

FOCUSED ON JESUS



A 30 DAY
DEVOTIONAL
FOCUS CHURCH

Introduction

In June 2016, I decided to start “journaling.” Because I had become so accustomed to typing instead of writing, I quickly realized that I would never be able to go back and read what I wrote down.

At that time, I owned a domain (www.13gen.com) and still had some paid hosting connected to it. I put together a basic WordPress site that I could access from my phone. My journaling turned to devotional writing. At the time of this writing, there are over 900 devotionals on the website.

This devotional only represents 30 of those entries. But I pray that they will be a blessing to you as you go through them.

I don’t recommend that this devotional serve as your only time with God. It can be a launching pad, yes. But every true Christian should spend their own time in the Word daily! If you would like a plan, you can [watch this video](#), which also contains a downloadable plan in the description.

As you read through this devotional, take time to reflect each day and decide how you will respond. Most of the devotionals have a call to action. What will you do after the daily reading?

Ultimately, my desire is to see other Believers grow in their relationship with the Lord. I pray this devotional can help focus your attention on Jesus.

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Peace,
Todd Sepulveda, Pastor
Focus Church

Day 1

Overwhelmed

He said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb,
And naked I shall return there.
The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away.
Blessed be the name of the Lord." Job 1:21 NASB

Job received a lot of bad information all in one moment. He lost his livestock and all of his kids all in one day. Of course, this was all at the hands of Satan. But nevertheless, it was all painful and overwhelming.

How do you deal with times when you are overwhelmed? Do you lose it? Do you get mad and angry? Do you take it out on God?

Maybe we should follow Job's example. After he heard the news, he worshipped the Lord. "Blessed be the name of the Lord."

That is hard to do. But if you look to the Lord as your source and realize that everything comes from Him, then you know that He is in control.

And knowing that God is in control is the best place to be.

Father, help us to look to You when times and circumstances are overwhelming. Help us to know and take comfort that You know everything and that You are in control.

Day 2

Jesus Signaling

Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."
John 2:19 NASB

One of the first things that Jesus did in His ministry was to drive the people doing business out of the temple. He actually made a scourge and drove them out.

Of course, this didn't sit well with the religious leaders, because they received their share of the profits. So they asked Jesus under what authority He did this.

Jesus responded in verse 19. But it wasn't the cut and clear answer they wanted to hear! Jesus was signaling.

He was letting them know that He had all the authority to drive those doing business out of the temple because He was the Son of God, the Messiah, the Anointed One!

They might not have known it then. But later, they sure did!

When you understand what the Lord is saying, when you finally get it, do you change up your response, your attitude and life? Or do you just keep going along like the religious leaders did after Jesus was raised from the dead?

Has the Lord been signaling to you lately? Maybe you've noticed it? Maybe you haven't yet! But when you do, what are you going to do with it?

Don't be like the religious leaders who were face to face with the Son of God and missed it because He didn't look like they thought.

God will get your attention. He will send you signs and signals. Will you respond?

Lord, help us to be sensitive to Your signs, Your call and the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Day 3

Lifted

But You, O Lord, are a shield about me,
My glory, and the One who lifts my head. Psalms 3:3 NASB

We look to so many people and things to find comfort and peace, especially in times of trouble and uncertainty. But the Psalmist understood that God was the One he should look to.

We all want to be comforted. We want answers to the questions that are bugging us and resolve to the situations that cause us anxiety. But looking for help in any other place than the Lord is futile and short-lived.

God the Father is All-Powerful and has every resource available to Him to come to us in our hour of need.

But will you accept it? Will you look to Him? Will you look up and spend time with Him so He can lift up your head above the clouds of despair?

The thing is He is always there, waiting for you, longing for you to come and spend time with Him.

He does not let His people down! Get to know Him in this time. You won't be disappointed, but instead will find peace.

Father, thank You that You are always there in good and troubling times. And thank You that Your peace knows no difference.

Day 4

The Exchange

Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water." John 4:10 NASB

Jesus, sitting at the well, asked the Samaritan woman for a drink of water. He was thirsty and didn't have any way to get some from the deep well.

