



# Introduction

Here at the Journey Church we exist to show Christ as incomparably glorious. In doing so, we want our people to have an unwavering submission to the authority of, and pursuit of God in the Scriptures. The spiritual discipline to stay diligent in reading and meditating on the Word of God is something most Christians struggle with. Satan uses the busyness of our schedules and our tired flesh to hinder us from having a consistent devotional life in the Word. These devotionals are meant to help those who struggle to figure out where and what they want to read. Instead of waking up in the morning and not knowing where to start, these devotionals can be a starting place. Instead of coming home from a long day of work weary and tired, take a few moments to allow these devotions to be the music to your soul, giving you the spirit to make Christ the center of your home life.

For the next few months, Monday through Friday, there will be a new devotion on scriptures all throughout the New Testament that Jesus proclaimed. In other words, every devotion over the next few months will be based off of the words of our Lord and Savior! The content for these devotions were written by godly leaders throughout our church who desire to see spiritual growth in our church.

We pray these devotionals are an aid to help you in your bible reading. We encourage you not to let these be your only means of pursuing God in the scriptures but an extra gift of grace to help you build your life on the Word of God.

# Day 1

## **Matthew 6:13-14**

“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you,”

In this section of the Lord’s prayer the spotlight is placed on our great helplessness and our great need for regeneration. Lest we think that we can master our condition on our own, the Lord teaches us to submit this battle against sin to the Father. And lest we think that mercy is for us alone, the Lord again shows that a tree produces fruit in keeping with its nature.

Where do you need to give the battle against sin to the LORD today?  
Where do you need to show the mercy that you’ve been shown today?

*- Written by Nick Judd*

# Day 2

## **Mark 3:33-35**

And he answered them, “Who are my mother and my brothers?” And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother.”

In this account we find Jesus in a house overflowing with the poor, sick, needy, and broken. The disciples long held misunderstanding of what their Messiah would be gets the best of them again. Their priority is to get Him out of such an improper, inconvenient place for the King of Israel. Little do they know, there’s nowhere else He would rather be. In His correction of their misconception, He grants value immeasurable to the poor, sick, needy, broken children of God...He grants this value to you.

Further reading: Romans 5:8, Psalm 34:18

*- Written by Nick Judd*

# Day 3

## **John 5:22-23**

“For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.”

Christ, God the Son, is the centerpiece of time and eternity. The Father has subjected all things to the Son. The Son is prophet, priest, and king to His people. Here we see the line in the sand. Apart from Jesus, there is no way to the Father. In a world that champions relativism and individualized spiritual experiences, Jesus stands alone as Lord and Judge. This may seem difficult but the same God who gives breath to the Christian likewise gives breath to the non-Christian and their rejection of Him will not be excused when He judges.

Further Reading: John 14:6, Acts 17:22-34

- *Written by Nick Judd*

# Day 4

## **John 8:51**

“Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death.”

We are time bound creatures who know not how to measure anything without applying the disappointment of finality to it. We’ve all heard the saying, “all good things must come to an end,” but Christ gives us victory by freeing us from this finality. In Christ, eternal life does not simply mean Heaven when we die, it means we will never die. We will lay these bodies down, but that is only a moving from an imperfect house to a perfect one. Believer, you are not short on time today. Thanks be to Christ, your days will have no end.

Further Reading: John 11:25, 1Corinthians 15:55-57

- *Written by Nick Judd*

# Day 5

## **Luke 19:10**

“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

The scandal of the Gospel is that it is only meant for the unworthy. Truly we are all unworthy, but not all can see it. When Christ calls a man, He calls a lost man to be found. He did not come for the well but the sick that His name might be praised for endless ages by those in whose hearts rang the cry, “wash me Savior, or I die,” and then, “amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me.” What a Savior! He seeks us, even while we are running headlong into our lostness.

Further Reading: Luke 18:9-14, 1Corinthians 1:22-28

*- Written by Nick Judd*

# Day 6

## **Luke 17:1-2**

“And he said to his disciples, “Temptations to sin are sure to come, but woe to the one through whom they come! It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were cast into the sea than that he should cause one of these little ones to sin.”

Such a stern warning is given here that we must be careful not to excuse ourselves from it. Many things will indeed come into the Christian’s life to try their faith, Christ has said so. However we must be careful that the trials, temptations and stumblings of God’s children never come by our hand. The extent that Christ cares about this can be seen in the graphic judgement He pronounces on the offender here. We are to intentionally and actively seek the strengthening of the faith of our brothers and sisters.

Further Reading: 2 Corinthians 13:10, Romans 14:12-23

*- Written by Nick Judd*

# Day 7

## Mark 10:21

“And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, “You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.”

There is a form of godliness that we must make every effort to root out of our hearts. Often hard to detect, this self-help Gospel is shown to us here. This man was a “good guy” who had been blessed with material blessings. Wanting to seal the deal, he approaches Jesus for His approval. Jesus, however, will not be added onto a man’s works any more than He will be added onto his good fortune. All Me or all nothing is the blow that Jesus strikes into the man’s heart and tragically the man leaves with the latter, though pockets full.

Further Reading: Matthew 22:37, Philippians 3:8-14

- *Written by Nick Judd*

# Day 8

## Luke 6:27

“But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you”

Christ reverses the curse. People created to bear the glorious image of God are reborn in Christ to display the beauty of God. The command Christ gives us here has little to do with creating a more coexistent society and much to do with being the image bearers He created us to be. Loving your enemies and blessing those who curse you is a reflection of the character of God on display through you. This then is a privilege for us, not a burden saints.

Further Reading: Matthew 5:45, 1John 5:2-4

- *Written by Nick Judd*

# Day 9

## **Revelation 22:7**

“And behold, I am coming soon. Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”

Our lives in Christ are lived in the constant tension of “already, not yet”. We have been saved and will be saved. We have been changed and will be changed. And here, Christ and His Kingdom have come and will come. We are to be a people marked by longing anticipation of the fulfillment of promises. We are to long for the day when all will be made right, all will be made new, when our faith shall be sight. That day, always imminent, when our wondrous King comes to us face to face. Come Lord Jesus!

Further Reading: Titus 2:11-14, 1John 3:2-3

*- Written by Nick Judd*

# Day 10

## **John 15:16**

You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.”

There is no disjunction in the words of Jesus here. The choosing, appointing, fruit bearing, and petitioning are all interconnected. These are the source and the marks of one abiding in Christ. Because of His choosing and appointing, we bear fruit. Because of our fruit bearing, our wills become progressively aligned with His, and those things which He desires for us become the very things we desire of Him.

What spiritual fruit have I seen God produce in my life? Is it enduring?

What spiritual fruit am I asking the Father for in Jesus name today?

Further reading: John 15, Galatians 5:22-26, Proverbs 15:29

*- Written by Nick Judd*

# Day 11

## **John 6:46-47**

“not that anyone has seen the Father except he who is from God; he has seen the Father. Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life.”

Who has seen God? Who will see God? Scripture tells us that only He who is from God (Jesus) has seen God. Jesus says to us that whoever believes has eternal life. So what is it to believe? Is it simply a one- time confession of faith or does it require more? To believe is to continue to believe and trust in Jesus. Through belief and relationship with Christ, we too shall see the Father and commune with him eternally. This is not of our own accord but that of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

*- Written by Walker Woods*

# Day 12

## **Matthew 10:19-20**

“When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour. For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.”

How often do you sit in silence when the opportunity arises to share the Gospel? For most of us, it occurs daily. How do we combat this? Scripture tells us to not be anxious about what we will say because the Holy Spirit will speak through us. However, this does not excuse us from arming ourselves with the Gospel. By learning God’s Word, we invite the Spirit to work through us as we grow closer to Christ. Then we can rely on the Spirit to move through us in sharing the grace and mercy of Christ.

*- Written by Walker Woods*

## Day 13

### **Matthew 4:10**

“you shall worship the Lord your God  
and him only shall you serve.”

