

# 2024-2025 One-Year Scope

BRIDGES TO ORTHODOXY



# CONTENT OVERVIEW

## July

*Biblical Study*  
Bondservant of Christ

## September

*Spiritual Growth*  
In One "Peace"

## November

*Spiritual Growth*  
The Secret

## December

*Orthodox Faith*  
The Spirit of Christmas Past, Present, & Future

## January

*Spiritual Growth*  
No Chill

## August

*Biblical Study*  
In God We Trust

## October

*Biblical Study*  
Ultimate Reset



## February

*Spiritual Growth*  
Judgment Call

## May

*Biblical Study*  
Perfect Timing

## March/April

*Biblical Study / Lent Prep*  
The Storyteller

## June

*Orthodox Faith*  
Defenders of the Faith

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### EXTRAS (Retreat and VBS / Summer Materials)

#### VBS / Summer Camp

*Orthodox Faith*  
Transformed Hearts  
*\*Pairs well with "Philo & the SuperHolies" (elementary)*

#### Teen Retreat / Parent Workshop

Wait to Date

#### Teen Retreat (Perfect for Lent)

By His Stripes

July 7 – July 28

# THE BONDSERVANT

A 4-Week Biblical Study on  
some important lessons from  
St. Paul's Letters / Epistles



## The Bondservant

Philippi, Corinth, Thessalonica, Ephesus, Colossae, Rome, Galatia - what do all these places have in common? St. Paul visited each one proclaiming the name of Jesus Christ. Many of these letters were sent with St. Paul sitting in a home prison in Rome, but all had an important message to the early churches. These messages included lessons pertaining to Spiritual Warfare, how to guard against sin, how to treat one another, remembering the power of our Lord God and Savior, among many others.

Among all his lessons is one common theme: the righteousness of God. St. Paul gladly forsook himself to become a bondservant of Christ. God willing, by the end of this month, our teens will see why and what that means.

*"For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men?  
For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ." Galatians 1:10*

August 4 - August 25

# IN GOD WE TRUST

A 4-Week Biblical Series on the  
Story of Joseph and his trust in  
God no matter what happened



We all have a desire to be important, for people to like us, and for our lives to matter. The truth is, though, when we put our trust in people, things, or even our own aspirations, we will be let down.

Joseph lived a life where he fully put his trust in God no matter what happened to him. Because of the trust Joseph placed in God, his life played out in a way no one could have imagined or planned. When bad things happen, we hope our teens remember to place their trust in God- Someone who will never let them down.

*"But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive." Genesis 50:30*

September 1 - September 29

## THE SECRET

A 5-Week Spiritual Growth Unit  
on Contentment



Who doesn't like a good code-breaker, problem solving, combination-lock puzzle? Sometimes when we read about Biblical principles such as "joy," "peace," and "contentment" - the concepts seem like mysteries. Ideas that are far out of reach for the "regular" person. But what if "the secret" to contentment St. Paul spoke about while sitting in a prison cell in Rome wasn't a secret after all? What if the mystery to maintaining joy in any and every situation did not require a code-breaker cipher?

In fact, the Bible teaches us happiness is fleeting, but contentment is a simple choice - a choice to love God and others no matter our circumstances. This month, we will unveil the "secret" of contentment by exploring its common thieves, such as comparing what we have with others, needing to be in control of everything, and our own insecurity/shame. This month, we unlock the mystery behind this simple Biblical principle.

*"I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want." Philippians 4:12b.*

October 6 - October 27

## THE ULTIMATE RESET

A 4-Week Biblical Study On  
Ruth and Naomi and their  
Ultimate Reset after Life  
Seemed Against them



Ups and downs are just a part of life, but when there seems to be more "downs" than ups, it is hard not to feel like life, and maybe even God, is against you. Ruth and Naomi suffered tragic loss during a time when being a widow essentially meant being destitute. Ruth was a foreigner who had married into a Jewish family, but when her Jewish husband and father-in-law had died, Naomi gave her an "out," instructing her to go back to her own land and marry another. Ruth refused to leave. In a world of self-serving ambition, it is very rare to find a heart like Ruth.