Her reply was typical for people that don't get along. Why are you asking me? We aren't supposed to have anything to do with each other.

But Jesus didn't care about that. He moved right into what was important, the exchange.

He was asking for water to quench His physical thirst, but He knew she needed "living water" to save her soul!

It's the exchange that we all have available to us, exchange the physical, temporary for the spiritual and eternal. This is for me and you!

The Lord asks us to take this physical, temporary life and exchange it for eternal life. The cost is that you give up your physical life and give the control to Jesus.

This is hard because people want to be in control of their own lives. They want to call the shots. And that all changes when you give up your life for Jesus. You now allow Him to call the shots.

The benefits are so great that they can't be valued. You give up a temporary life for eternity. That is a no brainer. But just as Jesus didn't force the Samaritan woman. He won't force you.

You have to make the decision to give up your life for His. And on top of all this, He blesses you with peace and love and mercy and grace and the Holy Spirit!

You don't lose, unless you think this world is better than eternity. And I pray you don't think that.

Get right with the Lord today, make the exchange.

Father, let everyone who reads this get convicted to turn from their ways and start living for You.

**NEED PRAYER?
CLICK HERE**

Day 5

Before

For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.
Romans 5:6 NASB

God knew you before! He knew you when things weren't right in your life. He knew you when you were at your worst!

And yet, He still sent Jesus, His only Son, to die on a cross so that you could have eternal life.

There is nothing that you can do to get clean or "look" right before His eyes. The only thing you can do is just come! Just come to Him and say, "Lord I need You. With all my uncleanness. With all my insecurities. With all my worry. I come to You!"

And then, receive Him. Receive the goodness and mercy that He wants to give you. Receive the forgiveness, peace and eternal life.

God is a giver. He wants to bless your life. Let Him. Open your heart wide to Him. See what happens.

Father, thank You for taking us just as we are. We are worthless, but You made us precious in Your eyes. Fill our hearts with hope and peace so that the world around us sees You inside of us.

Day 6

Up Close

As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore. John 6:66 NASB

Jesus had just finished saying that He was the Bread of Life. People couldn't understand it. It was spiritual. They were thinking in the flesh!

As a result, many followers stopped following Him. It must have been a mass exodus because He turned to His disciples and asked them if they were leaving too.

But, they had seen too much. They had heard the Words that touched and stimulated more than just their minds. There was no way they could turn back after all of this.

What about you? Have you turned back?

Or have you been convinced without a shadow of a doubt, that living for Jesus is the only way to live? Have you settled that once and for all?

Hopefully you have the same response as Peter, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life. We have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God."

And that's it right there! Jesus has the words of eternal life. That's from people who saw, heard and experienced it up close!

Are you experiencing Him up close? Why not? He has words of life for you. Draw close to Him, He will draw close to You. He's already done so much, even giving His life for You!

Father, thank You for allowing Your people to know the truth. Help us be a conduit that brings people closer to You.

Day 7

Pain

“But it is still my consolation,
And I rejoice in unsparing pain,
That I have not denied the words of the Holy One. Job 6:10 NASB

Job wasn't in a good place! He had lost everything, including his health. He was wearing sackcloth, had thrown ashes on his head and was surrounded by friends who weren't the best at comforting him.

He had reason to be mad! He had reason to lash out! He could have screamed at the Heavens and told God how displeased he was with Him.

But he didn't. He rejoiced in the pain. Why? How?

He still trusted the Lord. He still trusted in His Word.

This is so hard for us to grasp. But Job was coming from a life that had seen the overwhelming faithfulness and blessings of God. He experienced it. He had history with God. And in his time of pain, he leaned in.

Job leaned into the Word of God. He leaned in to trusting Him.

He still didn't understand it all. But at least the pain let him know that he was still alive. And while he was alive, he could rejoice, even if it was in the pain.

Because while we are alive, even if there is pain, there is still hope.

Cling to the hope, because you have experienced Him before. Or cling to hope knowing that God is Sovereign to give you the experience He wants you to have. Either way, cling to hope, cling to Him.

Father, when all seems lost, give Your people hope to look to You and Your Word to find comfort and peace.