When and why do spiritual attacks come? Our enemy is tactically sound in his process. Most spiritual attacks come at times of spiritual highs or the lowest of lows. These are the times that Satan seeks to extinguish a powerful enemy or deliver a fatal blow to a suffering believer. How do we protect ourselves from these attacks? In the same way Jesus set the example. When Satan tempts Jesus with the world he shields himself with God's Word and drives the enemy away. You too may be strong against attack by guarding and arming yourself with the Gospel and focusing on God rather than the circumstances of this world.

*- Written by Walker Woods*

## Day 14

### **Mark 6:7**

“And he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits.”

When Jesus sent his disciples, why did he send them in pairs rather than as individuals? After walking with Him, was each not equipped to minister on his own? This is but one example of how the Gospel is to be shared. We all need the guidance and support of other believers. We are called but we are not called alone. So be sent, but be sent with a community of believers. Are you walking alone or do you have the support of other believers? Do not be alienated but be a part of the body so that you will be encouraged and cared for as you share the good news of Jesus.

*- Written by Walker Woods*

# Day 15

## **Matthew 6:11-13**

“Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.”

For many believers prayer is difficult. We often feel inadequate in our words and many struggle to pray around others. Throughout scripture, Jesus teaches us through his example. Jesus compares this simple prayer to that of the Pharisees who often prayed long, articulate prayers for no reason other than impressing others with their knowledge. Prayer should not be difficult but it is necessary. What is our daily bread? The daily bread given from God is not only the food we consume which allows us to survive but also the strength and guidance that only He can provide as we become more and more like Christ.

*- Written by Walker Woods*

# Day 16

## **Mark 4:24-25**

“And he said to them, “Pay attention to what you hear: with the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and still more will be added to you. For to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.”

Those who are in Christ have been given ears to hear His word. Through scripture, the nature of God is revealed to us. This understanding is not immediately given, but through prayer and study of the Word we learn more each day about who God is and our faith is strengthened. For those who seek God, more understanding and faith is granted. To those who neglect time in the Word, less is revealed. How well do you know the true nature of God? Do you see Him rightly, and how are you to know without knowing the message that He has revealed?

*- Written by Walker Woods*

# Day 17

## **Luke 9:62**

“Jesus said to him, “No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.”

I will give my life to Jesus once I'm married. Once my debts are paid, I will be an obedient steward and give generously of my finances. So many times, we resist the commands of Jesus and compartmentalize the gospel. We want everything from Jesus but we only give what is left over or easy. We are willing to follow Jesus until it costs us something. How do you combat the urges to withhold your best from Jesus? Jesus makes it clear that the time to follow Him is now and that we should follow Him completely regardless of the cost. We must let go of earthly comfort and security and trust Jesus.

*- Written by Walker Woods*

# Day 18

## **Matthew 18:2-4**

“And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them and said, “Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”

Faith in Christ requires that we relinquish control, and humbly accept that it is Christ in us, and not our own power that not only saves us, but also provides for us daily. Much like a child trusts in his parents to lead and provide, so should we be with Jesus. How often, do you lean on your own power to resist sin only to find yourself painfully stumbling? How many times do you find yourself trying to do it all alone.? Our only righteousness is that of Christ in us, and it is only found through seeking deep relationship with Him.

*- Written by Walker Woods*

# Day 19

## **John 6:63**

“It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.”

Who will choose to follow God? Not one. We are incapable of choosing the things of God. Left to our own understanding, we will inevitably perish and spend eternity separated from God. With love, mercy, and compassion, God has sent His spirit to us through the power of the Gospel. The flesh, which is no help to us, cannot follow or choose God without the understanding and desire granted by the Holy Spirit. Even those who are in Christ must continue to pray and spend time with God through his Word. Where are you in your walk with Christ? Are you walking with Him or keeping him at a distance until you need him? We all need Christ. We need him every moment of every day.

*- Written by Walker Woods*

# Day 20

## **Luke 10:18-20**

“And he said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”

Who will mourn at the end of their days? All who are separated from God will mourn. They will be eternally separated from His presence. After seeing His glory all those devoid of Him will thirst for His presence forever. Scripture tells us that this will be more unbearable for those who heard the gospel but rejected Christ. Do you have a relationship with Christ or have you simply been near the kingdom keeping Christ at arm's length? For us in communion with Christ, we anticipate our glorious reunion and an eternity of walking with the Savior. As followers of Christ we must bring the kingdom near to those who have not seen, for it is through the Gospel that God speaks and saves.

*- Written by Walker Woods*

# Day 21

## Matthew 20:1-16

Do you think the early workers are rightly upset? Apply what you have learned about the landowner to God. We see two characteristics up front. He is faithful and He gives graciously. God doesn't show favoritism. Whether you are a new believer or you were saved at an early age, God loves us equally. And because of Jesus, we can approach the throne of grace. Anything the Father gives us is purely because He is generous, not because we deserve it. Do you appreciate provision more than the Provider? In what ways can you learn to be more humble?

*- Written by John Cantrell*

# Day 22

## Matthew 11:25-26

“At that time Jesus declared, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will.”

Jesus admires the way His Father operates. He humbles the arrogant, and gives wisdom to the least likely. Later in the book of Matthew, Jesus tells the disciples to become like children. What is so interesting about children is that they are passionate and get excited about little things we adults tend to ignore. Children aren't cynical. They are hopeful. Does your hope in God mirror that of a child? Do you get excited when you think of God's promises? Do you study the Father the way a child would?

*- Written by John Cantrell*

# Day 23

## **Matthew 7:22-23**

“On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’”

Paul Washer stated this in one of his sermons: “Sometimes Jesus Christ can become... a thing to be studied, instead of a person to be loved.” The best way to get to know someone is to spend time with them. God has revealed Himself to us through His Son. Scripture says that there will be many who know of God, but will be surprised when they are cast away from His presence because they don't KNOW God. So, how do we spend time with God? We read His word, we spend time in prayer, and we fellowship with other believers.

*- Written by John Cantrell*

# Day 24

## **John 9:39**

“Jesus said, “For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind.”

There are times I find myself wondering whether or not I would notice a certain thing happening had I not been saved. Scripture tells us that that when we turn to the Lord, the veil is removed (1 Corinthians 3:16). A veil is used to cover someone's face. Scripture tells us that Jesus removes that veil when we come to him. Now that we can see, we are a lot more aware of sin. Now, imagine seeing the world through Jesus' eyes. How has your life changed since Christ has restored your sight? Are you compassionate towards “the blind”?

*- Written by John Cantrell*

# Day 25

## **John 6:43**

“Jesus answered them, “Do not grumble among yourselves.”

Jesus came to perform the will of the Father. People get irritated because they want to come to Jesus on their terms, not His. If God knew that He was going to send His Son to save the world, don't you think He would do it in such a way that would yield the most fruit? Jesus mentions a few verses later that the bread He is offering is His flesh. Jesus offered Himself on the cross for us, and in so doing, He offered us life through His death. Do you savor the bread of life that Jesus offers?

*- Written by John Cantrell*

# Day 26

## **John 16:20**

“Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy.”

## **John 16:22-23**

“So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you.”

One of the most beautiful verses in scripture is John 16:23. Do you know why “you will not ask for anything in that day”? Because every need will be fulfilled. We ask things right now because we need them. Scripture shows us that Jesus is our need and we will rejoice when He returns and nobody will be able to take that joy from us. He tells us that we will have difficulties in this life, but the life to come is far better! This should change the way we think about this life and hope for the next!

*- Written by John Cantrell*

## Day 27

### Mark 13:22

“For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform signs and wonders, to lead astray, if possible, the elect.”

Jesus says that in the last days there will be false prophets who can perform signs and miracles and that we shouldn't trust them. We see that today don't we? People claim outlandish things, then we find that they are only trying to prey on naive people for a quick dollar. So what is something we can do to prepare ourselves against false prophets - the same people that will be deceptive enough to fool even the elect? Read the Bible! See if what they say matches what scripture says. You'll find that scripture tells us many times to avoid such people.

*- Written by John Cantrell*

## Day 28

### John 14:1-4

“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way to where I am going.”

