

THE

PURPOSE-FILLED

LIFE

30 DAYS OF LEARNING THE MEANING OF LIFE

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The Purpose-Filled Life: 30 Days of Learning the Meaning of Life

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PREFACE

Psalms 139:13-14, “13 For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. 14 I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.”

You are not an accident. You are alive and here on the earth today because of the will of God. Your parents might not have planned your coming, but God did. Your life has a purpose to glorify God in all that you do.

You didn’t come from the goo and then through the zoo! You are not the evolved relative of an ape or any other kind of animal- you are a human, God’s greatest creation- made in His very image. Moses wrote in Genesis 1:27, *“So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.”* As a result, whether you’re a male or a female, you are made in God’s likeness. You are beautiful, wonderful and special in many ways- there is only one like you.

In the Psalm 139, David described the majestic nature of humanity in poetic terms that still capture my heart- no matter how many times I read it. Just in the last few years, doctors with x-ray technology have been able to see for the first time all the stages of human development in the mother’s womb, but they still cannot explain “why” the body does what it does. In all our natural wisdom, all we can do is describe on the surface what is happening physically. But God teaches us that we are more than just physical machines surviving to pass on our DNA. We are spiritual beings “knit together” with our physical body to thrive in life as God’s children.

Stop and think for a moment about how wonderful and yet fearful it is to be a spiritual being in a physical body. You’re more than just a ghost in a machine; you’re a spiritual soul that is interwoven into a physical body. Therefore, your soul knows both the voice of God and the inner voice of your human thought. You are not an animal of instinct; you’re a free will agent able to make choices and decisions without outside coercion. Likewise, you are subjected to the natural laws of God’s creation and since the fall of Adam- to a

sinful nature. Your sinful nature must be subjected to the cross of Calvary and made new in Christ (John 3:3).

Sadly, many people never move beyond their sinful nature (inherited because of Adam's sin) and remain under the wrath of God. However, we were made for so much more. We were made to know and love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. To be penetrated by His presence as He makes us His dwelling place.

To be truly human is to know God the Father, through Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit, in the secret and sacred place of knowing one's self.

Some have thought they can promote human flourishing outside of a relationship with God. In regards to this popular false belief, Dr. William Lane Craig noted, "Modern man thought that when he had gotten rid of God, he had freed himself from all that repressed and stifled him. Instead, he discovered that in killing God, he had also killed himself. For if there is no God, then man's life becomes absurd." Truly it comes down to this, "God or Absurdity." I choose God and His marvelous plan for my life.

What do you choose? I believe if you have picked up this book, you want to live life to its fullest potential with your eyes wide open and your heart ready to receive all that God has for you. Join me on this journey and prepare to be amazed at what God has in store!

HOW TO USE THE BOOK

1. Read a lesson each day consistently for 30 days.
2. Prayerfully consider the reflection at the end of each lesson.
3. Put into practice the three actions listed each day.

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DAY 1: DOES GOD EXIST?

Romans 1:20, *“For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.”*

Yes, God does exist! In today’s passage Paul taught that everyone already really knows that God exists and are without excuse. In a few verses prior Paul explained why people try to claim there is no God, Romans 1:18-19, *“18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, 19 since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them.”* Therefore, the only reason why people disbelieve in God is because they suppress the truth of His existence with their sin.

Think about it, if there’s a watch, there’s a watchmaker. If there’s a car, there’s a carmaker. And certainly, if there’s a creation, there’s a Creator.

However, I’ve actually heard some people say, “I don’t believe in God because I believe in science!” The person making this statement has no real understanding of either one. True Christians have always believed in science, which is the gathering of knowledge. For example, Francis Bacon, the scientist who established the scientific method itself, known as induction, was a Christian.

Sir Isaac Newton, who was one of the most influential scientists in history, was also a devote Christian who wrote more about the Bible than he did science. Newton said, “Gravity explains the motions of the planets, but it cannot explain who set the planets in motion. God governs all things and knows all that is or can be done.” Not only have Christian scientists understood the greatness of God’s wisdom in creation, but even non-Christians have had to admit this too. Albert Einstein said, “The most incomprehensible thing about the universe is

that it is comprehensible.”

There are many evidences for God’s existence but remember the best one is God’s witness to you in your heart right now! As well as: (1) *The Evidence From Design*: The universe’s laws are precisely ordered for life- without these properties life couldn’t exist. (2) *The Evidence From Objective Morality*: Man’s inward moral compass proves a moral law giver- for we all generally feel the same towards evil. (3) *The Evidence From the First Cause*: Something cannot come from nothing; thus, everything that has a beginning has a cause.

(4) *Evidence from Your Intelligence*: Last, but not least, the best evidence for God is your intelligence. The very fact that you can question if there is a God proves that God exists. Matter doesn’t produce mind and reason doesn’t come from rocks. You were made in the image of God and the Bible actually says you already know this because without Him you wouldn’t exist and everything would be reduced to absurdity. For example, it’s absurd for a child to try and disprove they have parents and the same is true for a creature to try and prove a Creator didn’t create them.

If you have doubts about God because you are suppressing the truth in wickedness, I challenge you to humble yourself, repent of your pride, pray, read the New Testament starting with John and ask God to reveal Himself to you in the person of Jesus Christ. I believe if you truly humble yourself, seek Him and open up your heart to Jesus you will know Him personally like I do! For those who already know and love God, let us be eager to share His message of redemption to the world around us.

REFLECTION

Do you acknowledge God or are you suppressing the truth of His existence?

ACTION

1. If you’re suppressing the knowledge of God; humble yourself to acknowledge the inner witness of His existence in your conscience and reach out to Him (Acts 17:27-28).

2. Don't be afraid of science because whatever is true has come from God and will confirm His Word!
3. Christians, pray and help others discover the truth of God's existence.

DAY 2: WHO IS GOD?

Psalm 89:8, *“Who is like you, Lord God Almighty? You, Lord, are mighty, and your faithfulness surrounds you.”*

According to Anselm, the great theologian of the past, “God is the greatest conceivable being.” He is the uncaused cause who is timeless, spaceless and immaterial. He is one Supreme Being, existing in three persons, with a spiritual substance that dwells in unapproachable light in another dimension called heaven. He is the Creator and Sustainer of all things. All knowledge and understanding come from Him. He can be known from our conscience and in creation, but He chose to reveal Himself primarily through special revelation (the Word of God).

The Word of God is also known as the Bible. To understand the Bible, I recommend starting to read it in the New Testament with the Gospel of John to discover who God is. After reading this book and others in the New Testament (NT) like Romans, Ephesians, Hebrews and 1 John; it is then good to go back and read the Old Testament (OT). Start with such books as Psalms and Proverbs and then move into the Torah (the first five books of the Old Testament) and then read some of the Major Prophets (like Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel). Afterwards you should have a good understanding of who God is.

Most theologians (those who study God) summarize knowing God in two ways. The first and most important way is by knowing Jesus as one’s personal Lord and Savior. Jesus said in the book of John that He was the only way to the Father and everyone who wanted to come to God had to first come to Him (John 14:6). Paul, the author of thirteen books in the NT, also wrote in 1 Timothy 2:5, *“For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus.”*

The only way to know God is to have a personal relationship with Jesus.

The second way to know God, after becoming a born again Christian, is to study His attributes in the Bible. Here is a short list and explanation of God’s main attributes (or qualities); (1) God is Tri-

Personal or a Tri-Unity (Trinity): God is three divine persons in one being; the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). (2) God is All Powerful (Omnipotent): He possesses all power and energy in the natural and spiritual world (Job 42:2).

(3) God is All-Knowing (Omniscient): God knows everything at all times (1 John 3:20). (4) God is All-Present (Omnipresent): God fills and sustains all space, time and dimensions (Jeremiah 23:24). (5) God is All-Good (Omnibenevolent): Everything God does is good because He is good (Mark 10:18). (6) God is All-Loving: God is the source of all love because He is love (1 John 4:8). (7) God is Holy: God is moral perfection and no one can compare to Him (Isaiah 6:3).

I would first strongly encourage all God-seekers to come to Jesus and be born again. Then, second, make time to read the Bible everyday to get a glimpse of the awesomeness of God's characteristics!

REFLECTION

Does your understanding of God agree with the Bible's description of Him?

ACTION

1. Come to Jesus and be born again if you haven't already (John 3:3).
2. Read the Bible daily and write in a journal anytime you learn something new about God's character.
3. Pray everyday to God in Jesus' name to personally grow deeper in your knowledge of Him.

DAY 3: HOW DOES GOD COMMUNICATE?

John 10:27, *“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.”*

The Bible teaches us that God can communicate to His people in seven different ways. First, with an audible voice that comes to the ears (Acts 9:4). Second, God can communicate to us by the Holy Spirit speaking to our mind in the form of thoughts (1 Corinthians 2:16). Third, God can send angelic messengers to visit people to bring His message (Luke 1:28).

