

Life Small Groups – Big Impact Connections

THE LIFE OF A JESUS FOLLOWER

*STOP LIVING FOR JESUS
SO JESUS CAN
LIVE THROUGH YOU*

DAILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE: WEEK 3

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WEEK 3

ABIDE:

Spending

Time with God

DAY 1

A JESUS FOLLOWER *KNOWS GOD*

READ

Read the following passages slowly and carefully.

Exodus 3:1-6
Exodus 3:13-15

EXAMINE

Answer the following questions:

What does the Bible say?

What do these passages teach me about following Jesus?

APPLY

Apply the teaching of Scripture to your life.

To know God more intimately is the greatest pursuit in life. The amazing truth is that God wants you to know Him more. We know this because the Bible is full of accounts where God reveals Himself in specific ways to individuals. He may not speak to you from a burning bush as He did with Moses, but God continues to reveal Himself to us today through His Word.

God wants you to know Him, and He has given us the Bible to know Him. We don't read the Bible to be an ace at Bible trivia but to know the God behind the Bible. God desires

we have intimate encounters with Him in our daily lives, so that we not only know about Him, but we know who He is personally.

Below is a list of verses in which God reveals Himself. Beside each verse, write the name, title, or description of God that each verse reveals. Before you do this exercise, stop and prayerfully ask God for you to not merely know about Him, but for you to know Him intimately as He reveals Himself to you.

Genesis 17:1

Isaiah 47:4

Genesis 22:14

Genesis 16:13

Jeremiah 10:12

Psalms 48:14

Lamentations 3:25

Psalms 33:20

Hosea 13:4

Isaiah 9:6

Habakkuk 3:18-19

1 Chronicles 29:11-12

Psalms 32:7

Job 10:11

Isaiah 40:28-31

Colossians 3:4

Isaiah 41:10

Revelation 19:11,16

DO

Obey the teaching of Scripture with your life.

*Pick one verse from **READ**, and use that verse to spend a few minutes praying and thanking God for His love for you.*

DAY 2

A JESUS FOLLOWER *LOVES GOD*

READ

Read the following passages slowly and carefully.

1 John 4:19
Joshua 22:5
Deuteronomy 6:5
Matthew 22:37

EXAMINE

Answer the following questions:

What does the Bible say?

What do these passages teach me about following Jesus?

APPLY

Apply the teaching of Scripture to your life.

We're only able to love God because He first loved us. Our love for God is only in response to His great love for us. As we've said several times throughout our time together, a love relationship with God is at the very heart of what it means to follow Jesus. Everything in our life is dependent upon the quality of our love relationship with Him.

Most of our difficulties in the Christian life can be traced back to a love problem. Love for God, like faith, doesn't come naturally. It's only possible as God reveals Himself to us, and we choose to respond to Him lovingly. If this isn't right, nothing else will be right, and this is why Jesus believed loving God was the greatest commandment of all.

Loving God isn't a suggestion; it's a command that expresses God's desire for us. He desires that we love Him to the very core of our beings (heart). He desires that we love Him with all of our emotions (soul). He desires that we love Him with all of our energy (strength). He desires that we'll fully choose to love Him (mind). The God of all creation lacks nothing, yet He chooses to love us, and He wants our love in return. Because we're the only creatures created in God's image, we're the only created beings who have the capacity to love Him like that. We can love God in an intelligent, emotional, willing, and active way.

Why should God's love for you motivate your love for Him?

Do you willingly choose to love God in response to His great love, or is it dependent upon circumstances? Why should we love God independently of our circumstances?

DO

Obey the teaching of Scripture with your life.

God desires that we love Him sincerely, passionately, willingly, and actively. Love for Him doesn't come naturally; it deepens and develops as we know Him more. The more we know Him, the more we love Him.

What actions will you take this week to strengthen your love relationship with God?

DAY 3

A JESUS FOLLOWER *OBEYS GOD*

READ

Read the following passages slowly and carefully.

John 4:34

John 14:15, 23-24, 31

1 Samuel 15:22

1 John 2:3-5

EXAMINE

Answer the following questions:

What does the Bible say?

What do these passages teach me about following Jesus?

APPLY

Apply the teaching of Scripture to your life.

The personal studies in this week build upon one another. On the first day, we saw that Jesus followers know God. Those who know God will love God, which we thought about on the previous day. Those who know and love God will also obey God.