Day 8

Dwell

But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. Romans 8:11 NASB

Think back to a time when you have visited a model home or maybe checked out a home during an open house. Everything was perfect! Every cushion was in place, every toy in the toybox. The furniture was staged correctly, and the kitchen and bathrooms were spotless!

It was all fake! It was a setup to let you see the house in the best possible shape. The house doesn't stay like that the minute someone moves in and life starts happening.

A fake house shows no signs of someone dwelling there.

Contrast that with a house filled with people, sounds, smells and everything that goes with that. Life gets real when people dwell together. There are signs of life all around.

This is also true about your spiritual dwelling. Some people have a "model" spiritual home. It looks good at first glance, but there is nothing truly happening on the inside. It's a show house.

But when the Holy Spirit dwells in you, then life gets interesting. The Spirit tugs on your heart and mind, moving you closer to Jesus and the results are kind of messy as you start to remove and leave behind the stuff that isn't pleasing to God. A wake of habits, friends, maybe even family could be shed as you "dwell" more and more in the Spirit.

But what happens in return is life, real life. God gives life to your spirit, but also to your mortal body. And it is good because it is eternal life.

Is the Holy Spirit dwelling in you? Because now is the time to truly live. The Father gave life to His Son Jesus and He will give it to you too!

Father, I welcome the Holy Spirit to dwell in my heart. I want to live for You today.

Day 9

Looking Forward

Jesus answered, "*It was neither that* this man sinned, nor his parents; but *it was* so that the works of God might be displayed in him. John 9:3 NASB

The disciples saw a man that was blind. They asked why he was born that way. The thought was that at some point the man or his parents sinned and his blindness was punishment for that sin.

Jesus changed their way of thinking. It wasn't about what had happened or why it happened, but what can happen as a result.

When we deal with hard issues, we like to blame or come up with a reason that puts it in a nice box. The issue is, that is always looking backward.

Jesus wants us to look forward. What can come about because of this? The answer is that God can be glorified!

What if every problem was looked at this way? Your current situation, or what is happening in the world, can all point to giving God glory!

What if every Believer used this language? What if every Believer looked at life and whatever was happening and prayed, "How can You receive glory from this Lord?"

Pray that the way you look at things, the good and the bad, become conduits for God's glory!

It's all about Him! He deserves all the glory! And you get to be a part of that...today and tomorrow!

Father, help me to see You in every situation. Help me to look for all the ways that You can receive glory!

Day 10

Your Picture

How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? Romans 10:14 NASB

When "this" stuff is done, how will others remember us? What is the picture others will have about us when our name comes up?

True Believers always have the blessed opportunity to shine for Jesus! We get to be salt and light for Him, not just in tough times, but also when things are good.

So as salt and light, we should desire to always use our lives to point to Jesus!

We do that in our speech. We do that in our actions. We do that in the crowd and even when people aren't paying attention.

We have the awesome opportunity to bring God glory by the way we live, here and now!

So how will YOU live? Will you live differently? Will you draw closer to God knowing that you could lead someone to Jesus and eternal life?

Or will your face be lost in the crowd?

In all the ways you appear in this world, at home, at work, in your community and online, point to Jesus!

This isn't about you! This is about Him! Let others see Jesus in you!

Father, make and mold me to be more like Jesus. Help me to be Jesus' hands and feet today.

Day 11

The Gift

Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, *each of us is to exercise them accordingly*: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. Romans 12:6-8 NASB

Who doesn't like receiving a gift? There are gifts that we receive from certain people that are super special to us, like a homemade gift from a child or something passed down by a parent or grandparent.

But what if the gift giver was God? How awesome would God's gift to you be?

I'm not talking about the free gift of Grace, which is the most important. I'm talking about a special gift that God determined just for you!

The Father has given every one of His children special gifts. These gifts are to be "exercised" to serve Him in this world.

And because God is God and is All-Knowing and doesn't make mistakes, His gift to you is perfect and exactly what He desired for you.

How do you find out the gift He gave you?

Well, what do you love? What brings you great joy? What work doesn't feel like work to you? What have you done in service to others that people say you do a good job, but you think is really no big deal?