Fourth, God can speak to people in dreams while they are sleeping (Matthew 2:13). Fifth, God can speak in the form of visions. Visions are spiritual dream like states that people have while they are awake (Acts 10:3). Sixth, God can communicate to people by His earthly messengers (preachers) who preach the Word of God (Romans 10:18). Seventh, and most importantly, God speaks to His people through the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16).

Prayer, talking to God, is the best way to make yourself available to hear God speak to you. I recommend people who desire to hear God speak to them to do the following; (1) Pray to the Father in Jesus’ name and ask the Holy Spirit to come and speak to you, (2) Confess all known sin- which can keep you separated from God, (3) Begin to read the Bible during your prayer time and (4) Spend time in meditation on God’s Word with an open heart to hear God speak.

God speaks to us primarily when we pray and read the Bible. And He desires us to speak to Him through prayer, both with our words and inwardly with our thoughts.

Some people get discouraged when they don’t hear God speak to them immediately, but one genuine message from God can change your life forever, it’s worth the wait. Also, people can get confused when seeking the voice of God because there are other places voices can come from. For example; (1) Your own mind, (2) Other people’s

own words pretending to be God's words and (3) Demonic messages. The Bible states that Satan is said to be able to appear as an "angel of light" and deceive people (2 Corinthians 11:14).

I always recommend people testing all their "messages" by the Word of God and trusted leaders. Jesus promised in today's passage that He would speak in such a way that you would know it is His voice. He is your Good Shepherd and desires to be in relationship with you. Trust His ways and do not get anxious if you are waiting to hear direction from Him, God is always with you and promised to direct all your paths (Proverbs 3:5-6). God is always speaking, but are you always listening? Charles Stanley wrote, "God's voice is still and quiet and easily buried under an avalanche of clamour." Be patient, God will speak.

REFLECTION

Has God ever spoken to you?

ACTION

1. Make time every day to read your Bible, pray and meditate on God's Word.
2. Ask God to communicate with you about the issues of your life and how much He loves you.
3. Be obedient to all that God tells you to do and believe what He says about you (ex., "you are blessed, never alone, etc.").

DAY 4: WHO AM I?

Genesis 1:27, *“So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.”*

You are an image bearer of God. The Bible teaches that God created us in “His own image,” in Latin this is called the, *“imago dei.”* Though biblical scholars have taken different positions on what exactly being made in God’s image altogether entails, one thing is clear; humanity is the pinnacle of God’s creation.

Never let a day go by without expressing your gratitude for the privilege of being made in God’s image. No other creation has the honor that we have because we can freely know and love God by being partakers of His divine nature (2 Peter 1:4).

Consider the following two ways you are fearfully and wonderfully made; first, you are a spiritual being living in a physical body. The physical body is just a shell that your spirit and soul reside in. Think of your body as an “earth suit.” Though your spirit is influenced and limited by the body, when the body dies your spirit lives on. Then after Judgment Day, if you’ve been born again, you will be given a glorified body to rule and reign with Christ on the earth (2 Corinthians 5:4).

Second, you are a spiritual person who has a soul. Your spiritual life is what gives you existence and your soul is what gives you expression of your personhood. The soul consists of your mind, will and emotions. Though all humans are created alike as spirits with souls, your soul is one-of-a-kind. No one else has a soul like yours because each person’s soul is uniquely developed through your life’s experiences (Genesis 2:8).

Sadly, now because of Adam’s sin, you are a spiritual soul that lives in a sinful body. This may be hard to swallow, but it is no less true. When Adam and Eve sinned humanity was cursed. Now all people’s nature is born in sin (Genesis 2:17). That is why we must be born again in our spiritual soul (John 3:3), face physical death

(Hebrews 9:27) and then be resurrected in perfection at the renewal of all things in our body (Revelation 20:6). Alistair Begg wrote, “Within each of us exists the image of God, however disfigured and corrupted by sin it may presently be. God is able to recover this image through grace as we are conformed to Christ.”

Now that you know who you are, God commands you to be born again (if you haven’t already). To be born again is to be made new spiritually and renewed in your soul. Then once you have been born again you are to live for Jesus in the sinful body (flesh) until either your body dies or Christ returns. If you die and go to heaven before Christ returns, when He comes back on Judgment Day you will come back with Him and receive a new resurrected body (1 Thessalonians 4:16).

Take responsibility for who you are and live for Jesus. Consider what Paul said in 1 Thessalonians 5:23, “*May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*” Make this your prayer everyday; to be wholly holy in your spirit, soul and body.

REFLECTION

Do you believe you are who the Bible says you are?

ACTION

1. Come to Jesus and be born again if you haven’t already (John 3:3).
2. Daily be renewed in your soul (mind) (Romans 12:1-2).
3. Consider your sinful body and its desires dead because it was crucified with Christ (Galatians 5:24).

DAY 5: WHY AM I HERE?

Acts 17:26-27, “26 From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. 27 God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us.”

You are here on earth to be in a relationship with God and do all things for His glory. Paul in today’s verses was preaching to a group of pagan philosophers who were constantly seeking for the meaning of life. Paul gave them what we now call, “The Christian Worldview.” He shared with them the meaning of life from a biblical, Christ-centered perspective. Ken Ham said, “God’s people need to unashamedly and uncompromisingly stand on the Bible. We need to unashamedly proclaim a Christian worldview and the gospel, all the while giving answers for the hope we have.”

The Christian Worldview can be summed up in the following main points, also known as the gospel message; (1) God created all things, (2) People are a part of God’s creation made uniquely in His image, (3) Humanity was created to have a relationship with God, (4) When Adam sinned humanity was separated from God and (5) Only through faith in Jesus Christ’s work on the cross can all people be restored to their relationship with God.

You are here on earth to have a relationship with God that is restored through faith in Jesus Christ. You are to ask, seek and knock at heaven’s door, in Jesus’ name, until you find peace with God and have assurance of your salvation. Then for the rest of your life you are here to be satisfied in enjoying God.

Jesus said in Matthew 6:33, “*But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*” When you seek first God’s kingdom and His righteousness all other things will be added to you, such as your family, career, friendships, etc. These important things will all come into place with God’s

blessings when you keep Jesus at the center of all you do. Think of God being the gear that makes the bicycle wheel, with its many spokes, go around. Without God, the wheels and their spokes won't move. Without God in all the important areas of your life you can't experience peace and joy because all those things were meant to revolve around Jesus.

Sex outside of God's plan will lead to perversion and dissatisfaction. A family that doesn't revolve around God will lead to heartache and dysfunction. And a job void of God's purpose will lead to selfish ambition and drudgery. Is it any wonder that so many people have sex, families and jobs; yet they still don't understand their purpose on earth? That is because they haven't put God in the center of their lives. When God is at the center of your life everything in your life will have its intended purpose.

REFLECTION

Is Jesus the center of who you are and everything you do?

ACTION

1. Repent of any false views you may have about the meaning of life.
2. Seek first God's kingdom and righteousness in all you do.
3. Like Paul, preach to others the gospel, which is the basis for the Christian Worldview.

DAY 6: WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I DIE?

Hebrews 9:27, *“People are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment.”*

After your body dies your spiritual soul will be sent to hell or brought to heaven. Then after Jesus comes to earth and judges the world, hell will be thrown into the lake of fire for eternity and heaven’s citizens will live forever on the new earth with Jesus in resurrected bodies (Revelation 20:13-21:1).

The Bible is very clear that there are no other options. Such things as “purgatory” and “reincarnation” are only myths promoted by false teachers. Sad, but true, the origin of purgatory (a middle place between heaven and hell for the purging of sin) in the Roman Catholic church had more to do with greed than biblical evidence. The money-loving priests promised freedom from the torment of purgatory for those who gave “indulgences.” These fees were developed in the Dark Ages to fill the pockets of the popes in Rome to expand their empire. And reincarnation is a demonic lie with its roots in pagan religions like Hinduism. Certainly, Jesus, nor the Bible, ever taught either one.

What you do in this life will determine where you will be for all of eternity. Everyone will exist in the after life, both the wicked and the righteous, however, where you will be is determined by your acceptance or rejection of Jesus Christ as Lord.

Some skeptics question God’s goodness because they think it would be unfair for Him to punish people’s temporary sins with eternal punishment. However, I thank God for His eternal judgments because they display the glory of His might and His great love for His people (Revelation 15:3-4). God wouldn’t be a good God if He simply overlooked evil and He wouldn’t be just if He didn’t permanently remove people from His presence that rejected Him in their life. Also, though man’s sins are temporary in their life, they are against an eternal God, therefore, they have eternal consequences. Also, God

didn't have to give humanity another chance, because the angels are now eternally damned based on their one and only choice.

Humanity not only received another chance after Adam, but most of us have had many chances. Someone could respond, "Why did He create us then, if He knew so many would reject Him?" Simple, Jesus wanted to be in relationship with those who wanted Him, even if it meant many would reject Him. God is responsible for creating us with choice (whether you like it or not), but you are responsible for the choices you make (whether you like the consequences or not).