We will all have moments where we will feel sorry for ourselves, wallow in our misery, and struggle to see God's goodness in all the "downs" in our life. This month, though, we hope to challenge our teens to trust in God not just in the best of times, but also in the worst of times... *especially* in the worst of times because it is in those moments God is planning an ultimate reset.

*For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. Romans 8:15-17*

November 3 - November 24

## IN ONE “PEACE”

A 4-Week Spiritual Growth Series on Resolving Conflict with Friends and Family



No matter how happy and healthy your relationships are with your family and friends, conflict is a fact of life. When that happens, sometimes we forget that the relationship is more important than “winning” the argument or proving our point. Sometimes we focus on what makes us feel vindicated in the moment even if it tramples all over those we care about the most. In other words, “fighting fair” is not really a skill people tend to have naturally. Genuine encouragement generally gets thrown to the wayside because of envy, pride, jealousy.

The Bible has a lot to say about how we resolve conflicts, when they happen, with those we care about the most. This month we will explore some of the most important relationships in a teen’s life: their parents, their siblings, those put in authority over them, and close friends. Analyzing Biblical examples of such relationships, we will see that keeping the peace doesn’t mean we have no opinion or that we can never disagree - it simply means showing our care more for people than for opinions.

*“If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.” Romans 12:18*

December 1 - December 29

## THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS PAST, PRESENT, & FUTURE

A 5-Week Unit\* on Unlocking the Christmas Spirit

*\*One “Lesson” is a Christmas Party*



This Christmas season, our teen classrooms will be visited by the spirit of Christmas past, reminding our youth that Christ’s birth was a day when past prophecies were fulfilled; the spirit of Christmas present, reminding our youth that St. Nicholas is more than just the myth of Santa Claus; and the the spirit of Christmas future, reminding our youth that Christmas day was just the beginning of a promise of future salvation.

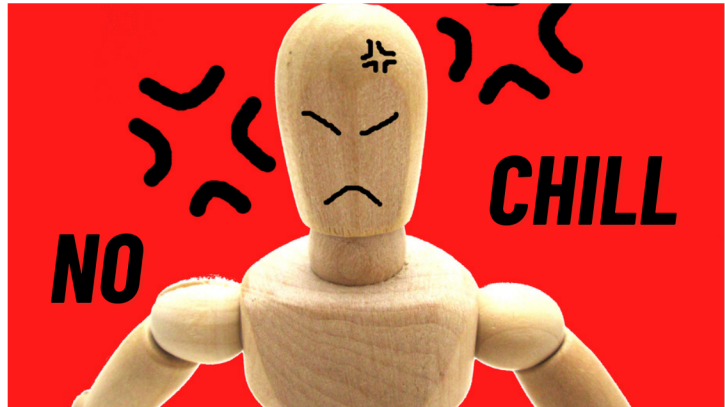
We will not forget the true Christmas spirit this year as we explore all the reasons for the season.

*“And His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6*

January 5 – January 26

## NO CHILL

A 4-Week Spiritual Growth  
Unit on Self-Control



Have you ever heard the expression “that guy has no chill”? It usually refers to someone who reacts quickly, saying and doing whatever first pops in their mind without any regard to the consequence. In other words, it looks like someone with no self-control.

In today’s social-media world, many times we forget that our comments and messages matter. Self-control requires plugging into a wise power source allowing us to filter our words and actions.

This month, we will explore that power source and other important wisdom found in the book of Proverbs, Biblical stories, and in the lives of our Orthodox saints.

*“A person without self-control is like a city whose walls are broken through” Proverbs 25:28*

February 2 - February 23

## JUDGMENT CALL

A 4-Week Spiritual Growth  
Unit on the Importance of  
Extending Grace over  
Condemnation



We know the old saying, “never judge a book by its cover,” but too often we do this with others. We cast judgment on someone based on his or her worst mistake, and sometimes, we judge ourselves equally as harsh - or maybe even harsher.