The culture in Jesus' day was much different than ours. The groom would go to his father and tell him that he is engaged. The father would give the son some land and the son would build a home for his wife. Once the father decided that the place was suitable for his daughter-in-law, he would tell the son to go get his bride. During this time the bride had to constantly wait for her betrothed to come take her home. Jesus promises that He will return once He has prepared a place for His bride. We must wait for Him!

*- Written by John Cantrell*

## Day 29

### **Luke 6:22**

“Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man!”

We tend to get uncomfortable at verse 22. Jesus says that you are blessed when people hate you for His sake. Take some time and read the differences between the beatitudes and the wo's. Notice that those who are blessed are those who place their faith in Christ, and those who depend on material things will be in despair. I love what the CSB says in verse 23. “Take note - your reward is great in heaven.” If you have to, write it down and then rejoice. Know in your heart that your dependency on Christ is already awarded.

*- Written by John Cantrell*

## Day 30

### **Matthew 4:17**

“From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

My wife and I went to Cumberland Caverns a few years ago. Halfway through the cave they turned off all the lights. Total darkness. Then they turn on one light above and it lights up the whole area. Now think about the times in Jesus' day. It's been roughly 400 years since God has spoken to His people and they have slipped back into sin. Then comes God in human flesh. A great Light amidst darkness with a message, “Turn from evil, heaven is close.” Light reveals what darkness hides. And because of Jesus, we don't have to hide from God.

*- Written by John Cantrell*

# Day 31

## 2 Corinthians 12:7-9

“So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”

What is the thorn in your flesh? We all have them. Some thorns pierce deeper than others. Paul’s thorn is never identified by name but, just like ours, it was painful and at times debilitating. Whether he faced physical pain, mental anguish, or emotional turmoil, Paul learned to use it to humble himself and rely completely on God’s power and not his own. Do not be discouraged by the thorns you face in life but rather use them to grow deeper in your relationship with God. Allow your character to reflect God’s promise so that others will see Him, know Him, and trust Him too.

- *Written by Matt Espenshade*

# Day 32

## Luke 8:39

“Return home and tell how much God has done for you.” So the man went away and told all over town how much Jesus had done for him.”

Do you recognize God’s hand in changing your life? If so, are you emboldened to share your personal story with others? In today’s verse, Jesus has just miraculously healed a man possessed by thousands of demons! The man is so grateful he wants to come with Jesus but instead Jesus tell him to go tell others what God has done for him. We may see ourselves as much “cleaner” than this man, or a homeless person begging on the street, or an addict stealing to fuel his habit. The truth is, we are all equally “dirty.” Our salvation is no less miraculous than that of the demon possessed man. Be grateful for His gift and obey the command Jesus gives to courageously tell others what God has done for you.

- *Written by Matt Espenshade*

## Day 33

### Matthew 4:4

“Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”

Do you remember who Jesus answered here? He answered Satan during an attack when the enemy thought Jesus was tired, hungry, and vulnerable to attack. What do you hunger for? If your hunger is not for God and His truth then you will be defeated. The devil knows our weaknesses and will try to exploit them. Whether that weakness is physical needs and desires, or possessions and power, or pride, the enemy is probing. Learn from Jesus’ example of being strong in our time of weakness. Fight temptation with God’s Word, trust in His providence, and relinquish your pride for His power!

- *Written by Matt Espenshade*

## Day 34

### Matthew 28:18-20

“And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Are you naturally a rebel or a rule follower? This question matters when considering how we react to Jesus’ last words to His followers. If you are a rebel, your reaction may be to question by what authority this command is given. The answer to you clear. God gave Jesus ALL authority – EVERYWHERE. If you are a rule follower this command may seem so overwhelming that you cannot grasp how to accomplish it. Ever since this command was given churches have struggled with both of these natural inclinations. Jesus knows our weakness to question authority, doubt His power, and become discouraged. That is why he promised to be with us always as we toil to accomplish this Great Commission. When we endeavor to make disciples of others we do so motivated not by our own ability but by our relationship with the living God. Be transformed by your relationship with Christ and show His incomparable glory to others.

- *Written by Matt Espenshade*

# Day 35

## **John 6:37-40**

“All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of Him who sent me. And this is the will of Him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those He has given me, but raise them up at the last day. For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in Him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day.”

Are you in sync? That question is commonplace in our society, sports, workplaces, and relationships. We want to know that we and those we rely on are on the same page – working toward the same goal. While on earth, Jesus was in perfect sync with the Father by being obedient to His will rather than human desires. Hence, God was “well pleased.” Our walk with Christ should be the same. When we give ourselves to Jesus, we can be confident in His protection and secure in God’s promise of eternal life. Of course being in sync requires a lot of practice, communication, commitment, dedication, and support from a loving community. Trust and rely on your perfect partner whose sacrifice has restored our relationship with the Father. Be in sync with Him and He will never leave you or forsake you.

*- Written by Matt Espenshade*

# Day 36

## **Matthew 7:19**

“Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

Have you ever tasted fruit that looked beautiful from the outside but tasted terrible? Often people, and for that matter churches, can be similarly disappointing. Don’t expend your energy to look good outside but be empty in your character, actions, and behavior. God knows your heart. Your fruit reveals your depth of relationship with the Savior. Don’t be satisfied that God has blessed you with gifts or talents. Those gifts require commitment and discipline to practice for the glory of His kingdom. This verse is a stark reminder of the responsibility that comes with being a follower of Christ. God would rather destroy a tree that does not bear fruit than have it spread its disease to the rest of the orchard.

*- Written by John Cantrell*

## Day 37

### Matthew 12:33

“Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit.”

Are you living your life with consistency? Or, do you try to cut your life into parts and store it in different compartments. God wants our character to be revealed in our conduct. In other words, our “being” and “doing” should be a reflection of each other. The Pharisees saw Jesus’ good works but doubted who He was. Their lack of belief was fueled by their inconsistent character. They pursued power and placement for personal benefit. When faced with Christ’s divine goodness they attacked Him because He revealed the evil in their hearts. Those who have joined with evil will attack us too when we join our character and conduct with Christ’s. Expect it and find strength in His promise and truth.

*- Written by Matt Espenshade*

## Day 38

### Matthew 22:37-38

“Jesus replied: “ ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment.”

Have you ever felt strangled by rules and regulations? Sometimes whole organizations, even economies, can be suffocated by an exorbitant amount of rules and regulations. This was the case at the time Jesus came to live among us. The Pharisees had created over 600 laws to follow. Many may have been well intentioned, but naturally followers concentrated on what NOT to do rather than what they were called TO do. This seems stunningly simple but somehow we try to make this relationship complicated. How do you approach your walk with Christ? Stop living your life constricted by your perception of things “good” Christians must avoid. Rather, live your life in the freedom, joy, and purpose that only Christ provides.

*- Written by Matt Espenshade*

# Day 39

## Luke 12:51-53

“Do you think that I have come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. For from now on in one house there will be five divided, three against two and two against three. They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.”

Do you “go along to get along?” This is often drilled into us at a young age to ensure we don’t offend others or are pleasant in work and social situations. The problem in applying this same axiom to our spiritual life is it often entails sacrificing loyalty and commitment to our faith for a perceived middle ground. The truth is, the depth of our relationship with Christ should know no compromise. Discipleship is not easy. Neither was Jesus’ sacrifice for us. Separating ourselves from evil desires, sinful behaviors, and destructive relationships is necessary to fully follow Christ. We can not pick and choose what we like and don’t like when we decide to follow Jesus. Are you willing to “not get along” in order to gain eternal life?

- *Written by Matt Espenshade*

# Day 40

## John 20:27

“Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.”