God is not going to force people to love Him. The most loving thing Jesus did was give humanity a choice to either accept or reject Him. A wise man once said, "Hell is exactly what sinners want- an eternity without God. And heaven, is exactly what saints want- an eternity with their precious Jesus!"

REFLECTION

Where will you go when you die?

ACTION

1. Repent of any anger you may have towards God because He created you with the responsibility of making a choice with an eternal consequence.
2. Be born again by faith and choose to love God by obeying all His commands.
3. Tell others what will happen when they die.

DAY 7: WHY DOES GOD ALLOW EVIL?

Genesis 2:17, “But you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”

God allows evil in the world because humanity freely chose to disobey Him in the Garden of Eden. When Adam sinned he brought spiritual death to all mankind, was cursed with the knowledge of both good and evil and brought death to the natural world (paradise was lost). Afterward, humanity began living in the fallen state of sin with only himself to regulate the evil in his heart. Sadly, the first example of man choosing evil over good after the fall was Cain murdering Abel (the sons of Adam and Eve) in Genesis 4:7-8 and the choice of evil over good has continued to this day.

In the 3rd century before Christ, the Greek philosopher Epicurus came up with the following argument against God known as the “Epicurus' Trilemma,” it goes as follows; “If an all-powerful and perfectly good god exists, then evil does not. There is evil in the world. Therefore, an all-powerful and perfectly good god does not exist.”

The conclusion to his trilemma is simple, “If evil exists, then God cannot exist.” The philosopher David Hume popularized this argument against God based on evil in the 18th century. Hume wrote, “If God is unable to prevent evil, he is not omnipotent [all-powerful]. If God is not willing to prevent evil, he is not good. If God is willing and able to prevent evil, then why is there evil?”

In both arguments against God from evil, the philosophers are using a definition of evil as, “morally wrong.” When they refer to evil they mean things like murder, child abuse and the like. However, without God existing as the ultimate “Moral Law Giver,” there cannot exist an “objective right or wrong” because evil itself is just a matter of one’s opinion. Therefore, the atheist has the real “problem with evil” because without appealing to a higher law how can they define what is evil? They cannot.

If God doesn't exist, then neither does evil and any argument against God using evil is self-defeating because its first premise (evil exists) cannot be established.

On the other hand, if evil does exist (which everyone knows it does), then there must be a God that gives each person the ability to recognize evil, i.e., "a moral compass." The story of God creating Adam and Eve gives the best explanation for why humanity has the knowledge of good and evil, and why most people choose evil. In summary, Adam and Eve freely chose to disobey God by following Satan's temptation and eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 3:1-24). Since that time mankind has not only known goodness but also evil. The argument for God from evil then goes like this, "If the knowledge of evil exists, God exists. The knowledge evil exists. Therefore, God exists." In trying to use the knowledge of evil to disprove God, it actually does the opposite and proves that God exists!

The good news is that evil doesn't win. Jesus came to die on the cross to destroy the power of Satan and bring redemption to all those effected by evil (1 John 3:8). Jesus also promised to one day return and to once and for all rid the universe of evil (starting with those who love to do it; i.e., "sinners"). Therefore, choose God and His goodness today by accepting Jesus as the Lord of your life. And in times of evil look to the cross to find the love and comfort of Jesus Christ.

REFLECTION

Do you believe Jesus is the answer to the problem of evil?

ACTION

1. If you haven't already, repent for the evil you have done.
2. Live in the goodness of God by obeying Jesus' commands.
3. When you meet someone who has a problem with evil- let him or her know Jesus already solved it!

DAY 8: WHAT IS THE TRINITY?

Matthew 28:19, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

The word “trinity” is a term Christians made to describe the three divine persons of God’s nature. Tertullian was the first church theologian to use the word trinity around 200 A.D. (approximately 100 years after the death of the last Apostle; John). The trinity is not so much a what, as it is a “who,” and the who is the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The term itself means, “tri-unity or three-in-one.” Some cults like Jehovah Witnesses and Oneness Pentecostals, along with false religions like Islam have tried to claim that the concept of the trinity was taken from the pagan religions that worshipped three gods in the form of a “triad.” However, as one can clearly see in the verse above Jesus Himself taught the doctrine of the trinity because He knew it to be true.

Likewise, the Greeks who worshipped three main gods; Zeus, Athena and Apollo and the Hindus who worship a triad; Brahma, Vishnu and Sheva; consider their three gods to be separate and not “one being.” Christianity, based in Judaism, affirms one God revealed in three persons. Therefore, referring to the worship of a “triad” or “three separate gods” has nothing in common with the trinity. It is like comparing a “house” with a “mouse” because they sound the same.

The concept of the trinity was concealed in the Old Testament through the Jewish prophecies and experiences but the New Testament revealed the triune nature of God through the person of Jesus and the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Neither Jesus, nor His followers, would have ever believed or taught “polytheism” (many gods) because the Jews were strictly instructed to only serve one God, “monotheism” (Deuteronomy 6:4).

At the same time, when Jews studied their Scriptures they were left with great mysteries surrounding God's nature. God said He wouldn't meet with people face-to-face (Exodus 33:20), yet Abraham and Moses saw God face-to-face (Genesis 18:22-23 & Exodus 33:11). God said He wasn't a man, yet Isaiah prophesied that a child would be called, "Mighty God" (Isaiah 9:6). And it was strictly forbidden to bow down and worship anyone other than God, yet, Daniel saw in a vision "one like the Son of Man" come to the Ancient of Days and receive worship from all of creation (Daniel 7:13-14).

Though false teachers may wrongfully slander the term trinity, it is taught in the Bible from beginning to end. I would encourage you to read the Bible and see for yourself the following three foundations concerning God's nature as taught by Dr. James White; *Foundation One*: There is only one God worthy of worship who is all-knowing, all-powerful and ever-present (Isaiah 43:10). *Foundation Two*: Three divine persons claim to be God and act as one God- the Father, the Son (also known as the "Word" and "Jesus") and the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 13:14) and *Foundation Three*: The three divine persons are equal in their nature as God because they share the same "name" (Matthew 28:19).

The prophet Isaiah said, "*With whom, then, will you compare God? To what image will you liken him?*" (Isaiah 48:10) Don't fall for the ole' tricks of the devil and think that if you cannot fully comprehend the Trinity or see examples of it in nature then it must be mythological or pagan. God is God and we are not, period. Come to the Holy Scriptures with a humble heart and let the Word of God expand your mind!

REFLECTION

Do you believe in the triune nature of God?

ACTION

1. Repent of any false beliefs about God's nature you may of had.
2. Believe the doctrine of one God revealed in three divine persons.
3. Teach the three-fold explanation of the Trinity to others.

DAY 9: WHAT ARE GOD'S GREATEST COMMANDS?

Mark 12:30-31, “30 *‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ 31 The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”*

God’s two greatest commands are to love Him with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and to love your neighbor as yourself. First, to love God means to worship and adore Him with Spirit-led worship (John 4:24). Second, we love God by keeping all of His commands (John 14:15). The first way we are to love our neighbor as ourselves is to help them in their times of need like the Good Samaritan did in Luke 10:25-27. And the second way is by preaching the gospel to them so that they might believe and be saved (Acts 20:26-27).

When Jesus walked the earth He revealed the Father’s heart and perfectly completed the Old Covenant. Jesus did not come to abolish or do away with the 613 laws given by God to Moses (known as the “Law of Moses”) but rather He came to perfectly obey them, fulfill them and bring a new covenant with a new law (the “Law of Christ”), as revealed in Jeremiah 31:31 and John 1:17.

Though the Christian can gain understanding of God’s character from the many laws of the Old Testament, Jesus Christ is the full representation of God’s law in the flesh (Colossians 1:15). Therefore, the disciple of Christ is commanded to follow all that Jesus taught as the final revelation from God the Father and not try to go back to the previous covenant (Matthew 28:20). Though the moral commands of the Old Testament remain intact in the New Testament (for example murder and lying is still sinful); the civil, priestly,

sacrificial, dietary and religious laws are no longer binding. God said in Hebrews 8:13, *“By calling this covenant ‘new,’ he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and outdated will soon disappear.”*

As a result, from the foundation of Jesus’ two greatest commandments (loving God and people) we should follow all the rest of Jesus’ teachings. For example, if you truly love God you will follow Jesus’ teaching on sexuality because Jesus taught that God only blessed sex between a married man and woman (Mark 10:7). Chuck Colson wrote, “Loving God - really loving Him - means living out His commands no matter what the cost.” Set your heart on obeying God’s two greatest commands and all the others will come naturally (1 John 2:15-17)!

REFLECTION

Do you love God with all your heart and your neighbor as yourself?

ACTION

1. Repent of anything you love more than God (Luke 14:26-27).
2. Repent for the times you did not love others as yourself.
3. Determine to always love God and people!

DAY 10: WHAT ARE GOD'S PRIORITIES FOR MY LIFE?

