and to correctly handle the word of truth. Faith received, stewarded, passed on.

> “You, however, must continue in the things you have learned and are confident about. You know who taught you and how from infancy you have known the holy writings, which are able to give you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. Every scripture is inspired by God and useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the person dedicated to God may be capable and equipped for every good work.”
>
> 2 TIMOTHY 3:14–17 ↗ (NET)

Rather than put a block of text on the screen, LaNette showed the passage laid out the way she learned to diagram Scripture as a college freshman — indentations, columns, parallels. Verse numbers, she noted, were added later as an index and are sometimes arbitrary. *Must continue* is a command. What we continue in is what we have learned and are confident about.

A grandmother, a Bible Bowl, and a word that does not return empty

▶ 1:23:08

Here she stopped to say why this is personal. Like Timothy, she has a grandmother in her story: her paternal grandmother. Her first memory — she was not yet three — is of being rocked while that grandmother sang “Jesus Loves Me” and read to her from a children’s Bible. That grandmother set her to memorizing the Lord’s Prayer, the Apostles’ Creed and the order of the books of the Bible, which she did, she admits, to make her grandmother happy. Breakfast at her grandparents’ house always included a short reading from Scripture and a daily devotional guide. Then a surprise blessing: just last

week she discovered that she also has her maternal grandmother’s Bible in her possession, further evidence of a legacy of faith.

Then pastors who taught her to use a concordance. A pastor’s Lenten challenge in middle school; when the denomination moved him to another church, her family found they were hungry enough for the word to change churches. And in high school, Bible Bowl — intensive study of set portions of Scripture, then game-show quizzing at regional and national tournaments. “I was quite the competitor,” she said, “and I know that a big part of my motivation was to win or to perform well. And I did.” Her senior year was Joshua, Judges and Ruth; she could write out the boundaries of every tribe of Israel from memory. She brought it up not to brag but to make a point about God’s economy: the motives were not pure, and the word went deep anyway.

> “As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.”
>
> ISAIAH 55:10–11 ↗ (NIV)

The people she described — a college InterVarsity leader still on campuses forty-plus years later, a pastor still memorizing and teaching Scripture past eighty, a 2018 class at Hope that Geno Hildebrandt taught on interpreting and teaching the Bible — have one thing in common. “They are people who do not just study the Bible, they live according to it.” They made mistakes. They would not all see eye to eye on every issue, in the world or even in the word. “I would absolutely describe them as living by the book, and I sincerely hope that the same can be said of me.”

God-breathed, and why the wording differs

▶ 1:31:00

The Greek behind “inspired by God” is *theopneustos* — *theos*, God, and *pneo*, to breathe or blow. God-breathed. “I absolutely love the poetic beauty of that,” LaNette said, and used it to open the question of translations. Teams render the same word differently for real reasons, and languages drift: a phrase that meant one thing to her grandparents may mean something else to her children, especially with figurative language, which Scripture uses constantly.

So one of the easiest and most accessible ways to go deeper is to read a passage in more than one translation — with one caution. Scholarly translations are usually the work of a group of scholars; paraphrases are often one person or a very small group. Paraphrases are not off limits, and will

sometimes stimulate thinking that drives you deeper, but read them with discernment against what the scholarly translations agree on. Her own go-to starting points are the NIV 1984 and the NASB 1995 — partly because they are what she first learned to study in, and their idioms still make sense to her brain.

Four uses, one purpose

▶ 1:34:50

Verse 16 lists four profits, and they are not synonyms. **Teaching** is giving instruction or knowledge. **Reproof** is exposing what is wrong. **Correction** is restoration to a right state. **Training in righteousness** is the nurture that produces good character, right actions, and a right understanding of God's grace. Her illustration came from the classroom: the teacher presents the lesson; the student tries it; "oh no, that's not quite right"; here is how we fix it; now do the practice problems.

▶ 1:36:29

Verse 17 is the point of all four. Not information — equipment, for the good works God has called us to. And the guide in it is a person:
"But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth." Different background, different giftings — "having a different background and different giftings means that you are able to bring something to the kingdom of God that I can't."