Are you a natural skeptic? It appears Thomas may have been. We often see Thomas’ doubt as a weakness or a lack of faith. Instead, let’s observe Thomas from the perspective of his actions rather than his questions. Thomas’ loyalty to Jesus never faltered. He lived his life before and after Jesus’ resurrection as a devoted follower. Many of us doubted before we believed. God blesses us with a natural curiosity which is often displayed as skepticism. How you act on your curiosity is the key. Do you look for answers to your questions? Or, do you allow your doubt to manifest as stubbornness, rigidity, or arrogance? It has been said that a faith never tested is a faith that can’t be trusted. Allow your curiosity, doubt, and skepticism to motivate you to find answers in God’s Word and the Holy Spirit’s counsel. Your faith will grow stronger in it.

- *Written by Matt Espenshade*

# Day 41

## John 3:16-17

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

Verse 16 is the most memorized verse in the bible so let's look at verse 17. Imagine, the unsinkable S.S. World is sinking. The freezing waters are full of desperate passengers. The few lifeboats are themselves sinking. Out of the darkness comes a swiftly moving boat. In the bow a figure leans forward, his hands outstretched to the dying passengers. As they grasp his hand, he pulls them to safety within the boat. The rescued then rush to the sides to alert those still in the water. “Look up!”, they call. “Reach up! Take the hand of Jesus! It's the only way to be saved!” We are the church – the rescued.

*- Written by Dan Linden*

# Day 42

## John 10:27-30

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one.”

In verse 28 Jesus says that eternal security is in “my hand”. Then in verse 29 he says that eternal security is in “the Father's hand”. A contradiction? Not at all because “I and the Father are one.” This is the bedrock of our faith as Christians. As C. S. Lewis pointed out, Jesus is not just a good man or an inspired teacher of morality who was of “one mind” with God. Jesus is fully God! “Once saved, eternally saved,” is the “Good” in the Good News of the Gospel.

*- Written by Dan Linden*

## Day 43

### Luke 4:18-19

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

One of the distinctive features of Luke’s Gospel is the pattern it demonstrates: the Holy Spirit moves and then people and events are set in motion. Here in the synagogue of Nazareth Jesus reads a portion of Isaiah, chapter 61 concerning the Messiah as Suffering Servant and it begins with “The Spirit of the Lord . . .” as He announces the beginning of His own ministry of salvation. It’s important to know the Word. It’s important to keep the disciplines. But apart from the power, wisdom and love of God’s Holy Spirit, our actions would be in vain. Let the Spirit guide you.

*- Written by Dan Linden*

## Day 44

### John 10:32

“Jesus answered them, “I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?”

This statement of Jesus can only be understood in the context of the surrounding verses – particularly verse 30 where Jesus says, “I and the Father are one.” The first of the Ten Commandments is “You shall have no other gods before me.” This has been the stumbling block for humanity since the beginning when the serpent tempted Adam and Eve with “. . . you will be like God . . .” In this passage in John, the Jews picked up stones against Jesus not because He healed the sick, fed the hungry, opened blind eyes and raised the dead, but because He demonstrated that He, and not the human effort of their law keeping, is the way of salvation.

*- Written by Dan Linden*

# Day 45

## John 5:24-25

“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.”

These remarkable statements by Jesus encapsulate the message of this whole chapter – that Jesus the Son, has authority equal to God the Father. This is shown in two essential areas – judgment and eternal life – and the keys to both are hearing the truth and believing the truth. Jesus is talking primarily about passing from spiritual death to spiritual life that leads to eternal life BOTH spiritually and physically. In order to demonstrate that authority we have four examples in scripture: raising the widow’s son (Luke 7:2); raising Jairus’ daughter (Mark 5:22); raising Lazarus (John 11); and, of course, His own resurrection. We too can believe and live.

*- Written by Dan Linden*

# Day 46

## Mark 11:25

“And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.”

It is so important to read scripture in context. The fig tree which Jesus cursed earlier is now withered and dead. Jesus wants to be sure that the disciples are not just impressed with spiritual power in the way “Star Wars” refers to “the Force”. Power in prayer must be based on two components – faith and forgiveness. The faith is not some quasi-magical invocation of the words, “In Jesus Name!”, but faith in the finished work of Jesus in purchasing our forgiveness by His death on the Cross. And if our faith does not include a recognition that Christ died for that person we can’t forgive just as surely as He died for us, then our faith is lacking and our prayers will be without power.

*- Written by Dan Linden*

## Day 47

### **Luke 10:16**

“The one who hears you hears me, and the one who rejects you rejects me, and the one who rejects me rejects him who sent me.”

This verse is Jesus' final encouragement to the 72 disciples he sends out to preach the Gospel. He wants them – and us – to clearly understand that the Good News of salvation through faith in Christ, is the word and will of God. We need to put aside our own egos or desire to be liked and simply be instruments in His hand. If we have died to ourselves we should not worry about being offended by rejection (you can't offend dead people). The only valid emotions should be sadness for those who reject the truth and joy for those who accept eternal life.

*- Written by Dan Linden*

## Day 48

### **Matthew 19:27-30**

“Then Peter said in reply, “See, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?” Jesus said to them, “Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”

These words of Jesus come in response to Peter's question but are clearly relevant to us in this nation that is drowning in material stuff to the exclusion of God. The rich young man turned away from Christ because “he had great possessions.” We must daily, almost moment by moment, refocus our hearts and minds away from the bright and shiny distractions of this life and towards the eternal rewards of life in Christ.

*- Written by Dan Linden*

## Day 49

### **Luke 6:46**

“Why do you call me Lord, Lord, and not do what I tell you?”

This statement of Jesus comes near the end of Luke’s version of the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7). Jesus has laid down some of the radical moral demands for being His disciple. The mark of a true disciple is not how many Jesus bumper stickers we have on our car or how many “churchy” words we have in our vocabulary. Rather, it’s how closely we walk with the Lord in obedience to His word – letting His words ring in our mind and His heartbeat in our chest.

*- Written by Dan Linden*

## Day 50

### **Revelation 22:14**

“Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates.”

This is the 7th and last “Blessed” in the Book of Revelation. The reference to washing our robes refers back to 7:14 of this book and indicates a willingness to identify with Jesus in His death. Entry into the New Jerusalem is reserved for those disciples willing to be obedient unto death. That is a standard that can only be achieved by the indwelling power of God’s Holy Spirit. That Spirit must be nourished daily by both taking in and living out the Word of God.

*- Written by Dan Linden*

# Day 51

## **Mark 10:18**

“And Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone.”

Would you consider yourself a “good” person? Are you doing good things to keep up with the “Christian Jones’s”? Jesus was approached by a wealthy, young man who had led a largely moral life, and when asked how he can inherit eternal life, Jesus points out that no one is truly “good”, except for God. Like this young man, simply living a moral life, being nice to others, serving others, and following the law means nothing eternally without giving your life to God, in Christ. We can never be good enough without God’s grace.

*- Written by Philip Organ*

# Day 52

## **John 4:21-24**

“Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”

The Samaritan woman at the well encountered Jesus, God in the flesh, unexpectedly. She viewed the world through the lens of an Old Testament Israelite, where worshippers travelled to temples and synagogues where God was present. Jesus teaches us here that with His coming, and the coming of the Spirit, we no longer have to seek places where we can worship, but since God is omnipresent, and is with us always, we are free to truly worship Him wherever we are, and He wants us to!

*- Written by Philip Organ*

# Day 53

## Matthew 4:7

“Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.”

Satan’s tactics with Jesus in the wilderness are exactly what he uses with us, when he promises happiness, pleasure and things if we would only turn from God. The truth is, the only things Satan can offer will separate us from God. Here, Satan was tempting Jesus in an attempt to undermine God’s plan for redemption. In response, Jesus used scripture (Deuteronomy 8) to warn Satan and remain a sinless Savior, so that one day he would fulfill the scriptures and complete His Father’s plan. His righteousness and sacrifice provides a way for us to stand before God, blameless.

*- Written by Philip Organ*

# Day 54

## Matthew 20:28

“Even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Do you seek to serve others or do you pursue being served? I think we would all like to say we serve first, but when we look in the mirror, we find we are selfish at the core. Christ is the perfect example: God in the flesh, creator of all things, but gave up everything, for us. He did this knowing we would continue to sin and serve ourselves. If our desire is to be more like Christ, we too must humble ourselves, and look to serve others first.