Jesus taught repeatedly against judging, and, instead, extending mercy and peace over conflict. We struggle with these concepts because, let’s face it, sometimes we want people to feel bad for things they’ve done wrong, we want them to “pay.” Whether it is judging others or judging ourselves, this month we will focus on some important lessons from Christ all focused on extending grace and forgiveness to others because we, in turn, are in desperate need of God’s grace and forgiveness.

*“Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.” Matthew 7:1-2*

March 2 – April 27

# THE STORYTELLER

A 2-Month\* Biblical Study of  
some of Jesus' Captivating  
Parables

*\*Excluding Palm Sunday & Pascha (April 13 & 20).  
Includes Holy Week Resources*



This Lent season, we will focus on powerful parables preached by Jesus. Whether teaching about the purpose of fasting, the Kingdom of Heaven, forgiveness, or God's great love for humankind, Jesus had a way with words.

This powerful Storyteller left us with an amazing blueprint on how to love God and love others. Month 1 includes a lesson on fasting, and Month 2 will include a week full of Holy Week resources to keep the teens engaged throughout the Pascha services.

*"To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but to those who are outside, all things come in parables, so that 'Seeing they may see and not perceive, and hearing they may hear and not understand; Lest they should turn, And their sins be forgiven them'" Mark 4: 11-12*

May 4 - May 25

# PERFECT TIMING

A 4-Week Biblical Study Unit  
on the Story of Esther and  
God's Perfect Timing



An orphaned girl raised by her uncle and told to keep her nationality a secret hardly seems like a hero. At the perfect time, however, that is exactly what she became.

This month we will explore the importance of remembering God's promises and deliverance. When we are in crisis, when we feel abandoned or lost, those are the perfect times to remember what God has done for us and what He will do for us again.

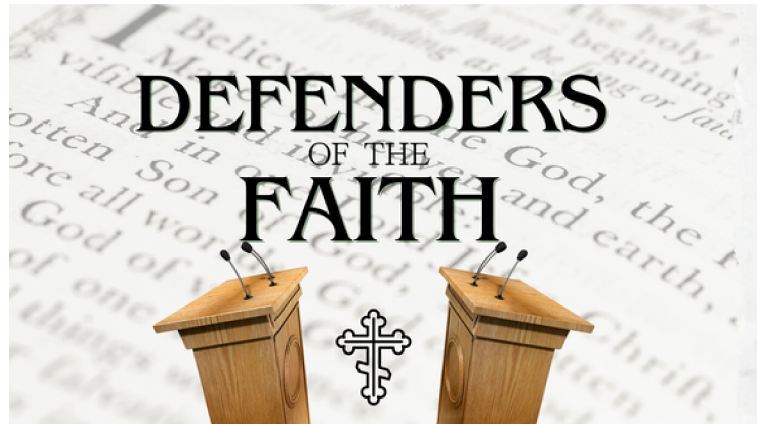
*"And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?" Esther 4:14b*

June 1 - June 29

# DEFENDERS OF THE FAITH

A 5-Week Unit\* Looking at the Ecumenical Councils and Church Fathers that Defended our Creed / Proclamation of Faith

*\*This unit has two versions to account for the different traditions: Coptic and Eastern Orthodox*



Memorizing our Creed is important, but only if we truly understand the words we are saying. Do we know what our proclamation of faith is and, more importantly, what it means? This month we will take a deep dive into the Ecumenical Councils that formed the Creed and the Early Church Fathers that defended our faith against heretical teachings.

We will broach hard to understand concepts such as the Holy Trinity, the dual nature of Christ, and the importance of our Holy Theotokos, Saint Mary. By the end of the month-long journey, our teens will hopefully understand and have confidence in the ancient roots of our Orthodox Faith as they proudly declare that faith in the Creed.