All of these thoughts and responses, when made prayerfully and with discernment will lead you to what the Father has given you as a gift.

And more than that, you get to serve Him with your gift!

Are you serving Him with the gift He has given you? This is for everyone, not just preachers or full-time ministry workers!

Open the gift today and put it to eternal use!

Father, You knew me before I was born. You knew exactly which gift I would receive. Help me to use my gift to serve and bring You glory.

**JOIN A BIBLE
STUDY**

Day 12

The Window

While you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you may become sons of Light.” John 12:36a NASB

There are times in life when opportunity comes knocking. Sometimes there is a short window, other times, you have a lot longer. But at some point, the window of opportunity does close for you.

Jesus invited those around Him to believe in the Light, to believe in Him. The window to accept Him and have a personal relationship with the Father was opened!

And this opportunity was one of the greatest of all times! It allowed regular people to become sons and daughters of Light. It provided identity, understanding, salvation and eternal life.

And this opportunity is for you and me too! God, through Jesus Christ, has given us the opportunity to become sons and daughters of Light.

The invitation has been given, the opportunity is in your hands. The window is open!

Father, thank You for inviting a regular person like me into a loving relationship with You. Let those who You call accept the opportunity too!

Day 13

Example

For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you. John 13:15
NASB

Big outreach events, like the Billy Graham Crusades, usually get the recognition and attention of the media. But are they truly effective?

With the big numbers that big events draw, there usually isn't the response that you would think.

Don't get me wrong. They aren't bad. They aren't wrong. They just aren't as effective as the example that Jesus gave...

Jesus had big events too. The feeding of the 5000 was a big event. There was actually more there than 5000. But Jesus didn't come out of that event with 5000 new disciples. In fact, the crowd soon turned and left because He didn't continue to perform miracles.

Before He was betrayed and crucified, Jesus showed by example how the disciples were supposed to minister and reach out.

Jesus took off his outer garments and washed their feet. He took the role of a servant, one of the lowest classes of servants, to help them understand how they should reach others.

After, Jesus told them that a servant isn't greater than his master. If He did this, they should follow His example.

Serving others, making a difference in another's life, shows the love of Jesus on a personal level.

How can you follow Jesus' example today? What can you do to serve someone else? It could be as simple as just being there for someone and taking time to listen.

Sometimes it is the simple things. But the simple are effective.

Serve today!

Father, help me to listen to the Holy Spirit and know exactly how You desire me to serve today.

Day 14

If You Love!

If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. John 14:15 NASB

For many, love is a feeling. It is a good feeling when things are good. You love someone and they love you back.

When we think about love, we think about Valentine's Day, romantic dates, a long embrace and just being with someone very special to you.

But Jesus talked about love differently. He said that if you love Him, you will obey His commands. That is way different than most people think about love!

If we bring what most people think about love into our faith, we wouldn't really be loving Jesus the way He wants us to! We wouldn't be loving Jesus on His terms.

So those that truly love Jesus are going to follow His commands. How do we know them? We have the Bible. When we read the Bible, we can understand and know how Jesus wants us to live.

When we live the way He desires us to, we show Him that we truly love Him. This is more than words, this is action!

Are you really loving Jesus? Obey His commands and show Him!

Father, help me to understand and live in obedience to Your Word so I can show my love for You.

Day 15

Opportunities

Each of us is to please his neighbor for his good, to his edification. Romans 15:2
NASB

The current culture is all about focusing on ourselves! "What about our needs?
What about the things I deserve?"

This runs counter to what Paul said we should focus on. It runs counter to what
Jesus said in John 15.

We are supposed to love, care and serve others.

True Christianity has always run counter to popular culture. That is why many
think Christians are weird.

But what the culture thinks shouldn't drive our behavior. We should, with the
help and guidance of the Holy Spirit, live in a way that pleases the Lord, including
serving others.

In the situation that you find yourself in today, how can you serve Jesus and serve
others?

Father, open my eyes to see the opportunity to serve You today.