Matthew 6:33, "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

God's four main priorities for your life are; (1) Faith, (2) Family, (3) Function and (4) Fellowship. In today's passage Jesus corrected the wrong priorities of people in the world. For example, many people place their need for food, clothes and shelter- even providing for their family above God's Kingdom. However, when they die, even if they gained those things, plus the whole world, they profit nothing because they forfeit eternal life and will spend eternity in hell (Matthew 16:26).

Jesus taught us that we should seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness because He knew that everything else would fail in the end.

First, God's Kingdom is the reign of Jesus Christ as King in your life. There is room for only one person on the throne of your heart. Who will you let rule your life, you or God? Second, seeking "God's righteousness" means, "to always do the right thing according to God's Word." If it's not blessed in God's Word, it's not right, no matter what culture or others say. Therefore, when the disciple seeks God and His righteousness, all that he or she does in life will be in order.

When God created Adam and Eve their first priority was their faithful relationship to Him. Second, was their family, i.e., "their marriage." Third, were their functions upon the earth- naming the animals, working in the garden, etc. Fourth, was their fellowship with others (eventually their friends).

Today, every disciple should follow the same priorities. First and foremost, the Christian's faithful relationship to God should always be number one. This includes private prayer, study of God's Word, going to church, being a living witness and living obedient to all of Jesus' commands. Second, the disciple must be committed to their family. If you're a child- obey your parents; if you're married- love and honor each other; and if you're parents- care and provide for your children.

Third, each person should serve the community by performing a function. Every community needs reliable and skilled workers to make the quality of living good for all and promote human flourishing. Remember, if you love what you do, you'll never work a day in your life. Fourth, we should have godly friends that we can fellowship with in our daily lives. Our times of Christian fellowship provide emotional refreshment, encouragement and edification.

We need to reprioritize our lives and do life God's ways. Shelton Smith said, "We need a sweeping revival where people confess their sins and get right with God, where folks turn out in bigger crowds at the church house than they do at the ball game, and where the old-time religion still gets top priority!" We have too many people pursuing sports, entertainment, money, fashion, materialism and "the good life;" it's time we seek first God's Kingdom and His righteousness so that everything else will be blessed!

REFLECTION

Do you have the right priorities in life?

ACTION

1. Repent if you have had the wrong priorities in life.
2. Seek God first in all you do.
3. Always do what is right according to God's Word!

DAY 11: WHO ARE GOD'S CHILDREN?

John 1:12, "Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."

To be a child of God means to be born again and adopted by the Father into His family. Sad but true, many people think that everyone is a child of God because they are His creation, but that is not what the Bible teaches. The Bible is very clear in the New Testament that unless we're born again we are by default children of the devil.

Take for example, when Jesus was correcting the Jewish leaders of His day for their hypocrisy. They believed they were entitled to special privileges because they were Abraham's descendants. However, Jesus said the following to them in John 8:44, *"You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires."*

Likewise, because everyone is born a sinner as a result of Adam's fall, no one can receive adoption into God's family until they are born of the Spirit. Jesus told Nicodemus in John 3:3, *"Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again."* A.C. Dixon wrote, "When we have accepted Jesus Christ, we have become akin to the Father; having become real children of God, we then have the spirit of sonship by which we can come into His presence and make known our wants in a familiar way."

Everyone must be born again in his or her spirit by the Holy Spirit to become a "child of God."

That is why John in today's passage said that only those who "receive Him [Jesus]" and "believe in His name" are given the "right/privilege" to become "children of God." Paul also said in Romans 8:16, *"The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children."* Therefore, the children of God, who are both born and adopted by the Spirit, have the privilege of calling God their

“*Abba,*” Aramaic for “Father.” Furthermore, in Romans 8:15 Paul wrote, “*The Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.”*”

Do you want to be God’s child? Then place your faith in Jesus, repent of your sins and be born again into God’s family!

REFLECTION

Are you a genuine child of God?

ACTION

1. Be born again if you haven’t already.
2. Praise God today for the privilege of being His adopted child.
3. Live as an obedient child of God according to 1 Peter 1:14-16.

DAY 12: WHO DOES GOD WANT ME TO BE?

Matthew 28:19-20, “19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

God desires all people to be disciples of Jesus. After a person has been born again God commands them to be Jesus’ disciple. The word “disciple” means, “student or devoted follower.” Accordingly, everyone should not only believe in Jesus, but also be trained and equipped to live like Jesus!

John records the following words of Jesus in John 8:31-32 to those who had simply “believed” in Him, “31 To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, ‘If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. 32 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.’” Jesus clearly distinguished between their belief and their actions. James also noted this difference between faith and works in James 2:17, “Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.”

God desires all people not only to have faith in Him but also to obey all that he commanded by being Jesus’ disciple.

The only way a person can obey all that Jesus commanded is if they are first taught all that Jesus commanded; this is called discipleship. Consider discipleship the school in which the disciple enrolls in and is a part of until they reach heaven. So not only is everyone to become a disciple, but God commands all disciples to be dedicated to discipleship for their entire lives. Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote, “Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ.”

Always remember, the work of being a disciple is not done in

human effort- it is initiated, maintained and accomplished by the Holy Spirit. Jesus said in John 6:63, “*The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the Spirit and life.*” Therefore, be a disciple of Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit!

REFLECTION

Are you a disciple of Christ?

ACTION

1. Become a disciple of Christ if you haven't already.
2. Learn and obey all of Jesus' commands.
3. Depend upon the Holy Spirit to empower you to be Jesus' disciple.

DAY 13: HOW DO I MOVE PAST MY PAST?

Philippians 3:13-14, “13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.”

You move past your past by forgetting what is behind you and pressing on towards your future by the power of the Holy Spirit. You cannot effectively move forward looking backwards. Imagine trying to drive a car forward by looking into the rear view mirror- it would be disastrous! The same is true with the past, you can't effectively move forward continually focusing on your past.

You have to forget the past and focus on what is ahead to move into God's plan for your life.

Every one of us has things in our past we want to forget about, but the memories follow us everywhere. Our mind can sometimes be our worst enemy- repeating like a broken record our past hurts and failures. Your worst memories of the past can sometimes be what others did to you. The pain they caused you lives on because you keep the past memories in your present thoughts.

For others the past is haunting because of the sinful things you did to others and yourself. You wish you could just hit the reset button and have all your sinful memories erased. Paul in today's passage stated that since he hadn't received his resurrected body yet, he was still reminded of his past mistakes. Nonetheless, he wrote that there is one thing he could do until then, he could choose to forget what was behind and strain towards what was ahead. By forgetting what is behind Paul is not referring to a special ability to erase his memories, but rather the supernatural freedom from being focused on them in the present.

The only way you and I can no longer focus on the past is if the Holy Spirit changes the pattern of our thinking. Paul wrote in Romans 12:2, *“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is —his good, pleasing and perfect will.”* Until we are given a new body with a new brain, it will be a daily fight to keep the mind free from the past and stay focused on God’s Word. A wise person once said, “The loudest and most convincing lies are the ones we tell ourselves. Yet at the same time, the most convincing truths are those God speaks to our hearts.”

Think about your mind like a cup of clean water that was cleansed when you were born again. Now every time you have thoughts about your past, they’re like specks of dirt coming into your pure water. The Holy Spirit is here to guard your mind from the specks of dirt ever coming in and if they do, He is here to renew your mind back to its default position of purity. Therefore, make a choice everyday to step out of your past and into God’s future with the way you think!

REFLECTION

Do you believe God can free your mind from your past thoughts?

ACTION

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to cleanse your mind and set you free from the broken record of your past.
2. Anytime your past memories try to come back ask God to cleanse you again.
3. Stay focused on your future and meditate on God’s promises for your life!

DAY 14: HOW DO I CHANGE MY LIFE?

2 Corinthians 5:17, *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!”*

To change your life, you must be born again and then believe you are who God says you are. Don't be deceived into believing today's self-help gurus that teach you are the source of change in your life. A broken computer can't fix itself, nor can broken people heal themselves.

True lifestyle change doesn't come from your will power, positive thinking or inner strength. Change comes from the outside in by the power of God, through the Holy Spirit!

Jesus didn't teach His disciples to believe in themselves, rather He taught them to deny themselves, take up their cross and follow Him! Jesus also taught, *“Whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it”* (Matthew 16:24-25). In other words, your life doesn't need an upgrade or minor changes; you need an entirely new life from God that goes beyond human potential.

Likewise, Paul in today's passage gives the one and only way to truly change your life- come to Jesus Christ and be made a new creation. Then for the rest of your life, believe you are who God says you are. When you believe that you were made holy, you will live holy. And when you believe you were made for a relationship with God, you will live dependent upon the Holy Spirit and obey God's commands. A wise man once said, *“If the devil could make you sinful, God can make you holy!”*

Remember, since being born again, you're not in a life long process of inner remodeling, but rather maintaining the “complete spiritual-renovation” that you received. After a person is made a new creation they don't have to keep becoming a new creation, rather they are to allow the new life that they've already been given to grow and flourish.