Following Jesus is impossible without obedience. At its core, obedience is simply the life of Jesus in me, being lived through me. According to Jesus, obedience to Him is an

outward expression of love (John 14:15, 24a). Therefore, an obedience problem is a love problem. We'll never obey Christ perfectly this side of heaven, but a characteristic of true Jesus followers is a desire to obey God (1 John 2:3-5).

If a Christian, by definition, is a "little Christ," then we should look more and more like Jesus. That raises the question, how did Jesus live?

Jesus lived in complete obedience to God. As Jesus lives through us, it will look the same. We don't obey God in order to get things from God. We obey God because we love God. Understanding this distinction is critical for following Jesus. Obedience doesn't earn God's love for us, it provides evidence of our love for God. Remember Jesus promised He would reveal Himself to those who obey (14:21, 23). When He reveals Himself in response to obedience, the result will always be deeper love for Him.

What is the difference between obeying out of duty and obeying out of love? Which most often describes your obedience?

What have you learned about God through obeying Him?

DO

Obey the teaching of Scripture with your life.

Is there an area where you're not obeying God and need to seek forgiveness? If so, pray and confess your sin now.

DAY 4

A JESUS FOLLOWER *IS DEPENDENT ON GOD*

READ

Read the following passages slowly and carefully.

John 15:5
Galatians 2:20
1 Corinthians 15:10
Luke 18:9-14

EXAMINE

Answer the following questions:

What does the Bible say?

What do these passages teach me about following Jesus?

APPLY

Apply the teaching of Scripture to your life.

*According to the previous verses under **READ**, What can we do on our own apart from God?*

Which statement in these verses is most difficult for you?

These verses allow no room for pride. Jesus followers recognize their total dependence upon God to accomplish anything of eternal value. Jesus says we can do nothing apart

from Him. Paul says we're crucified with Christ. A dead man can't accomplish much unless someone lives through Him.

DO

Obey the teaching of Scripture with your life.

Jesus is life. He tells us in John 15:5 that our relationship to Him is like a vine and a branch. We (the branch) are totally dependent upon Him (the vine) for strength, energy, and nourishment in order to bear fruit in our lives. Fruit's simply the life of Jesus in us being lived through us. The Christian life isn't about us living for Jesus; the Christian life is about Jesus living His life in and through us out of the overflow of our abiding in Him. The Christian life isn't about overworking or about what we can do for God. It's about being so intimately connected to Him that He lives His life out and accomplishes His purposes through us. The Christian life isn't about becoming a better version of ourselves. It's about dying to ourselves so that Christ may live through us. The key is a relationship with a person—Jesus Christ.

Where in life are you trying to live for Jesus instead of allowing Jesus to live through you?

What goals will you set so that your life is characterized by Jesus living through you?

DAY 5

A JESUS FOLLOWER *ENJOYS GOD*

READ

Read the following passages slowly and carefully.

Philippians 4:4

Psalm 16:11

Acts 16:23-25

EXAMINE

Answer the following questions:

What does the Bible say?

What does the passage teach me about following Jesus?

APPLY

Apply the teaching of Scripture to your life.

To know God is to enjoy God. In fact, The Westminster Catechism said that the chief end of man (the goal of life) is to know God and enjoy Him forever. You were created to delight in God forever. The life of a Jesus follower should be marked with joy because God is the ultimate source of deep abiding joy.

The enjoyment we find in God isn't a happiness dependent on circumstances but a joy we find only in God's presence, in communion with Him (Ps. 16:11). This is why Paul and Silas enjoyed God in a jail cell. Their joy was not determined by circumstance, but by a relationship with the living God. .

True, abiding joy is only found in an intimate, love relationship with Jesus. In John 15:11, Jesus tells us that abiding in Him allows us to experience the joy Christ has in us. This joy is independent of external circumstances. Following Jesus isn't a journey of drudgery, but the pathway to full abiding joy. The type of joy found in Jesus manifests itself in authentic praise, thankful attitudes, and a Christlike contentment that will be obvious to all.

Would you say that your life following Jesus is filled with joy? Why or why not?

What does it communicate to the world about following Jesus if Christians aren't joyful people?

When have you experienced contentment and joy despite difficult circumstances?

DO

Obey the teaching of Scripture with your life.

Looking back through each day's applications and goals, What is God saying to you, and what is your reply?