Day 16

Your Advantage

But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. John 16:7
NASB

Have you ever found that something you have had for a while has a function that you didn't realize? For example, let's say you had a radio and for the longest time you listened to FM stations, but then one day you realized that you could stream music from the internet too! All of the sudden, the ability of that radio multiplied 1000 percent!

Now, this isn't an apples to apples analogy, but the same is true with you and the Holy Spirit.

Most Believers know that the Holy Spirit comes into you the minute you receive Jesus as Lord and Savior. But many don't understand the power and connection to God that they have because the Holy Spirit is now in them!

The Holy Spirit that takes up residence inside of us at salvation is the same Holy Spirit that was with the prophets of the Old Testament, and the Apostles and Believers in the New Testament! It is the same Holy Spirit that raised Jesus Christ from the dead!

But the most Christians understand is that maybe the Holy Spirit gives them a nice "spiritual" feeling at church or when music comes on. This is weak!

Jesus said that it would be better for the disciples if He went back to the Father and sent the Holy Spirit. What could be better than having Jesus right next to you? Jesus thought it would be better to have the Holy Spirit inside of you!

When Jesus said, greater works will you do, He was saying that because we would have the Holy Spirit. When He said the Holy Spirit would guide us and help us understand all things, He meant that!

It would really benefit all Christians to take the time to understand and walk in the Spirit. When we do, we are walking in the fullness of what the Father has for us.

Father, help me to understand, be guided by and walk in the Spirit today and everyday.

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO
SUPPORT MISSIONS?**

Day 17

Right Here, Right Now

that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the *past* ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, Colossians 1:26 NASB

You could have been born at any other time in history, but you were born right here, right now!

Why? Because that is just the way it happened? Or was it purposeful? Did God want you right here, right now?

Paul thought so! Paul looked at his being alive at the time he was alive as a privilege, seeing the revelation of what God the Father had planned for thousands of years. It all came into focus because of Jesus.

If you are not sure about your purpose, it's probably because you aren't focused on Jesus. Get focused on Him first and everything else falls into place.

And the reason you need to find your purpose is because God has plans for you. So you need to be in a place where you are able to listen and then be obedient to what the Holy Spirit is saying.

We are living in curious times. But even so, God has more for you than you realize. You were born for this time!

Father, help me to hear and be obedient to the Spirit and Your plans for me so that I can live purposefully in this age.

Day 18

Realms

Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm." John 18:36 NASB

This world didn't have a hold on Jesus. He wasn't worried about losing it, because it wasn't in His realm.

But He was concerned about His people. Those whom the Father had given Him. Those who He had prayed for on the previous day (previous chapters).

Then why do we care so much about stuff? This "stuff" that we worry so much about is meaningless and temporary. Do you remember those favorite shoes or purse from 10 years back that you just had to have or didn't want to get dirty? Do you still own them and treat them the same way? No you don't! Because everything in this world loses its value. Everything but our relationship with the Lord and our relationship with others who need the Lord.

Like Jesus, we need to look ahead towards our true world, His realm, His Kingdom. When we do, this world starts to lose the hold it once had on us, priorities change and our focus is clear.

Are you letting this world dictate and control you, or is the Lord leading you all the way?

Check your priorities today! Let Him guide you through to our true home.

Father, remove everything that is not of You so I can see the road You have for me clearly.

Day 19

My Redeemer

As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, And at the last He will take His stand on the earth. Job 19:25 NASB

Belief can be a powerful thing. It can cause people, regardless of the situation, to take a stand for what they believe in.

Job sat broken in front of his "friends" and family. He had lost everything, his kids, his wealth, his health, everything. Yet, he stood by the one thing that he had not lost, the one thing that he couldn't lose. His Redeemer lived!

There is no power on Earth that can cancel that belief out. The world, the devil and governments have tried. But for the true Believer, my Redeemer lives!

It speaks to the now and future! It gives us strength and hope! It reminds us that this world isn't all there is. It causes us to live with one loose hand holding on to this Earth as we take the jump to the next.

"My Redeemer lives" gives us hope and reminds us that we will live too! When everything else is stripped away, like it was for Job, we realize that it is the only thing that matters.

Are you at a place where you can say, "my Redeemer lives?" If not, make Him your Redeemer today!