Think of being made a new creation like going from being a weed to a grape vine. The vine is not a weed anymore because its very nature has been changed. Now think of sin and bad habits as weeds that try to grow along side of the vine and steal its life. A good gardener will come and remove the weeds whenever he sees them. And if the weeds affect any of the vines and they become unfruitful, he prunes them so the vine can always be healthy and be able to produce good fruit.

The same is true in the disciple's life. Once you are born again you are a new creature- you are no longer a sinner (weed) but are a righteous child of God (grape vine). When you are tempted to sin and go back to your old ways (like weeds trying to grow in the vineyard) God will remove them from your life- if you allow Him to. And if you do sin and evil takes root in your heart- He will cut it out and make you whole again when you repent.

If you haven't been born again, ask God right now to be the Lord of your life and make every part of you new, from the inside out. And if you have already been born again, abide in the vine of Jesus and ask Him to make you a fruitful branch (John 15:1-10).

REFLECTION

Do you believe when God makes a person new, they are actually made 100% new?

ACTION

1. Be born again and made a new creation if you haven't already.
2. Repent of any sins or disobedience in your life and ask God to daily "lead you not into temptation, but deliver you from evil" (Matthew 6:13).
3. By the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, believe you are who God said you are and that you can do what He said you can do!

DAY 15: HOW DO I OVERCOME SADNESS?

Isaiah 61:1, *“He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted.”*

God wants us to overcome our sadness in life by giving Jesus all of our hurts and pain. Many times in life’s tragedies people ask, “Where is God?” The Bible teaches us that God is always with us and is personally aware of our pain. Isaiah wrote concerning when Jesus was on the cross, *“Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering”* (Isaiah 53:4).

There is no pain you will ever have in life that Jesus didn’t personally experience on the cross.

When Jesus was on the cross He supernaturally bore all the pain that the world has ever felt. Only the divine Son of God in the flesh could have bore such pain upon His soul- that is why Jesus alone is our Savior. As a result, when you face sad times, Jesus is literally the only person that can truly say, “I know how you feel!”

Likewise, the author of Hebrews wrote, *“Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need”* (Hebrews 4:16). We are to come to Jesus with all of our hurts and confess, “Jesus, I give you all my sadness and pain because you understand what I am going through and you are able to heal every broken part of my heart.”

Be encouraged by the words of the old hymn, *What a Friend We Have in Jesus*, “What a Friend we have in Jesus, All our sins and griefs to bear! What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer! O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear, all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer!”

When we come to Jesus with our sadness and heavy burdens He promises to bind up and heal our broken hearts. Are you sad today? Come to Jesus and let Him give you rest for your weary soul, for He said, *“28 Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am*

*gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30
For my yoke is easy and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30).*

REFLECTION

Do you need Jesus to take any sadness in your life?

ACTION

1. Believe and confess Jesus is your Healer.
2. Come boldly to God’s throne of grace when you are sad to receive comfort and healing.
3. Share the love of Jesus with others when they are in pain (Romans 12:15).

DAY 16: WHAT IS GOD'S WILL FOR SEX?

Hebrews 13:4, *“Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.”*

God's purpose for sex is for one man and one woman in marriage to enjoy themselves in intimacy with the desired outcome of having children. Certainly, married couples can enjoy sex without having children, but reproduction should be considered as the “norm” during childbearing years. Also, being sexual can refer to more than just having sex, but also erotic behavior that produces an orgasm.

Though the Bible strongly advocates genuine love and sexuality in such books as Song of Solomon, it also gives strong warning against perversion. Perversion is a distortion of the original “version.” In today's passage the author of Hebrews warns that God will judge sex outside of God's original intent of marriage and we know from Revelation 21:8 that means they will not inherit the Kingdom of God but be cast into the Lake of Fire.

Here is a list of sexual sins with a short definition that everyone should avoid: (1) *Adultery*: A married person having sexual relations with someone other than their spouse. Also, Jesus said in the New Testament all lust was considered “adultery of the heart” (Matthew 5:28 & 19:18). (2) *Immorality*: Sexual experiences with the opposite sex outside of marriage, i.e., “oral sex, massaging or touching of private parts, etc.” (Galatians 5:19).

(3) *Lust*: A strong sexual desire for someone you're not married to, also called adultery of the heart (Matthew 5:28). (4) *Bestiality*: Sex between a human and an animal (Leviticus 18:23). (5) *Molestation and Rape*: To have sex by force or to touch in a sexual way without permission (Deuteronomy 22:25).

(6) *Homosexuality*: To have sex or sexual experiences (kissing, oral sex, etc.) with the same sex (Romans 1:26-27). (7) *Masturbation*: To have sex with one's self, this is considered impure in Galatians 5:19. (8) *Pornography*: To lust after images in a magazine, video or

the like, this is also considered impure in Galatians 5:19. (9) *Unequally Yoked*: To marry someone that is a non-Christian (2 Corinthians 6:4). (10) *Incest*: To have sex or sexual experiences with a family member (Leviticus 20:12).

God's purpose for sex is meant to be in heterosexual marriage and everything else is a sin- a perversion of God's original version. Marriage and sex is the one thing God said represents His relationship with the church; which is a loving, holy and intimate relationship (Ephesians 5:31-32).

In the beginning God made us male and female in His image. He did this to show us His love for us. Sexual union is a physical representation of a spiritual union with God. John Piper said, "We need a robust vision of the beauty and sacredness of sexual intercourse as God designed it." I agree because what we are sexually is a reflection of who we are spiritually. If we believe we are in union with God we will treat sexuality as a holy thing, not as an idol. Therefore, if you're married stay committed to each other and if you're single wait for the right person to marry. For both single and married, be holy because God is holy.

REFLECTION

Do you live a sexually pure life?

ACTION

1. Repent of any sexual sin you may have in your life.
2. Ask the Holy Spirit to keep you sexually pure.
3. Honor marriage and live holy in your sexuality!

DAY 17: HOW DO I CHOOSE A SPOUSE?

Proverbs 18:22, *“He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the Lord.”*

God will direct both the man and woman through His Spirit to meet each other, fall in love and marry. Today’s passage teaches the traditional role of the man pursuing the woman, however, both should pursue God and in so doing find each other. Think of two paths heading in the same direction from two starting points intersecting. Someone once said, “A woman should be so lost in God, that a man must seek Him to find her.”

Here are “Seven Steps to a Godly Marriage,” from my book, *Date Like a Christian*; (1) *The Search*: Be the right person God wants you to be so as a man you can find the right woman and as a woman you can be found by the right man. (2) *The Intro*: Once you have found someone that seems to be God’s choice, make time to pray and get to know each other first as friends. (3) *The Taste Test*: As friends with potential for more, let God lead you as you become closer and discover His will for your lives.

(4) *Love vs. Lust*: As you are getting to know each other, let God either open your heart to love so you can start a relationship or close the door of “lust” and stay friends. (5) *Down For Life*: If you are truly in love with the person, seek God to confirm that you are to be together for life. (6) *The Engagement*: Seek God for the best time to become engaged and begin to make preparations to get married.

(7) *The Joining*: Have a wonderful wedding ceremony where you ask God to join the two of you together in such a loving and godly way that you can never be torn apart! From start to finish the secret of marriage is to be daily led by the Holy Spirit.

When you date like a Christian, God will give you the desires of your heart because your heart’s desires will be in His perfect will for your life.

If you're single and ready to mingle, learn to hear God's voice as you spend time with Him in prayer and study of His Word, along with godly mentorship in the church. God promised He would lead you in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake, and marriage is included in that path. Just as surely as God saved you, He will bless you with His best!

REFLECTION

Do you want a blessed marriage built on God's Word?

ACTION

1. Repent if you have broken God's Word in regards to dating.
2. If you are single ask the Holy Spirit to lead you to date like a Christian.
3. When you are in a dating relationship follow Jesus in all you do, from beginning to end!

DAY 18: WHAT IS GOD'S ORDER FOR MY FAMILY?

Ephesians 5:25, *“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.”*

God's order in the family is for a husband to love his wife as Christ does the church, the wife to submit to her husband as unto Jesus and for the children to obey their parents. When the family is structured with God's order it is the greatest example of God's Kingdom on the earth. Henry Drummond said, “The family circle is the supreme conductor of Christianity.”

When the family structure is corrupted it causes many problems to a society. For example, studies have shown that children who grow up without their father in the home are 5x more likely to commit suicide, 32x more likely to be homeless, 20x more likely of being in prison and 9x more likely to drop out of high school. The leading causes to fatherless homes are sex outside of marriage and divorce.

Likewise, current research proves that same-sex families are just as destructive as fatherless homes. The children are more likely to be depressed, arrested and 10x more likely to be molested. Plus, over 3,500 children a day in the U.S. are murdered in “Abortion Mills.” And the number one reason for abortion is that the pregnancy was an inconvenience. As a result, over 50 million children have been slaughtered in the wombs of their mothers because both parents lacked love, self-control and human decency- they didn't understand God's purpose for family and sexuality.

The best solution and hope for today's broken generation is for every disciple to contribute to building a God-honoring society based on God's principles for the family.