*- Written by Philip Organ*

## Day 55

### **Matthew 7:13-14**

“Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.”

Life is a journey, and we all choose our own path. Satan is circling trying to draw you away from the path that leads to God. Jesus tells us that following His path is the one that's not so easy. It is easier to be self-serving, following the flesh, but the trade off is an eternity of suffering. Jesus opened the gate for all of us at the cross, and calls us toward Him. Are you willing to fight the good fight today, even when it's tough, for the glories that await us one day with Christ?

*- Written by Philip Organ*

## Day 56

### **Matthew 18:8-9**

“And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire.”

Do you have any sins you battle against a lot? If you're like me, the answer is “yes”. We are all human, and our nature is to be selfish, prideful, dishonest, you fill in the blank. Jesus is teaching us that there is nothing of earth, even our own hands and eyes, that is worth keeping if it means we lose our eternity. Keep our goal, and the chance to praise God face to face, in mind always, and fight against the sins you face daily. Heaven is worth it!

*- Written by Philip Organ*

## Day 57

### **Matthew 5:10-11**

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.”

These words of Jesus are eye opening! Why would he tell us this? Christ knows that being an outspoken follower of His will always opens us up to persecution and hatred, as humanity is often scared of what it doesn’t understand. We don’t experience this in the same way as Christ followers in some other parts of the world, but we must always remember that loving Christ, no matter the cost, will bring the ultimate blessing when our time on earth is done.

*- Written by Philip Organ*

## Day 58

### **Luke 5:10-11**

“And so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men.” And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.”

Do you ever think the disciples of Jesus were extraordinary people, who had talents and gifts you and I don’t have? Here, Jesus climbs into Simon’s fishing boat while teaching to a crowd. The fishermen’s unexpected encounter with Christ changed everything. He told them to fish and blessed them with a huge amount of fish, when before they had caught none. When He calls them to become “fishers of men”, they felt unworthy, scared, and unqualified. Were they extraordinary? Not on their own, but with Jesus’ help they could do extraordinary things, and so can we.

*- Written by Philip Organ*

## Day 59

### **Matthew 9:9**

“As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, “Follow me.” And he rose and followed him.”

Can you hear Jesus calling you? Matthew had a very direct calling from Jesus, and He didn't hesitate to respond. Tax collectors were mostly hated, considered corrupt, and not religious, and yet Jesus chose him specifically. Jesus' power and authority compelled Matthew to follow and should do the same for us today. No matter how messed up we are, how others view us, or how little we already know Jesus, there is no better time to drop everything and follow Him than now.

*- Written by Philip Organ*

## Day 60

### **Matthew 9:16-17**

“No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch tears away from the garment, and a worse tear is made. Neither is new wine put into old wineskins. If it is, the skins burst and the wine is spilled and the skins are destroyed. But new wine is put into fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved.”

Jesus is responding to followers of John who asked why His disciples weren't fasting as they and the Pharisees did. The purpose of a fast then was for discipline and mourning. He tells them, before offering this analogy, that there's no reason to fast, just to fulfill tradition, while the Christ is present. Christ is the new way, and we don't have to follow old traditions simply because others are doing it. Jesus is reminding them, and telling us, that He should be our focus, as He is the living God!

*- Written by Philip Organ*

# Day 61

## Luke – 6:35-36

“But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.”

We're given some commands in the these passages; to love, do good, to lend and be merciful. It seems like the Lord is telling us to lend and expect nothing in return but actually we are to do all of these without expecting anything in return. Jesus gave of Himself freely, expecting nothing in return. How often do we do these things expecting nothing in return much less doing them to someone we consider our enemy? We can't on our own but Jesus gives us the perfect example, our heavenly Father.

*- Written by Shawn Casto*

# Day 62

## Matthew 20:20-23

“Then came to Him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping Him, and desiring a certain thing of Him. And He said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto Him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto Him, We are able. And He saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.”

What is your true motivation for serving or seeking to do the will of God? Is it to gain some prominent position in the church? Is it a prideful act to look good in front of others? Is it to seek out some reassurance that you will go to heaven? Ambition or self-glorification can easily blind us to our purpose as children of God. If this could happen to two of the disciples, then we should be extremely careful. Remember, the first will be last and the last will be first in the kingdom of God.

*- Written by Shawn Casto*

# Day 63

## **John 12:47-50**

“If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak. And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me.”

Jesus didn't come to this world to judge us but rather to show us the way to eternal life. God, the creator and sovereign ruler, will judge those who do not receive the message that Jesus brought. Jesus was the announcer, the message bearer, the broadcaster. He said repeatedly that He was here to do the will of the Father. To reject Him and his message is to reject the Father. We will all be judged one day. However, when the Father looks on those that do believe this message, He will not see us but rather see His son standing in our place. A son that is completely righteous and free from sin. That is the good news!

*- Written by Shawn Casto*

# Day 64

## **Luke 15:10**

“Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

God wants to have a relationship with us. That is, after all, why He created us. Unfortunately, that relationship was severed when sin entered the picture. This doesn't mean He no longer desires to have that relationship. On the contrary, He very much desires it which is why He sent Jesus. When we repent and turn away from our sin, we help restore that relationship. This is so pleasing to God that even the angels in heaven share in His joy. What sin do you have that requires repentance? If you're not sure then ask God to show you.

*- Written by Shawn Casto*

# Day 65

## **John 5:28-29**

“Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.”

These two verses show us the simplicity of following Jesus. It is us who make it overly complicated. Jesus shared this message shortly after miraculously feeding the 5,000. Even this group was looking for ways to complicate His message. How often do we seek ways to be more Christ-like? Doing more works, reading more books, trying to be good, the list goes on. Not that these things are bad but they aren't a requirement. This is what makes the Gospel so simple. It only requires our belief in Jesus and the message He brought. Out of that belief comes the sanctification that will eventually conform us to His image but it begins with one simple step. BELIEVE!

*- Written by Shawn Casto*

# Day 66

## **Matthew 5:27-30**

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.”

Jesus provides imagery in these verses to convey how seriously we are to war against our sin. We are to battle to the point of removing whatever it is that causes us to stumble. What would this look like in the current world? Perhaps it would be to get rid of the computer or device that causes us to sin. But, it goes deeper than this. True sin manifests from the heart and only the great Physician is able to heal this area. Pray for forgiveness, repent, store the Word in your heart and put on the full armor of God to fight this battle.

*- Written by Shawn Casto*

## Day 67

### **Matthew 5:19**

“Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”

Our faith in Jesus doesn't give us the right to pick and choose what commandments we will follow. We don't know what measure of reward or punishment God will allot for breaking any of the commandments. If we don't submit to ALL of His commands then we may be guilty of not surrendering completely to His lordship in our lives. Jesus makes it very clear that even what we would consider to be the least of one of the commandments can have eternal consequences if we choose to deliberately disobey and teach others to do the same.

*- Written by Shawn Casto*

## Day 68

### **Luke 22:31-32**

“Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.”

These verses illustrate just how deep the forgiveness of Jesus is. Jesus knew that Peter's faith would falter. That he would end up betraying Jesus in one of His greatest hours of need. Even so, Jesus prayed that Peter's faith would not fail completely and that when he had turned again, or repented, that he would go on to strengthen those around him. Oh, that we would show that same level of grace to those that have wronged us. Our forgiveness might just be the catalyst that causes someone else's faith to grow exponentially.

*- Written by Shawn Casto*

# Day 69

## **Acts 18:9-11**

“And the Lord said to Paul one night in a vision, “Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, for I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, for I have many in this city who are my people.” And he stayed a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.”

We are not promised that the Christian life will be easy. In fact, these verses make it clear that spreading the gospel may cause tribulation for us. However, we are called to proclaim the gospel because there are people all around us who need to hear it. This isn't a request but rather a command that was given before Jesus ascended into heaven. Paul had been enduring many trials while spreading the gospel and the Lord reassures him to keep speaking without fear. He doesn't promise that it will be easy. He even points out that attacks will come but they are to be endured because there are people that need to hear the Good News.