***"For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace." 1 Corinthians 14:33***

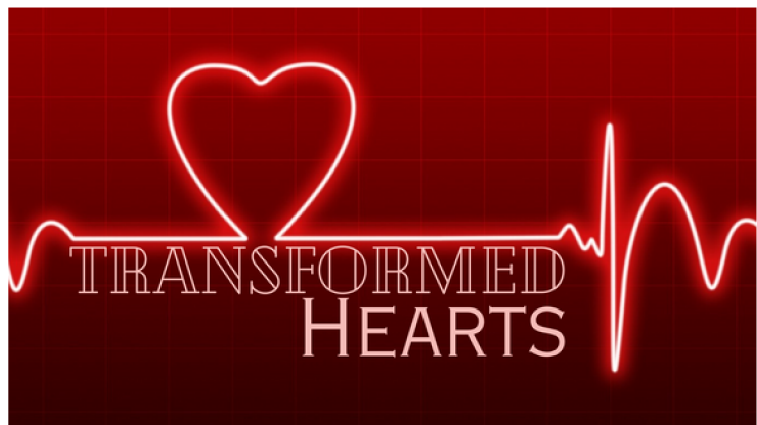
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EXTRAS - Summer Camp

# TRANSFORMED HEARTS

A One-Week (5 Days) VBS / Summer Camp series on the Fruit of the Spirit in the Lives of our Orthodox Saints\*

*\*This unit pairs well with "Philo and the SuperHolidays" VBS if you are looking to have a summer camp for all ages with matching themes*



The Holy Spirit is dwelling inside us from the moment of baptism. A spirit-filled life doesn't just change what we can do, it transforms who we are - inside. The fruit of the Spirit transforms us to be more like Jesus. A person who once held a grudge, finds himself kind and gentle with those who hurt him. A person who had a bad temper is somehow transformed into someone calm and patient.

This summer we will look at what totally true, real-life, spirit-filled lives look like by examining the lives of some of our Orthodox Saints, like St. George's peace and St. Moses the Strong's self-control. Through the examples of our Orthodox Saints, we hope our teens see the power of living a spirit filled life as we all strive to be more like Jesus.

***"But the Fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law." Galatians 5:22-23***



EXTRAS - Retreat Materials

## WAIT TO DATE

A Dating and Purity Retreat for  
Teens; and Dating and Purity  
Workshops for Parents

*This unit includes materials to host teen sessions & parent sessions so that parents can finish the conversation at home and create house rules that matter!*



One of the hardest subjects to broach with our teens is dating, purity, and the concept of "boundaries" before marriage. How old do I have to be to date? Why do the Church rules regarding "purity" seem so antiquated? I just want to do what I feel!

In fact, God is Love and we ought to listen to what the inventor has to say about His own invention. Using a three-tiered approach, teens will have a chance to have these difficult conversations with their **peers** through guided presentations and discussions; and churches will have a chance to equip their **parents** with live parent workshops and take-home materials to continue the **personal** conversations at home with their kids.

- The **Peer** Materials are perfect for a weekend retreat with the teens;
- The **Parent** Materials are designed for two church workshops to help parents continue the conversation at home;
- The **Personal** Materials are designed to facilitate that crucial follow-up conversation with parents and their teens, creating important house-rules that matter!

*"All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any." 1 Corinthians 6:12*

EXTRAS - Retreat Materials

## BY HIS STRIPES

A Retreat Focusing on Christ's  
Fulfillment of the Messianic  
Prophecies

*Perfect for a Lent-Time Retreat!*



When Jesus started His ministry, He wasn't exactly what people thought or expected of the Messiah. Those who knew scripture well, were expecting a royal king or a military soldier - someone they thought would overthrow the Roman Empire.

The prophecies, however, were talking about a different kind of King and a different kind of Kingdom - one that would last forever. How often do we let our limited brain interfere with seeing who God really is? This retreat we will focus on Christ's fulfillment of the Messianic Prophecies and what that means for our lives today, tomorrow, and forever.

*"But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed." Isaiah 53:5*