Paul took seventeen verses to outline the blessed family in the book of Ephesians. Please take some time to prayerfully read his

instructions for yourself and determine to have a “God-kind-of-family!” Ephesians 5:21-6:4, “21 Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. 22 Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. 24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her 26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, 27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. 28 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— 30 for we are members of his body. 31 “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”

32 This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. 33 However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband. 1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 “Honor your father and mother”—which is the first commandment with a promise— 3 “so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.” 4 Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.”

REFLECTION

Do you want to order your family according to God’s Word?

ACTION

1. Repent if you have sinned against God’s plan for the family.
2. Study God’s Word and learn to structure your family according to the Father’s heart.
3. Ask God to make your family an example for all to see and be encouraged by!

DAY 19: HOW SHOULD I RAISE MY CHILDREN?

Proverbs 22:6, *“Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.”*

God wants us to raise our children with the love and teachings of Jesus. God has given parents the responsibility of developing and nurturing the human soul (mind, will and emotions). We are given the task of developing the mind (with godly thoughts), the will (in submission to the will of God) and the emotions (controlled by the fruit of the Spirit) of a child in a God-honoring environment.

The greatest role model a child will ever have is a parent of the same gender. And the best example of cross-gender interaction will come from the parent of their opposite sex. Therefore, both Mom and Dad need to be disciples of Christ to raise their children right.

Researchers believe between the ages of two to three years old, a child begins to develop their personality and by seven years old most children have acquired their moral compass and personality that they will keep for the rest of their life. That is why there is no greater job on this planet than that of being a godly parent; what the child becomes and the role they will play in society depends on it.

With this great God-given responsibility in mind, Jesus said concerning parenting in Matthew 18:6, *“If anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in me—to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.”* Basically, Jesus was saying that it would be better to kill yourself than to harm a child. Please don't think Jesus is advocating suicide, even for those who have been bad parents. God can forgive you. However, Jesus wants us to know how important being a parent is.

Here are some great ways to insure your children are raised in the ways of God; (1) Model genuine Christian love in the home-

discipleship starts with the parents. (2) As soon as your children can talk, teach them to pray. (3) Give them consistent and compassionate discipline so they can learn right from wrong. (4) Always keep them involved in the church's children's ministries- don't let school, other activities or sports take its place.

(5) Have a time of family prayer and study of God's Word every day. (6) Make family meals a priority as much as possible. (7) Demonstrate forgiveness and compassion by letting them know when you make mistakes. (8) Once they can read teach them to read the Bible daily. (9) Help them to love and treat others as they would want to be treated. (10) Encourage their salvation, baptism and church involvement, as they get older. (11) Stay involved in their school, hobbies and friends. (12) Pray for them and guard them from making bad choices, placing things above God and having the wrong friends.

Remember, if we expect our children to honor us as their parents, then let us live honorable lives in front of them. Billy Sunday said, "Not to walk in the straight and narrow way yourself, is to give the devil the biggest kind of a chance to get our children!" Guard your children with your love for God, faithfulness to His Word and obedience to all His commands.

REFLECTION

Do you want to raise your children God's way?

ACTION

1. Repent if you have not raised your children right in the eyes of God.
2. Study God's Word and raise your children with the fear and admonition (teaching) of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4).
3. Ask God daily in prayer to bless and protect them, to comfort and love them and fulfill His purpose in their lives.

DAY 20: WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF CHURCH?

Ephesians 3:10, *“His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms.”*

The purpose of the church is to encourage your spiritual growth through fellowship, teaching, prayer, worship and ministry. The term for church in the Greek, *“ekklēsia,”* means “assembly or gathering.” Specifically referring to Jesus it means, “the community of gathered disciples.”

Jesus promised He would build only one thing upon the earth that would remain until His return; His church. So if you’re not building Christ’s church in your family, job and with your talents; whatever you’re building will be lost because it was built on another foundation.

The term “church” refers to two things in the New Testament. First, the word church is applied to the entire gathering of disciples because they together are the one universal Church, also known as the “Body of Christ” (1 Corinthians 12:27). The universal Church transcends all culture, locations and even time. It is the complete and unified followers of Jesus in all times and places.

Second, the word “church” in the NT refers to the smaller gathering of disciples in one particular location. These churches are called the “local church” as opposed to the “universal Church” because they are localized. Most early churches met in people’s home like in Romans 16:3-5, *“Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my co-workers in Christ Jesus... also the church that meets at their house.”*

Here are some good things to remember when looking for a good church to join; (1) Make sure the church believes the fundamentals of Christianity. For example the doctrine of the Trinity, the deity of Jesus, salvation by faith alone, a literal heaven and hell, etc. (2) Search for a church that has good leadership, discipleship,

biblical teaching, powerful worship and prayer times, fellowship opportunities and evangelism. (3) Be committed to following the vision and example of the church's leadership. Don't just be a spectator- be a team player! (Hebrews 13:17).

Charles Spurgeon once said, "I do not think the devil cares how many churches you build, if only you have lukewarm preachers and people in them." Therefore, as Paul taught in today's passage, we all need to be on fire disciples in the church of Jesus Christ so that God can reveal His multi-faceted wisdom to the world and to the authorities in the heavenly realms!

REFLECTION

Do you belong to a good Bible believing church?

ACTION

1. Repent if you have not always honored God's church.
2. Find a good church to join, if you haven't already.
3. As a part of the Body of Christ serve in the local church- touch heaven and change earth!

DAY 21: WHAT ARE MY GOD-GIVEN GIFTS?

Romans 12:6, *“We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us”*

God will reveal His gifts and talents in your life as you seek His will for your life. You were created in the image of God with special abilities that make you “one-of-a-kind.” Sometimes we may doubt ourselves, but as the ole’ saying goes, “God doesn’t make no junk!” Psalm 139:14 boldly states, *“I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.”* In today’s passage Paul taught we were all given different gifts from God according to His grace.

Some people may think that just because they don’t see their talents that they don’t have any. However, many times our talents are hidden like buried treasure waiting to be discovered.

For example I never knew I had the God-given gift to write until I went to Bible College and discovered my gift to express myself in writing. For others like my Dad, they didn’t find great success in their business until later in life- his last ten years of working were his most successful! As a result, all of us should be open to God leading us to places in life where we are stretched and forced to find things in ourselves that we never thought were there.

At the same time, the gifts and talents we have that may be obvious to us should be given to God so they can be excelled in and used for His glory. Just because playing basketball came natural to Michael Jordan, that didn’t mean he could miss practice or take all the credit. He had to practice his talent to be the best he could be and if he was humble, he would give credit to God, His Creator. Because Jordan wouldn’t have a leg to stand on if God hadn’t given it to him!

Therefore, ask God to show you your special talents and abilities in life. Then place them in His hands and work hard to perfect them so you can be the best you possible. Paul wrote in Colossians

3:17, *“And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”*

REFLECTION

What are some of your God-given gifts?

ACTION

1. Pray and ask God to reveal all the talents He has given you for this time in your life.
2. Honor God with your abilities by working hard at perfecting them.
3. Whenever you succeed in life give all the glory (credit) to God!

DAY 22: HOW SHOULD I HELP OTHERS?

Galatians 6:10, *“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.”*

You should help others by giving them the message of Jesus and meeting their needs as often as you can. You may not be able to help everyone, but you can help someone! Everyday have an open heart for God to lead you and give you exciting opportunities to love people. The Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-37 simply did what he would have wanted someone to do for him. You may not have a million dollars to give away or hours a day to volunteer, but you have something to give and time to offer someone in your life.

Use whatever you have been blessed with to be a blessing to others. All you have to do is look around the world you live in and ask God, “Who can I show your love to?”

John the Baptist in Luke 3:11 described what true generosity looks like when he said, *“Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same.”* In other words, whatever you can give away- give it away for free! I believe garage sales for the most part reflect the heart of greed. Especially in the U.S., we have so much stuff that we can’t even fit it all in our house, but we still want to sell it and make money from it to buy more stuff- God have mercy! What if we were more like Jesus and the disciples and simply gave it all away? Your old toaster could make someone else’s day!

Also, even if you don’t always have money or things to give away, you always have Jesus’ love and the gospel to share with others. The greatest gift you can ever give someone is the message of eternal life. The method you use to witness isn’t important, being a witness is. Ask God for opportunities to preach the gospel to the lost everyday. For example hairdressers, waitresses, gas station attendants,

neighbors, coworkers, family members- they all need Jesus!

Paul wrote in Romans 1:16, "*For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.*" Don't be too shy or embarrassed to give people the gift of the gospel. It's the greatest help you can offer someone because people can still go to hell after being given all the other gifts in the world. Real charity is the message of Jesus to lost sinners.

How can you help others? Get out of your comfort zone and do something in Jesus' name- start today!

REFLECTION

When was the last time you helped someone and preached the gospel to a sinner?

ACTION

1. Repent if you have been selfish and ignored people in their times of need.
2. Ask God to give you a heart of love for others.
3. Live by John Wesley's motto, "Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can."

DAY 23: WHAT CAREER PATH SHOULD I TAKE?