*- Written by Shawn Casto*

# Day 70

## **John 14:23-24**

“Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. 24 Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me.”

If we truly love Jesus then we will have a desire to live out His commands. He showed us how to do this by serving others. Jesus' life and ministry was marked by constant service to others. What other king in history lowered himself to the status of a slave so that His slaves could be called kings? This is the kind of heart where God longs to dwell and the Holy Spirit will bring constant renewal. Others will know we are disciples of Jesus by the way we love one another. Love should be the constant motivator for all that we do for the kingdom. If we find that we are having trouble keeping Jesus' commands then we should spend time in prayer examining how much we really love Him.

*- Written by Shawn Casto*

# Day 71

## Mark 5:19

“And He did not permit him but said to him, “go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how much He has had mercy on you.”

Have you ever wanted to do something for the Lord, a mission trip, teach a class, or even sing in the choir; then for whatever reason it didn't happen? Did it seem as though God closed the door every time you tried? God's plans for you at that time were maybe something you never considered. He may ask you to influence your co-workers, friends, and family. He may ask you to be His missionary right where you are. Are you willing to follow and do whatever He asks of you? We have been bought with a price that He has paid. Isn't it time that we surrender to His will no matter what He asks us to do, even if it's to sit still for now, even if it doesn't conform to our plans? He knows what is best for us and what will draw us closer to Himself. Trust Him and surrender to Him daily. If you do that you will find yourself right where you are supposed to be.

*- Written by Eric Dorris*

# Day 72

## Mark 5:35-36

“While he was still speaking, there came from the ruler's house some who said, “Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher any further?” But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue, “Do not fear, only believe.”

Have you received devastating news? Perhaps a death in the family, has your wife decided that she no longer wants to be married to you? Or your boss has just told you that the company is downsizing and no longer needs you? Was your immediate reaction despair? If so, listen to your Savior's voice as He whispers “Talitha Cumi” ( “Arise Maiden”). He is where hope is found. He is the sustainer of everything. When hope seems a stranger and life seems much too heavy to bear, focus on His voice and have faith in the One from whom all Love springs forth. He will help carry you through. All we have to do is believe in Him, have faith that He is exactly who He claims to be and His grace will be sufficient for whatever news comes our way.

*- Written by Eric Dorris*

## Day 73

### **Matthew 11:27**

“All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.”

What a statement! Have you ever sat and wondered about God? What is He like? What is His heart and mind like? What does He think about people? Does He really care about us? Jesus answers everyone of those questions and more. He simply says, do you want to know what God is like? Well, then look at me! They are one and the same. A relationship with Jesus is a relationship with the Creator and Sustainer of all things. And what does the Creator of all things think of us? What does He offer us? Jesus answers that too. Read verses 28-30 and you will hear how the God of the universe describes Himself and what He will do in our lives. He says He will carry our burdens. The God of everything says He will carry your problems. All we have to do is ask. How extraordinary! How blessed we truly are!

*- Written by Eric Dorris*

## Day 74

### **Acts 23:11**

“The following night the Lord stood by him and said, “Take courage, for as you have testified to the facts about me in Jerusalem, so you must testify also in Rome.”

Do you ever feel like things just keep getting worse and worse? Like you're going from the frying pan into the oven? Take courage, God is sovereign and He is walking with you, taking every step along side you. We may not understand why, until we are with Him for eternity, but rest assured everything is for a purpose and, as Tim Keller once said, “If we knew what God knows we would ask for exactly what He gives.” So, trust Him and know the God who made the stars is in control of every aspect of your life.

*- Written by Eric Dorris*

# Day 75

## Mark 1:23-26

“And immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God.” But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be silent, and come out of him!” And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying out with a loud voice, came out of him.”

The people at the synagogue were awestruck! They had seen a Man command a demon with a few words and the evil spirit had no choice, but to obey. They had never seen such authority, such authentic power. Let me ask you, when was the last time you were awestruck? Can you think of the last time you stopped in amazement at God’s power? He sets every day into motion and sustains it until the next, yet we become blinded by routine. We fail to see the majesty of every day. Each one should be seen as a gift to do His will. So, take time to stop and be awestruck. He upholds everything with a word. What power! What authority! What love!

- Written by Eric Dorris

# Day 76

## John 15:22

“If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have been guilty of sin,[a] but now they have no excuse for their sin.”

Ignorance of sin is not an excuse for the continuation of sin. None of us are ignorant to the fact that we should seek time with Jesus daily and the more time we spend with Christ the more we are transformed by Him. He purges sin out of our lives and makes us more like Himself. So, we are faced with the same decision today as those Jesus spoke about in this passage. Are we going to accept Jesus and, because of Him, remain guiltless, becoming more and more like Him daily in every aspect of our lives? Or are we going to reject Him and have no excuse for our sin, becoming more and more like the world daily? Only one of those options offers hope. We all have tried living life the wrong way making the wrong choice. Only a fool would continue on that path. So, which option are you going to choose today?

- Written by Eric Dorris

# Day 77

## Matthew 5:3

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

What? Blessed are those who are depressed? Is that what this means? Heavens, no. Have you thought about what bless or blessed means? It comes from the Greek word “makarios”; a Greek word that was used to describe the joy of the gods. It described a joy that holds its secret within itself; serene, untouchable, self-contained, and impervious to chance or change. A joy independent of circumstance. This joy is the Christian’s, not in the future, but now. This verse is not a prophetic glimpse into the future. Jesus is saying “O’ the complete joy for the one who realizes how helpless he is and places all of his faith in Me, for he is a citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven and will experience this Joy for all eternity! What a gift he possesses!” And remember, that eternity begins now and this joy is not something we will receive, it is something we have received already! A depression ridden Christian life should be unthinkable! Focus on Christ and the joy He offers! Face today like you are blessed, set apart, a child of God...because you are!

*- Written by Eric Dorris*

# Day 78

## John 17:15:17

“I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.”

Isn't it remarkable that Jesus, hours from the cross, stops to pray. He stops to pray for us. Two thousand years later and He is still interceding for us. He makes it clear that there are things in this world opposed to God and His plan for us, but isn't it comforting to know that God stands watching over us every moment of every day protecting us. We stumble and fall in life because we try to do things in our own strength without stopping to pray for ourselves much less anyone else. We fail to realize that we are helpless without God's help. Let today be the moment that you let go and place everything you are in His hands. He is waiting, hand outstretched, for His children. All we have to do is ask.

*- Written by Eric Dorris*

# Day 79

## John 15:4-5

“Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.”

Have you ever walked through a vineyard or an orchard while the fruit is beginning to ripen? The aroma and colors of the trees mixed with the sweet smell of the fruit offers beauty to all of the senses. But if you look down on the ground you see a different story. There on the ground you find fruit apart from the vine or tree and it offers no alluring qualities. It is brown, soft and decaying. Yellow jackets and other insects ravage the inside of the fruit as it returns to dust. Jesus reminds us here that we are no different from the fruit you see in a vineyard or orchard. We are either connected to Him, growing, developing into that which God intended us to be and in doing so we honor our creator. Or we can try life on our own apart from Jesus. Which leads to death and decay, even while still physically alive, offering nothing to those around us except for a place next to us on the ground among the yellow-jackets of life. Where are you today? Clinging to the branch and reflecting God’s glory or are you among the insects and decay?

- Written by Eric Dorris

# Day 80

## John 3:5-8

“Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

Do you want to get into heaven? Here is the “how-to” manual for entrance into heaven. Jesus tells us how. He says that we must be “born again...born of water and the spirit.” Water symbolizes cleaning. When we ask Jesus into our lives, the sins of the past are washed away and we are born again as new creatures, we are born of water. But if that were all that happens we would repeat the very same sins and be back in the same place as before. Jesus knows this and that’s why we must be born of spirit also. When we hand our lives over to Jesus, He cleanses our sin and He enters His creation and His power (spirit) is now in us. He enables us to be something we never thought we could be and accomplish things for His glory that we never thought we could accomplish. In the process of being born again, we die unto ourselves, Jesus takes residence in our hearts, enabling us to become citizens of the Kingdom, sons and daughters of God for eternity! He has made it so simple and He does all the work. Do you want to get into Heaven? Jesus tells us how. Just ask! So, what are you waiting for? You could be a citizen of the Kingdom today! Already born again? If so, you have a “how-to” manual. Make sure you share it today with someone.