Father, all my hope and desire is in You. I pray that others will find You and live too!

Day 20

Split Second

And so Simon Peter also came, following him, and entered the tomb; and he saw the linen wrappings lying *there*, John 20:6 NASB

I once stumbled on a scene where I found someone that I knew crying. The problem is that this person's crying looked like laughing. No really!

What made things worse is that because I thought she was laughing, I started cracking jokes. I know, I'm terrible. But let's admit it, some people laugh and cry funny. Anyway...

For a split second I was looking for a way to respond. If I remember correctly, I apologized and moved to a more empathetic response. Hopefully I helped. I'm not sure.

But it always stuck with me that I made the decision to respond in a split second and that I should be patient and listen more. It's just that sometimes we come on a scene that is hard for us to wrap our heads around.

When Mary shared with the disciples that she had seen the risen Jesus, John and Peter took off for the tomb. John ran faster and arrived first. But Peter walked in. And what did he see?

Peter saw Jesus' burial clothes just lying there. Can you imagine how hard that was to understand? What emotions did Peter and John feel in that moment.

In the next few verses, we find both of them behind locked doors. The empty tomb wasn't enough to start ministering to the world that Jesus was alive!

Thank goodness that Jesus didn't hold it against them. His next words to them was, "Peace be with you."

You might need time to grasp all the things that Jesus has done for you. You might

need to wrap your head around how much He loves you. You might need time to realize that you need Him.

You have it and you've had it!

Now at what point do you get it?

You have time, but at some point, you won't! That is a scary thought.

He comes to bring you peace today. Will you accept it? Will you accept Him?

Father, let everyone who reads this make a decision for Jesus today!

Day 21

Rolled

and the face-cloth which had been on His head, not lying with the linen wrappings, but rolled up in a place by itself. John 20:7 NASB

It's easy in our fast paced world to miss little details. Details help us to see things in deeper ways.

One detail that we seem to read over is the difference in the burial clothes in the empty tomb.

John tells us that the cloth that was covering Jesus' head was rolled up. This is a detail that John thought was important for us to know.

In looking this verse up, there is a lot of commentary on this. A lot of it is very interesting. But on a very basic level, we can say that rolling or folding this cloth up meant that there wasn't a quick getaway.

In other words, Jesus or someone didn't rip off Jesus' burial clothes in haste. No, this shows activity and action in the tomb! Jesus purposely rolled or folded His cloth.

This speaks to life after everyone else thought or believed Jesus was gone. And if this happened for Jesus, it will happen for us too!

The grave isn't our final resting place. It is just a stop. And whether you believe that we immediately go to Heaven as Believers, or that we stay "asleep" until the Resurrection, the next thing you "know" is that activity is happening again.

Get that last sentence down! The next conscious thing you realize, after you die, is that life is happening again!

This is the hope of the Believer. This is the goal of living for the Lord here on this Earth, that on that day, we will be face to face with Him in eternity!

Are you comfortable with the activity that you will experience after you die? If not, you can be! Just give your life to Jesus and live!

Father, thank You that death holds no power over You. Thank You for life and life more abundantly.

**DO YOU WANT TO JOIN
A PRAYER TEAM?**

Day 22

Getting It

For as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead. So the disciples went away again to their own homes. John 20:9-10 NASB

Getting the full picture of a scene or a situation is important to make a good decision. Not having all the right information can leave you confused or headed down the wrong road.

When Peter and John left the empty tomb, they weren't sure what to think. They just went back home, behind locked doors.

At that point, they didn't understand the Scriptures. And they couldn't fully understand the Word because they weren't reading it with the illumination of the Holy Spirit.

Compare and contrast their behavior before and after the day of Pentecost to see the difference!

When we read the Word of God, we start to see the big picture and what God is doing. Christians that aren't spending time in the Bible daily are missing an important guide and source of God's instruction and information!

On top of reading the Word, we should do so with the illumination of the Holy Spirit. Without the Spirit's guidance, it just becomes another book!

Simply ask the Holy Spirit to lead you and guide you and give you understanding as you read God's Word.