Colossians 3:23, *“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters.”*

You should choose the career that God leads you to have and work diligently as unto the Lord. The Bible is full of examples of people who served God in various careers. In the Old Testament Daniel and Joseph were governors, Abraham was a herdsman, David was a shepherd, general and a king, and Gideon was a farmer. In the New Testament the disciples had various jobs; Lydia was a purple cloth dealer (Acts 16:14), Aquila and Priscilla made tents (Acts 18:3), Zenas was a lawyer (Titus 3:13) and Luke was a doctor (Colossians 4:14).

In the Old and New Testament, God gave us many different kinds of examples of His people working hard in their various careers. One thing that was true for all of them, whether they were male or female, doctors or farmers- God always blessed His people with wisdom and success.

For example, consider how God blessed Joseph’s work under Potiphar in Genesis 39:5, *“From the time he put him in charge of his household and of all that he owned, the Lord blessed the household of the Egyptian because of Joseph. The blessing of the Lord was on everything Potiphar had, both in the house and in the field.”* Stop and think about this phrase, “the blessing of the Lord was on everything Potiphar had.” Even when Joseph was a slave working for another man, treated like property, God blessed him in all that he did. Nothing can stop the blessing of God!

I like to refer to God’s blessing as the, “Holy Ghost Advantage!” When you discover the career path God has for you, ask Him to make you the best at it. Ask the Father in Jesus’ name for the Holy Ghost Advantage. The ole’ timers used to say, “If you work God’s Word, it will work for you!” Education, experience and

creativity are important too- but nothing can compete with the advantage that comes from God's blessing!

Someone is going to be the top seller in your company- why not you? Someone is going to get the next promotion- why not you? Someone's restaurant is going to become the next successful chain- why not yours? Someone is going to invent the next "big thing"- why not you? Someone is going to be successful today- why not you?

Therefore, believe and receive that what Paul wrote in today's passage, is for you. Make it personal; "Whatever I do today (washing dishes, trading stocks, building houses, answering phones, managing people, fixing cars, etc.), I will work at it with all my heart because I am working for the Lord!"

REFLECTION

What career path does God want you to be great at?

ACTION

1. Seek the Lord for His direction in your career if you haven't already.
2. Do all that you can to be the best at your job. Come early and stay late. Gain more education, perfect your skills, and treat your costumers and employees like how you would want to be treated.
3. Whatever work you do- do it as unto the Lord!

DAY 24: WHAT IS GOD'S PURPOSE FOR MONEY?

Deuteronomy 8:18, *“But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today.”*

God's purpose for money is to give you resources to provide for your family, the church and help the needy. Oftentimes people can fall into a trap with money and allow it to become their idol. Jesus said in Matthew 6:24, *“No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.”* A.B. Simpson wrote, *“There is no harm whatever in having money, houses, lands, friends and children if you do not value these things or ones for themselves.”*

Money tests your spiritual maturity because it can either be a blessing in your life or it can be a source of temptation. Your love for God will determine whether you handle money right.

The best way to break the love of money off of your heart is to consistently give tithes and offerings. The word tithe means, “a tenth.” Someone who gives God ten percent of his or her total income is a “tither.” An “offering” according to the Bible is anything you financially “offer to God after your tithes.” For example, giving offerings to missions or Christian run charities.

Towards the end of the Old Testament and the era of the Mosaic Law, the Old Covenant, God shared his heart concerning money. He said that His people were robbing Him and were under a curse. The only way for them to break the curse and see the windows of heaven open up was for them to give their tithes and offerings to God's storehouse.

Malachi 3:8-10 reads, *“8 Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me. “But you ask, ‘How are we robbing you?’ “In tithes and*

offerings. 9 You are under a curse —your whole nation—because you are robbing me. 10 Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.”

Jesus reiterated this principle of “God coming first” in monies in Matthew 6:33 when He said, “*But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*” Therefore, as today’s passage states, it is God who gives us the ability to produce wealth for the sake of His covenant (i.e., “His Kingdom”). Included in God’s covenant (or Kingdom) are our families and the poor. God wants us to be blessed to be a blessing to those around us.

Use money as a tool- just like you would use a hammer or screwdriver. You don't love your tools but you appreciate them for what they can do. The same is true with money, don't love it- respect and appreciate the good it can do for the Kingdom of God!

REFLECTION

Do you have a biblical mindset when it comes to money?

ACTION

1. Repent if you have allowed yourself to love money by not being faithful in your tithes and offerings.
2. Be a consistent tither and giver of offerings.
3. Use wisdom in budgeting your money. Consider the following example; (1) Give 10% in tithes, (2) Give 5% in offerings to missions or Christian charities, (3) Pay 10% in taxes, (4) Save 5% and (5) Wisely spend the remaining 70%.

DAY 25: HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH?

1 Timothy 6:17, *“Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.”*

You can own and enjoy as much as you desire as long as it doesn't lead you to sin.

God gives us many things in life to enjoy, however, they are never to be made idols, cause spiritual distraction, encourage greed or lead us away from keeping His commands.

Sometimes people think that because the Bible speaks of generosity and sacrifice that owning nice things is sinful. Certain Roman Catholic monks promoted this kind of “poverty mentality” in the Dark Ages and took vows of poverty to try and prove their love for God. They would even look down on those who married and purposefully wore uncomfortable clothes and gave themselves distasteful haircuts (think of “Friar Tuck”).

On the one hand, it's true the Bible speaks of Jesus not having a place to lay his head, Paul being without money at times and the poor being among those in the church. On the other hand, the Bible gives many examples of people who had great wealth and served God. Consider Moses' description of Isaac in Genesis 26:12-13, *“12 Isaac planted crops in that land and the same year reaped a hundredfold, because the Lord blessed him. 13 The man became rich, and his wealth continued to grow until he became very wealthy.”*

The real problem with money is not having it, but rather letting money have you. The ole' timers used to say, “Give God your wallet, not just your heart!” Paul said in 1 Timothy 6:10, *“For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.”* Therefore, it's not money itself that is the issue but the love of

money that is the sin.

John wrote in 1 John 2:16-17 that if we love the world, God's love really isn't in us, *"16 For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. 17 The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever."*

So what is the difference between having nice things while enjoying your life and loving the world in pride? Your heart. For some people, they can make a million dollars; be tithers, help the poor and have nice things without being greedy and worldly. For other people, they may just have \$10 and covet what their neighbor has and keep all their money to themselves without even being tithers.

It's not the amount money or the kind of things you own that determine if you're greedy, but rather your heart (Matthew 15:18-19). Ask God to show you your heart and to remove any greed, lust of the eyes or selfishness you may have. Then, after you have prayed, follow Paul's advice in today's passage and make all you can so that you can be rich in giving. Enjoy whatever is left because the Lord wants you to always have more than enough (Deuteronomy 14:26).

REFLECTION

Are you rich in giving and enjoying all that God has given you?

ACTION

1. Repent if you love the things of this world.
2. Be rich in giving and helping others.
3. Enjoy all that God has given you with a clear conscience.

DAY 26: WHAT KIND OF FRIENDS SHOULD I HAVE?

Proverbs 18:24, *“One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.”*

You should choose godly friends that truly love you and are reliable. The Bible warns that choosing the wrong kind of friends can lead to trouble. King Solomon wrote in Proverbs 13:20, *“a companion of fools suffers harm”* and Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 15:33, *“Bad company corrupts good character.”* My parents always used to tell me, “You are who you hang around. If you want to see who you are, just look at your friends- they’re your mirror.”

Don’t take friendships lightly; they will have an impact on your life either for good or bad. Therefore, make the right kind of friends with prayer and spiritual discernment.

David and Jonathon are biblical examples of two friends that were closer than brothers. The Bible even says that David loved Jonathon more than a woman (i.e., “more than sex”) because he was the closest person in his life (2 Samuel 1:26). God wants you to have godly friends that are that close.

Though most friendships will be just acquaintances and some will only be companions, there will be a select few that will be close and intimate. Seek out the people in your life that do more than just tolerate you, but they appreciate and celebrate you. Look for those who want to accelerate and motivate you to be the best you possible. You should want close and intimate friends that help you in your weaknesses and stay until you get strong. You need friends that can cultivate your gifts and talents and help you grow and flourish in all areas of your life.

Good friends will tell you when you're wrong and they'll help you make it right. They will stand by your side when everyone else leaves and they will fight your battles with you. Real friends don't just say they love you; they show you their love with their actions. If the devil can use people to hurt you, then God can use people to heal you. Don't let past hurts and broken relationships keep you from finding good friends in life.

Begin to pray and ask God to give you healthy friendships that encourage and strengthen your faith. And remember you have to be a friend, to make a friend!

REFLECTION

Do you have close godly friends in your life?

ACTION

1. Separate yourself from any ungodly friends that cause you spiritual harm.
2. Pray and ask God to send you good Christian friends.
3. Be a great friend and share life together with those who truly love you!

DAY 27: HOW DO I OVERCOME SETBACKS?