- Written by Eric Dorris

# Day 81

## **Matthew 7:7-11**

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!”

We get to talk to God. Let that sink in a moment. It gets better. He invites us to pray to Him. What an amazing opportunity for us to draw close to Him. We obviously need Him - three times Jesus encourages us to come to Him for what we need. When we draw close, then what does He do? He promises to respond. Ask your Father for what you need and you will receive it. Seek what God has for you and you will find it. Knock and watch the door swing open wide. Be close to Him. Be comforted by Him. Be encouraged that He will provide all that we need for our good and His glory!

*- Written by Chris Townson*

# Day 82

## **Matthew 10:27-31**

“What I tell you in the dark, say in the light, and what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops. And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.”

Many of us find it easy to worry and fear. Jesus' disciples must have experienced the same emotions when faced with the perceived threat of persecution. While speaking to his disciples, Jesus addresses who we should and should not fear. He acknowledges that his followers will battle fear while proclaiming His name. He commands them to not fear man, for man cannot destroy the soul. Instead, fear only a holy God who can destroy both body and soul. And understand that this holy God values you and is attentive to us- to the extent of even knowing the number of hairs on our heads. Have confidence in how our Father loves us and equips us to do His will. Do not fear man. Fear God, and boldly proclaim His truth.

*- Written by Chris Townson*

# Day 83

## Matthew 26:39

“And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.”

Falling on His face, the Son of God calls out to His Father for reassurance while exemplifying submission and obedience to the will of the Father. He humbly pleads that the redemption of man might be accomplished in another way, but, above all, He desires the will of God to be accomplished. We see Jesus here as fully God and yet fully human. He didn't want to die, but he wanted God to be glorified more. Jesus set the example we can follow. We can trust God to work for our good and His glory even in circumstances that we had rather not endure. His way trumps our fears.

*- Written by Chris Townson*

# Day 84

## Mark 7:6-8

“And he said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, ““This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.’ You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men.”

Jesus called out the Jewish religious leaders of His day for being hypocrites. Their actions were self-motivated and merely external. They sought to discredit Jesus' authority by showing He was breaking with Jewish tradition of the Elders, but at the same time they were far from God themselves. Furthermore, their teachings were from the tradition of men and not from God. Be aware of anything or anyone that puts works-based or empty, tradition-based gospels before you. Not only are human traditions ineffective for cleansing the heart, they lead to disregard for God's word. God's gospel is the real change agent for cleansing the sinner's heart.

*- Written by Chris Townson*

# Day 85

## Luke 13:2-5

“And he answered them, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”

“Repent or Perish.” Jesus almost always has compassion on those who suffer. But in this text, He does not intend for His point to be missed. As He was teaching, those present asked Him about two events not recorded elsewhere in scripture. They wanted to know if the Galileans killed by Pilate or those on whom the Tower of Siloam fell were killed because they were worse sinners than others. We often want to point to the sin of others and reason away our own sin. Jesus discredits this thinking. We must remember that all sinners need a savior, and only true repentance brings salvation. Will you turn from your sin and follow Him today? If you are already a follower of Jesus, will you share Him with others so they may know Him too?

*- Written by Chris Townson*

# Day 86

## John 6:48

“I am the bread of life.”

When Jesus called Himself the bread of life, He was referring to His death on the cross. As He did often, He was using a physical object to teach a spiritual truth, which was frequently misunderstood. He was merging physical and spiritual truth. While Jesus is not literal bread, he is the spiritual bread that satisfies the spiritual hunger of those who believe in Him. His death on the cross completely satisfies the required payment for sin. Nothing more is needed. No matter the need in your life, be it physical, emotional or spiritual, Jesus has earned the right to be all you need. He overcame death, hell and the grave when He laid His life down for you and then rose up from the grave victorious. Praise God for His all-sufficient providence. No matter your situation, He is the solution you need.

*- Written by Chris Townson*

## Day 87

### Luke 16:15

“And he said to them, “You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God.”

Pastor Erik once said, “We don’t do big-dealness around here.” Jesus didn’t put up with it either. In this passage, He was speaking to the Pharisees who were well known for their pompous attitudes. He pointed out their external, self-motivated actions. They longed for the approval of men, which they often received. They didn’t receive the same from God, for their gospel-void accomplishments were an eyesore before Him. He knew who they really were, and it was disgraceful. Their fame and fortune was found in the temporary praise of men. Let your big-dealness be found in Jesus; the benefits are eternal.

*- Written by Chris Townson*

## Day 88

### Luke 17:20-21

“Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them, “The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed, nor will they say, ‘Look, here it is!’ or ‘There!’ for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.”

Sometimes, it is hard to see God working; to see His kingdom advancing. Like the Pharisees, we often want to see “signs” and “wonders” or hear a “word” from God before we trust Him and obey His plan. But Jesus said that cosmic signs wouldn’t reveal the Kingdom of God. The Pharisees couldn’t see their present reality. The Kingdom was already present in the person of Jesus, and it was being manifested in the lives of His followers. Our present reality is that He is still with us and He is still working in and through His people to advance His Kingdom. We can trust God and stand on His revealed word – no special signs needed.

*- Written by Chris Townson*

## Day 89

### Matthew 8:25-26

“And they went and woke him, saying, “Save us, Lord; we are perishing.” And he said to them, “Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?” Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.”

Fear. Jesus addresses fear multiple times throughout the Bible. The message is often the same- “Don’t allow fear to overtake you.” Of course, He says this knowing that panic is often our first inclination and safety is our desire. And neither are the qualities of the faithful. We panic in the moment- forgetting who we are in the boat with. We cry out for safety when we should just be crying out to Him. And what does He give in return? He provides “a great calm.” Pray for confidence in the One who controls the wind and the waves and brings peace in the middle of your great storms. He controls nature – He can meet your need too.

*- Written by Chris Townson*

## Day 90

### John 15:19

“If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.”

There is a choice to be made: Chosen by God or loved by the world. According to Jesus, you cannot have the admiration of the world and the acceptance of Christ. Knowing this should bring us comfort when we are rejected and despised for the sake of Christ. The world’s reaction to us serves as a gauge to where we are in our walk with Christ. If you find yourself seeking the approval and applause of this fallen world, you will easily receive it but the reward is temporary. However, if you intentionally seek to walk with Christ, expect the world to reject you, but know that His love is enough for you and it is eternal. “Choose you this day whom you will serve...”

*- Written by Chris Townson*

# Day 91

## **Matthew 5:14-16**

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.<sup>15</sup> Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”

As God by His word commanded light into the darkness in the beginning, we as followers of Christ are to be light into this darkened world. The truth that is shown in us, cuts through the lies the world has swallowed and offers the only hope of reconciliation to a loving, merciful, and perfect God. The light that shines from within us is Christ himself. He is alive and working in our hearts. Changing us. Healing us. Conforming us to the perfect image of Himself. How can we hide such good news, such beauty and truth? We cant. “ A city set on a hill cannot be hidden”. Let your light shine brightly and fully. Rejoice that you can offer a picture of hope to this darkened world.

*- Written by Matt Mckinney*

# Day 92

## **Matthew 13:44-46**

“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it. ”

So often we set our sights and hearts on earthly desires. The priceless treasure that Christ offers is hidden to carnal man, and is of no profit to him. Only those that are in Christ can truly know the infinite value of the kingdom of God. Only in rightly seeing His majesty can we take our focus off of worldly ambitions. The treasures of this world will inevitably rust and fall away, but what Christ has purchased with His blood is eternal! What choice will you make? Will you be the wealthy young ruler who refuses to give up his possessions, or will you be the merchant and trade it all for him? Trust in what God has promised, and what Christ has bought. A ton of gold pales in comparison to an eternity with Him.