Making the time without making a law of it

▶ 1:37:37

LaNette was candid that regular time in the Bible is hard, and that she has walked through harder seasons. When her oldest were small it meant doing her study during the one nap they all took at once. Later, with a houseful, it meant a commitment not to glance at social media before she had been in the word. "The point was that I had to choose to make spending time in the word a priority."

What she would not do is prescribe a program, an hour or a duration. Her encouragement is a combination — devotional reading or meditation, memorization, and careful systematic study, both alone and with others — in a mix that will change across your life and will not look like hers. The pitfall to avoid by name: formulaic legalism.

Read it as the library it is

▶ 1:41:37

We hold one bound book, but it is a collection — law, prophets and writings; history, letters and prophecy. So genre matters. Poetry reads differently than prose. Parables are stories told to make a point. Letters were written by particular people to particular people about particular problems. Some prophecies warned about the consequences of present behavior; others foretold the distant future.

And context matters just as much. "People very often misunderstand what they've read or incorrectly justify a position because of pulling a verse out of context." The question to keep asking is how this fits the big picture — what she grew up hearing called the whole counsel of Scripture.

Take a step, then another

▶ 1:43:23

Reading the whole Bible, then reading it again, is a worthwhile goal — but a read-it-in-a-year plan may not fit the season you are in, and a slower pace is not a failure.
"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." A lamp shows the next step.

So: set the phone or the game controller down until you have spent even a little time in the word. Join a group study and use it as a springboard. Pick a reading plan and ask a friend to work it with you, meeting to compare what the Lord is teaching you both. Find an audio Bible for the drive or the workout. Or find a passage that grabs you, study it in depth and in context, and commit it to memory. Every one of those is something she has done. "What matters is that you're meeting with Jesus."

▶ 1:46:14

She closed by diagramming one more passage on the screen, and by offering — more than once, and plainly meaning it — to sit down with anyone who wants to learn how:

> "For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account."
>
> HEBREWS 4:12–13 ↗ (NIV 1984)

None of us will have all the right answers in this lifetime, and no amount of study will make every believer agree. That, she said, is all right. "The challenge that I put before you today is to be a lifelong learner. Let Jesus, through the Holy Spirit and the Scriptures, disciple you. Live by the book."

FOR FURTHER STUDY

SCRIPTURE IN THIS MESSAGE

- Deuteronomy 6:4–9 (NIV)
- Luke 24:44–45 (NASB 1995)
- Luke 24:25–27
- Luke 4:1–13
- Luke 4:16–21 (NASB 1995)
- 2 Peter 3:14–16
- Luke 24:45–47
- 1 Corinthians 15:3–4
- 2 Timothy 1:5
- 2 Timothy 2:1–2
- 2 Timothy 2:14–15
- 2 Timothy 3:14–17 (NET)
- Isaiah 55:10–11 (NIV)
- John 16:13 (NASB 1995)
- Psalm 119:105 (NASB 1995)
- Hebrews 4:12–13 (NIV 1984)

FOR YOUR HOPE GROUP

1. Jesus knew the scroll well enough to find the place and to catch it being twisted. What would that kind of familiarity cost you, and what do you think it would be worth?
2. LaNette named the people who taught her to handle Scripture. Who has done that for you, and who is currently learning it from watching you?
3. Of the four uses in 2 Timothy 3:16 — teaching, reproof, correction, training in righteousness — which one have you let Scripture do to you lately, and which one do you quietly avoid?
4. Where have you seen a verse pulled out of its context to justify something, and how would reading the surrounding chapter have changed it?
5. What is one step — a plan, a friend, an audio Bible, a passage to memorize — that actually fits the season you are in right now, and when this week will you take it?

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

LaNette Lathem was born and raised in Kansas City, Kansas, and met her husband Jerry in the Baltimore–Washington area; they have been married almost thirty-five years and have lived in Elgin for most of the last twenty-eight. She home educated for twenty-five of those years — six biological children plus four nieces and nephews who joined the household in early 2003. The Lathems have been part of Hope since 2005, where her service has centered on the study, teaching and memorization of Scripture, including Family Night, where she worked with the preschool and elementary kids, many of whom are now middle-schoolers or high-schoolers.

Watch the full message:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sXyDTr8Cj3Y&t=4020s

These notes summarise a message preached at Hope Chapel in Austin, Texas. They are a reader's aid, not a transcript — scripture references link to the full passage so you can read it in context.