Romans 8:37, *“No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.”*

We overcome our setbacks in the Christian life by trusting in God’s promises, relying on the Holy Spirit and finding comfort in His love for us. Tests and trials shouldn’t be strange or come as a surprise to the Christian; they are a part of life. Peter said, *“12 Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. 13 But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed”* (1 Peter 4:12-13).

Setbacks in life can be God’s setup for new and better things. So don’t let your present situations determine your identity- God is on the move. You just have to stay faithful and God will make you fruitful!

Lester Sumrall once said, “If you don’t quit, you win!” Don’t let your problems change who you think you are in Christ and make you want to quit serving God. For example, just because you have money problems, it doesn’t mean you’re not blessed. Or when you face tragic times, it doesn’t change the fact that you are still a child of the King! Problems come and go, but who you are remains forever because you belong to God.

In today’s passage Paul said that we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. If we’re in Christ, every battle has already been won. We’re just here proclaiming the victory and taking the land. David also said in Psalm 23:5, *“You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.”* Why? Because God is fighting the battle for you! You get the reward of someone else’s work- that’s how you’re more than a conqueror. God is your Father, Jesus is your Savior and the Holy Spirit is your source of power. Let God make your tests your testimonies.

Whatever situations God has brought you to, He will bring you through! You may be in a valley that has the shadow of death all around, but you will go through the valley and reach the mountaintop on the other side. And in the midst of all your hurt and weaknesses, Jesus' rod and staff will comfort you. Jesus promised He'd never leave you nor forsake you (Hebrews 13:5).

Here are some easy things to remember next time you feel like giving up; (1) God is with you- you're not alone. (2) Everything is "Father-filtered"- nothing is happening without His involvement. (3) Tests and trials are only temporary but God's love for you is eternal. Therefore, it may be true we as Christians face hardships in life, but we will never have to face them alone- God loves us and that makes us more than conquerors!

REFLECTION

Do you believe God is with you in the most painful seasons of your life?

ACTION

1. Repent of any self-pity or doubt you may feel in your times of trouble.
2. Pray and ask God to comfort you in your times of hardship.
3. Don't grow weary in doing good because if you don't quit, you win (Galatians 6:9).

DAY 28: WHAT IS GOD'S WILL FOR MY HEALTH?

1 Corinthians 6:19-20, *“19 Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; 20 you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.”*

The Bible teaches us to treat our bodies as the temple of God. We should be healthy, active and able to live a long life as much as it depends on us.

If you want to live a long life you will need to obey these four simple words. I call it the “Four Word Health Program;” “Eat Less, Workout More.”

By eating less I mean to consume less calories than your body burns in a day. Though most nutritionists may recommend you eat more times in a day (4-6x), the caloric intake will still be less than what your body burns. Working out more refers to burning more calories than you take in (or the same amount if you want to maintain your weight). This does not mean you need to be in the gym all day. However, if you can be active for 30-60 minutes a day with an elevated heart rate you will keep your body functioning well. You could swim, walk, jog, play with your children or ride a bike. It could be anything that safely elevates the heart rate and gets your body moving.

Specifically, in the U.S., we eat too much and exercise too little. We spend millions of dollars wasting food because we over eat and then we spend millions more on gym memberships and workout equipment; and most of the time we don't even use our exercise equipment or regularly frequent the gym. We need the fruit of the spirit called “self-control” to live a healthy lifestyle. We have the best technologies, the best workout programs, the best foods available and the best medical programs; yet we are the most overweight and out of shape generation that has ever lived- Lord have mercy!

Make a decision today that you will not be mastered by the food you eat. Decide that you are going to live a long and healthy life that can be used mightily by God. Take a look at your schedule and make time right now to be healthy if you haven't already. How can God use you if you're sick and tired all the time? Joyce Meyer wrote, "I believe that the greatest gift you can give your family and the world is a healthy you." So if you're needing to lose a few pounds or a whole bunch of pounds, start today and eat less and workout more!

REFLECTION

Are you physically healthy?

ACTION

1. Repent if you haven't treated your body well concerning health and diet.
2. Ask God to give you the strength and guidance to eat right and exercise.
3. Make and keep the right lifestyle to stay healthy!

DAY 29: ARE WE LIVING IN THE END TIMES?

Matthew 24:42, *“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.”*

According to the Bible we have been living in the end times since the Day of Pentecost (approximately 33 AD). Peter made this clear when he preached his first sermon that day, from the prophecy of Joel found in the Old Testament. In Acts 2:17 Peter said, *“In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.”*

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit marked the beginning of the last days. So we are in the last seconds of the last day. It’s time for people to get right with God before they get left behind!

Though the initial end times started at Pentecost, Jesus spoke about the conclusion of the end times happening at His return and second coming. In Matthew 24:4-30, Jesus gave specific signs to look for to know when His coming was near. As today’s passage teaches, no one can know the day, but we can know the season and the general timeframe. Jesus said in Matthew 24:33, *“Even so, when you see all these things [the signs mentioned in verses 4-30], you know that it is near, right at the door.”*

Here is a list of the eight signs Jesus gave in Matthew 24:4-14 to let us know when His coming was close; (1) False Christs in verse 5, (2) Wars & revolutions in verse 7, (3) Famines in verse 7, (4) Earthquakes in verse 7, (5) Diseases in Luke 21:11, (6) Persecution in verse 9, (7) Sin will abound in verse 12 and (8) The gospel proclamation in the whole world in verse 14.

Now consider the following stats concerning these signs in our current generation; (1) False Christs: Over 1,000 people in the last 50yrs have claimed to be “Jesus.” (2) Wars & Revolutions: We’ve had over 40 major wars and revolutions since 1940. (3) Famines: Around

800 million people are starving or are malnourished in the world today. (4) Earthquakes: Worldwide surge in earthquakes over the last 10 years (2004-2014). (5) Disease: Just in the case of AIDS, there are more than 50 million people affected.

(6) Persecution: On average, over 100,000 Christians die each year for their faith (many by Muslims in genocidal fashion). (7) Abounding Sin: Sins like abortion, perversion, godlessness and homosexuality are corrupting many. (8) Global Proclamation of the Gospel: Today Christianity is growing faster and reaching more unreached people groups than ever before!

Adrian Rogers once preached, “Jesus came the first time to die; He is coming again to raise the dead. When He came the first time, they questioned whether He was King; the next time the world will know that He is King of kings and Lord of lords. The first time He wore a crown of thorns; the next time He will be wearing a crown of glory. The first time He came in poverty; the next time He is coming in power. The first time He had an escort of angels; the next time He will come with ten thousands of His saints. The first time He came in meekness; He is coming again in majesty.”

Now is the time to preach, pray and plug away until Jesus comes back to judge the world. Maranatha- come Lord Jesus!

REFLECTION

Are you ready for Jesus to come back?

ACTION

1. Prepare your heart to meet the Lord.
2. Watch and see how the signs of the end times increase in your lifetime.
3. Preach the soon return of Jesus to everyone you can!

DAY 30: WHAT WILL ETERNITY BE LIKE?

1 Corinthians 2:9, *“However, as it is written: ‘What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived’ — the things God has prepared for those who love him.”*

Eternity will be spent with Jesus upon the new earth in unimaginable bliss. The Bible teaches that we will see Jesus face-to-face and know Him as we know ourselves (1 Corinthians 13:12). This unending union with Christ will bring about the fullness of joy and pleasures without end (Psalm 16:11).

Humanity was made for God’s glory and after accepting Jesus’ sacrifice by faith our original purpose is restored; from glory we came and in His glory we shall forever be.

After our bodies die we will wait in heaven until Jesus returns to earth to destroy the anti-Christ and his army (Revelation 19:11-21). When Jesus first comes back He will then set up an earthly kingdom to rule for 1,000 years. Christians will receive a resurrected body and rule as kings and priests with Him over the people left alive after Armageddon (Revelation 20:1-6). During this time the devil and his demons will be bound and cast into a pit.

After the thousand-year reign, Jesus will judge all creation (humans and angels alike; including the devil and his fallen ones) from a Great White Throne. From His throne He will reward those who have served Him and cast into the lake of fire those who rejected Him along with the devil and his demons. The lake of fire will be the final place of punishment for all the disobedient (Revelation 20:11-15).

After the final judgment, Jesus will remake the heavens (universe) and earth for people to dwell in. Then for all of eternity, we will be His children and He will be our God (Revelation 21:3). The Bible teaches the Father and Son will share a throne next to each other

in “New Jerusalem” (the capitol city of the New Earth) and the Holy Spirit will be a tangible river following from the thrones. We will then reign with Him as kings and priests over all His creation. God’s presence and great love will be experienced everywhere we go for eternity (Revelation 21:1-5).

REFLECTION

Do you want to spend eternity with Jesus?

ACTION

1. Prepare your heart to meet the Lord.
2. Spend time in God’s presence now by worshipping and adoring Him.
3. Spread the message of God’s Kingdom coming to this earth so everyone can reign with Him! John Wesley wrote, “Whosoever will reign with Christ in heaven, must have Christ reigning in them on earth.”

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