When you do this, it's like having the author of the book right beside you to point out important aspects of the story. And this is true because all Scripture was inspired by God, by the way of the Holy Spirit, written by men.

Start reading and understanding His Word today! There is no better time!

Father, thank You for Your Word and the leading of the Holy Spirit as I read it.

Day 23

The Next Verse

And they *said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She *said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him." John 20:13 NASB

Sometimes situations get so overwhelming that you can't hold it in any longer and break down. Everyone is different, but everyone has their limit.

Mary was at her limit! In less than one week, she saw Jesus ride in to Jerusalem triumphantly to being nailed up on a cross to being laid in a tomb. Now the thought of His body going missing and not having a place to grieve was more than she could handle.

But she didn't have all the information! The angels did! That's why they asked her, "why are you weeping?"

Her tears immediately dry up and she is filled with awe and then joy in the next few verses!

Why? New information! And that information wasn't only that the tomb was empty! It was that Jesus was alive!

Your situation, your weeping, is based on the information that you currently know. If you knew the next verse, would it be different?

Think about it. How many tears have you cried in the past and now that pain or worry is forgotten?

You see, that is what Jesus does! With the knowledge of who He is and what He has done for you, the troubles and finality of this life are made to nothing! This is in light of His mercy and grace extended to You because of His sacrifice.

Why are you weeping? Jesus is in the next verse, the next hour, the next day, the next life.

And when you see Him, everything melts away!

Are you ready for the next verse of your life? Close your eyes and turn to Him!

Father, thank You that this moment is temporary. Thank You for what we have waiting for us in eternity.

Day 24

Getting Sent

So Jesus said to them again, "Peace *be* with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you." John 20:21 NASB

As you read the account of the Resurrection in John, something happens later that evening that most miss.

Later that evening, after Jesus appeared to Mary, He appeared to His disciples who were behind closed doors.

He tells them, "as the Father has sent Me, I also send you."

Jesus didn't waste any time, the Gospel needed to get out!

The Gospel of John still records some hesitation and time between the disciples getting out and becoming active in ministry. But they did!

They went out in the power of the Holy Spirit and turned the world upside down for Jesus!

This charge wasn't only to the 12 disciples. This charge is also for us today. Do we "go into the world?" Each Believer has this responsibility in the context of the life the Lord has given them.

How have you shared the Gospel? How can you start? This should be a prayer and desire for every Believer.

He sent you. Will you go?

Father, thank You for the awesome privilege of sharing the Good News with others. Thank You that I can impact eternity for You.

Day 25

Temporary

After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen *and* establish you. 1 Peter 5:10 NASB

Suffering is not fun. No normal person signs up to suffer.

But suffering is part of life. You don't go through life without suffering at some point.

Your suffering can be brought on by something you caused or some outside force. But it is suffering!

The good news is that suffering is temporary. It doesn't feel like it when you're right in the middle of it. But it is!

But more than dealing with certain times of suffering, ALL the suffering that we experience in this life is temporary. Meaning, for the Believer, when your time is up, or Jesus comes back (whichever is first), suffering ends.

There is no suffering in Heaven! Read that again!

Can you imagine a life without suffering? It's hard because it is so much a part of this life. But this is something to look forward to!

Better yet, can you just imagine Heaven?

Something every Believer needs to get is that this life is temporary. There is eternal life that is your REAL life!

How much do you know about it? Shouldn't we learn more about it? Shouldn't we look forward to it? Shouldn't we look past this temporary situation to our ultimate home?

When was the last time you thought about Heaven? When was the last time you talked to Jesus about it? Why not now?

Father, thank You for the struggles of this life, because they remind us that one day, we will be with You and we can't imagine how awesome it will be!

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Day 26

And Now What?

what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. 1 John 1:3 NASB

Have you ever seen a good deal and had to share it with someone? Better yet, have you ever seen a good deal and experienced the blessing of it and then, because you were so blessed by it, you had to tell someone?

That was John!

He knew Jesus. He hung out with Jesus. He saw the healings, the demons cast out and the miracles. But more, he saw the risen Lord!

What he was sharing, what he was telling others about, he had first hand knowledge.

