



MILESTONES OF FAITH

by Shari Miller

HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE THE WORD “MILESTONE”? Name three specific milestones that you have experienced in your life.

During this Bible study, we will look at milestones in our Christian faith lives, and particularly at the Means of Grace. We will review the truth that our Lord is beside us and guides and directs us in His Word through every mile of this road of life. We will rejoice in our salvation through the perfect life, suffering, and death of our Savior Jesus. We will recognize the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives as He sanctifies and renews us in faith day-by-day ... or mile-by-mile!

Opening Prayer

Dear Lord, You have created us and given us talents and abilities. However, we know that we sin and do not use those talents and abilities to Your glory. Our sin separates us from You. Thank You for sending Jesus, the Word made flesh, to be our Savior from sin. We thank You for the Means of Grace that the Holy Spirit uses to renew, sustain, and sanctify us throughout this journey of life. By the power of the Spirit, make us bold to tell the Good News to those around us. Bless our study of Your Word. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

The Word of the Lord

Can you remember the first time you really heard the Word of God and knew it was for you? Since my dad was a pastor, I remember hearing the Word spoken in worship every Sunday. However, I probably was about 12 years old before I recall listening to that Word and really hearing what God was saying — to me — through its proclamation. I call that a milestone in my faith life. As I have grown in that Word through the years, I have also come to know the importance of the daily study of God's Word, not just on Sunday morning! Each step along the route of being in the Word has strengthened and bolstered my faith.

A children's anthem* uses phrases such as the following to define the Word of the Lord: “a lamp to my feet,” “a light to my path,” “the hope for the world,” and “forever will be giving life to me.” What do we know about God's Word from the following Bible passages?

Luke 24:27 _____

John 1:1–2, 14 _____

John 20:31 _____

2 Timothy 3:14–15 _____

2 Timothy 3:16–17 _____

2 Peter 1:21 _____

Read **Hebrews 4:12**. See also **Psalm 119:25**; **1 John 1:9**; and **John 17:17**. According to these passages, what does God's Word accomplish in us?

Read **Hebrews 4:14–16**. Discuss the following words and simplistic definitions. Do you agree? Why or why not?

Justice = getting what you deserve

Mercy = *not* getting what you deserve

Grace = getting what you *don't* deserve

Faith Talk

Share with a partner or small group what the phrase *the word of God is living and active* (**Hebrews 4:12a**) especially means to your daily life.

Holy Baptism

Do you know the date you were baptized? How could you celebrate that date as one of the most significant events (milestones) in your life? If you don't know the date, make sure to find out and then celebrate on that day!

The Bible tells us that Baptism ... now saves you (**1 Peter 3:21**). Who is at work in Holy Baptism? See **Titus 3:4-5**. _____

What are the life-long benefits of Holy Baptism?

Acts 2:38a and **22:16** _____

Romans 6:3-5 and **Colossians 1:13-14** _____

Mark 16:16 and **Titus 3:5-7** _____

The Sacrament of the Altar

A milestone of faith could certainly be the day when you, for the first time, partook of the Lord's Supper. Do you remember that day? How did you celebrate? Share if you do! _____

Read **1 Corinthians 11:23-25**. Who instituted the Sacrament of the Altar? When? _____

What are the life-long benefits of Holy Communion?

John 15:5 and **Matthew 26:26-29** _____

Romans 8:10 and **1 Peter 2:24** _____

1 Corinthians 11:26 and **1 Corinthians 10:16-17** _____

Our Heavenly Home

Paul writes in **Philippians 3:13b-14**: *But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.* As we daily use God's Word and Sacraments — the Means of Grace — throughout our lives, what is our ultimate goal ... toward what are we "straining"? _____

Read the word pictures of heaven given to us in **Revelation 21:1-6a** and **Revelation 22:1-5**. What feelings do these pictures invoke? _____

Faith Talk

If you were asked to draw a mental picture of heaven in your head, what would it look like? _____

Read **Colossians 3:12-17**. As we look forward to our final steps in life and our ultimate heavenly milestone, what advice does Paul give to us that might keep us from having our "heads only in the clouds"? _____

Make a list of the specific beneficial characteristics given in this Bible passage that might be used to walk this Christian road until we reach our heavenly goal. _____

Faith Walk

1. Praise God daily for His love and plan of salvation for us in Jesus Christ.
2. Rejoice in your Baptism and for the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.
3. Begin or continue a daily Bible reading plan.
4. Identify and encourage a fellow sister in Christ through the spoken word, cards, emails, and prayers.
5. **For further study:** Look at the life of the Apostle Paul (Saul) and identify the many milestones which marked his life. For starters, see **Acts 7:54-60; 8:1-3; 9:1-31; and 22:2-21**. See also **Romans 1:1; 2 Corinthians 11:21b-33; Galatians 1:11-18; Philippians 3:2-11; and Colossians 1:24-29**.

Closing Prayer

Leader: Your Word, O Lord, is a lamp to my feet

Group: And a light to my path.

Leader: Guide my steps on this road of life.

Group: Direct and lead me in Your Word.

Leader: Lord, remind me through Your Spirit that there is

Group: One hope, one faith, one baptism, and one Father of all.

Leader: Thank You for making all things new

Group: Because of our Savior Jesus Christ.

Leader: We pray in the name of our Alpha and Omega,

Group: The beginning and end! Amen.

[**Psalm 119:105; Ephesians 4:4-6; Revelation 21:5-6**]

Closing Hymn

Sing together: "May We Thy Precepts, Lord, Fulfill" (*LSB* #698; *LW* #389; *TLH* #412)

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