*- Written by Matt Mckinney*

# Day 93

## **Matthew 13:47-50**

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and gathered fish of every kind. 48 When it was full, men drew it ashore and sat down and sorted the good into containers but threw away the bad. 49 So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous 50 and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

There is a general call to repentance that brings forth many claiming to be followers of Christ. The reality is that, in our church, we are a mixture of those who are truly in Christ and those who are not. As followers we are to endure with patience and longsuffering in the promise that His sheep will answer the shepherd's call. Only those called by God's "effectual" call will be saved from the "fiery furnace". One group, a heavenly reward of eternity with God. The other, those who gnash their teeth in angry defiance and those who weep in eternal separation from God. Ours is not the job to determine who is Christ's and who is not. God is a perfect judge and we are incapable of rightly considering our own hearts, how then can we see into another's? There will be plenty of brothers and sisters who I would have had no doubt of salvation that will be missing in God's kingdom, and plenty whom I would have easily condemned to hell that will worship Christ for eternity.

*- Written by Matt Mckinney*

# Day 94

## **Luke 10:17-20**

“The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!” And he said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.””

Satan has been blinding mankind and the nations since the fall in the garden. Upon the arrival of Jesus, Satan knew his time was at hand. The first beings to recognize Christ were the demons. They knew who He truly was, even if His followers at the time did not. After the temptation of Christ in the desert, the final act of destroying Satan's hold had begun. God's plan cannot, and will not, be stopped by anyone of His creatures. His plan is perfect, His plan is complete, and His plan is just. Once we are in Christ we now have the power of the Holy Spirit to engage the enemy in the battle against evil. But, be careful to not focus on things accomplished by the Spirit through you in this age. The real joy, the true blessing is spending eternity in complete communion with God. If you are in Christ, and He in you, your name is written in the Lamb's book of life. And nothing can blot that out.

*- Written by Matt Mckinney*

# Day 95

## John 3:13-15

“No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.”

The combined wisdom of the human race still falls impossibly short of comprehending the mind of God and the secrets of heaven. To see God without the hindrance of sin, and experience Him as He truly is in all His glory will be the eternal reward of all of those who are in Christ, and Christ in them. “Who has ascended to heaven and come down?” (Proverbs 30:4) Only Christ has the right to enter heaven, for heaven is His home, and His kingdom. Jesus was not created at the time of His birth. Christ has existed for eternity as the Son with perfect communion with God the Father and the Holy Spirit. The only way for us, humans, tainted with sin, to enter into His kingdom was for Him to become fully human and to live a perfect life. To become the perfect sacrifice, and take on the sin of those who were predestined from the foundation of the world to be called adopted children of God. For that perfect lamb to be lifted up, up on a tree and become sin. Upon that man, who was upon that tree, God poured out His wrath and Jesus bore that cup. He bore that wrath for me, a sinner made clean by His precious blood, so I may have eternal life with Him.

*- Written by Matt Mckinney*

# Day 96

## John 4:24

“God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”

The finished work of Christ has afforded us the ability to worship God anywhere and everywhere. God is not limited to geographic location, nor to a day of the week. And, importantly, worship is not limited to race, creed, gender or ethnicity. Our worship should exist at all times, and wherever we may be. Those of us in Christ enjoy a communion not limited by time or space, for we have the Holy spirit In us. It is a part of us, a part that cannot be separated. The Holy spirit intercedes for us, helping us, growing us, sanctifying us. Worshiping in truth without spirit is not true worship, as is spirit with no truth. We must do both. How do we worship in truth? By learning the truth from God’s word. How do we worship in spirit? By allowing God’s word to penetrate our hearts, changing us and conforming us to the image of Jesus Christ.

*- Written by Matt Mckinney*

# Day 97

## John 6:28-29

“Then they said to him, “What must we do, to be doing the works of God?” 29 Jesus answered them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.”

In our modern culture we think hard work is our key to success. We, as Christians, can tend to apply that same principle to our salvation and Christian walk. It can manifest itself in the form of legalistic practices to try and “earn” grace. If success in life comes from effort and hard work then we can simply carry that over into our religion, right? No. There is no amount of blood, sweat or tears from us to justify our salvation. Our salvation is a gift, not earned or paid back. We are incapable of such holiness on our own, and there is nothing in us that is at all desirable to God. If our salvation was up to us, to gain or keep, we could not ever have any hope of seeing God. Christ took our sin on the cross, and only because He is holy and perfect are we saved. In exchange for our sin, we received His righteousness. The reformers called it an “alien” righteousness, because it does not belong to us. There was blood, sweat and tears used to secure our salvation, but it was not ours. The only thing we must do, is to believe and repent. Believe in Him whom He has sent, and that is Jesus Christ.

*- Written by Matt Mckinney*

# Day 98

## John 15:9-11

“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.”

What a promise from our Lord! Fullness of joy, everlasting and abundant. The same love God has for His son, Christ has for those of us that abide in Him. How does one abide in Christ? My favorite definition of “abide” is conform. When we conform to Christ, we are being “fashioned” into the image of Him. Being made into Him, and patterning ourselves after Him. The closer a relationship we have with Christ, the more we desire what He desires and the more we cling to Him, the more we let go of the world. We must continually, and intentionally, pursue a more perfect relationship in His perfect love by keeping His commandments. And what were Christ’s commandments? Love God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind. But don’t forget the second part....love your neighbor as you love yourself. Christ, by implication, is telling us that there is no other source of true joy; that everything this world has to offer pales in comparison. Let us continually seek to abide in Him deeper, and deeper and experience the joy that surpasses all human understanding.

*- Written by Matt Mckinney*

# Day 99

## Acts 10:11-15

“And saw the heavens opened and something like a great sheet descending, being let down by its four corners upon the earth. In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air. And there came a voice to him: “Rise, Peter; kill and eat.” But Peter said, “By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean.” And the voice came to him again a second time, “What God has made clean, do not call common.””

Where does our sin come from? Are we made sinful from what we eat or from our environment? Jesus answered this question in Mark 7: 14-15:14 “And He called the people to Him again and said to them, “Hear me, all of you, and understand: 15 There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what defile him.” Our sin comes from inside, it is a manifestation, or an outpouring if you will, of our sinful hearts. If we believe that sin is strictly from our environment, then we cannot be held liable for what we do. Scripture makes it abundantly clear that each and every one of us is responsible for our own sin. As it has been said, “the heart is the heart of the problem”. As we see in the following verses, God is telling Peter that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is to be given not only to the Jews, but also to the Gentiles. The Good news of Jesus Christ was never intended to be kept with Jewish people alone. God’s plan of salvation was meant to go to all corners of the earth. Remember, sin starts in the heart. When we continually struggle with sin we need to examine our hearts and seek to deepen our relationship with Jesus Christ. The problem will always be on our end, not his.

- *Written by Matt Mckinney*

# Day 100

## Revelation 3:19-20

“Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.”

Let us break this verse down a little to gain some more understanding of what Christ is telling us. “Those whom I love” can only mean those who are in Christ. “To reprove” in this context means “convict”. “To be zealous” means “desire after very strongly, to covet”. So, Christ is saying “ those who are in Me, I convict and discipline, so in turn desire Me, covet Me and repent of your sins. Christ is standing at the door of your heart, knocking. He is the beautiful voice of the shepherd calling us, His sheep. We recognize that voice. That voice to us is more beautiful than a thousand birds singing in unison, more lovely than all the compositions played by man. Even more heart warming than that of my mother when she would sing to me as a child. A voice that changes hearts and minds, and brings forth hearts of flesh that once were stone. He promises that, not only will He talk to us, He will come IN to us, in our hearts, in our minds and live there. He will sustain us, nourish us with His Word, with His voice and with His power. An eternal communion awaits us, one just to lay at His feet and revel in the awe of a Creator so powerful that the very stars hang from the sky by His word alone. Brothers and sisters, that is our eternity. How glorious it will be.

- *Written by Matt Mckinney*