And what about you?

Jesus is near you. He has come close. He sent the Holy Spirit so you are connected to Him and the Father.

Are you excited about it? Are you excited to tell someone what you have experienced, what you have known, what He has done for you?

Like John, you have the invitation to draw close to Jesus.

So now what?

Father, let the joy of my heart and the desire of my soul proclaim Your salvation in this place.

Day 27

In Place

But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Matthew 6:33 NASB

Have you ever skipped a step, like when you are putting together a new piece of furniture or trying out a new recipe?

Skipping a step can throw everything else off! Sometimes the fix is an easy course correction, but sometimes you need to start all the way from scratch!

It's the same with God!

When you start with God, in alignment with Him, everything else falls into place. But if you go for it on your own, you'll run into road bumps and feel like "things" are just not right.

So how do you do it?

You invite Jesus into everyday! You read the Word and find out how the Father wants you to live. You stay sensitive to the guidance and leading of the Holy Spirit. You just get aligned with God!

Do things feel out of alignment with you? Go back and start with God! Seek His Kingdom and His righteousness and trust Him. You could never truly do it all on your own anyway!

Are you aligned with God right now?

Father, help me to put You first, to start with You and let everything else fall into place.

Day 28

Patience in Prayer

Blessed be the Lord,
Because He has heard the voice of my supplication. Psalms 28:6 NASB

You have heard the saying, "you won't know if you don't ask."

This saying applies to prayer too! God answers prayer. But if you don't go to Him in prayer, if you don't expect Him to answer, you won't value your prayer time.

Prayer feels awkward because it seems like you're just talking to yourself, in your mind or out loud.

But the Father is listening. He is listening and He is doing something about your prayer.

Just don't get impatient on the answer. He has a reason for the way He does things. His ways aren't your ways, but they are always best. He sees the big picture, the long game. He sees and thinks in eternity.

Like the Psalmist, know that He listens and answers your prayers. Then trust!

Trust and wait on Him! It is hard, especially when we like quick answers and resolutions. But He knows what He's doing!

Are you praying?

Father, thank You that You listen and answer every prayer. Help me to be patient and wait for Your answer.

Day 29

Looking Back

“Oh that I were as in months gone by,
As in the days when God watched over me; Job 29:2 NASB

It's easy to look back at a different time in your life and desire that time again.
How far would you go back? 3 months? 1 year? 10 years?

The problem with looking back is that IT IS THE PAST. You know how it all went down. You lived it!

And many times, we remember the past better than it actually was.

Job wished he could go back too. He longed for the days when everything was good and he was blessed. It's understandable. No one likes to be in the storm.

But if he would have gone back to the past, he wouldn't have seen how God was going to bless him in the near future! Job's later days were far better and more blessed than his earlier days.

Yes, there was pain. But it lasts for a moment.

When we desire the past, when we long to go back there, we miss what God wants to do in our lives today and in the future. Looking back, instead of looking forward stunts the blessings of God because you miss them right in front of your eyes.

Are you looking backward, desiring a "better" time? Ask the Lord to show you His goodness. Open your eyes to see what He is doing in your life right now! You might be surprised how He is setting it all up, getting you ready for the big blessing! Don't miss it!

Father, thank You that Your mercies are new every morning and that You have a great future in store for me.

Day 30

Awestruck

But when the crowds saw *this*, they were awestruck, and glorified God, who had given such authority to men. Matthew 9:8 NASB

It must have been truly amazing to see someone healed instantly. Jesus did it all the time it seems.

One of the main reasons for miracles is to give glory to God!

Imagine being sick or blind or demon possessed or a family member of someone who was. And then, after a time of helplessness, seeing them healed because of Jesus. You would be excited for them. You might be relieved! But the most important thing is that it happened because of God's grace and mercy.

As a result, He deserves glory and praise.

Now, He does thing for us all the time. Sometimes, they are so small we don't recognize them or they are behind the scenes and we don't realize them.

Either way, He deserves the glory.

Do you make room in your life, in your faith, to give God glory? We all should!

Father, let my life and the words I speak give You glory today and always.

GET FOCUSED