

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 5

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WEEK 5

CONNECT:

LIFE IN

COMMUNITY

DAY 1

JESUS FOLLOWERS

PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER

READ

Read the following passages slowly and carefully.

John 17:9-26

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.

Who specifically is Jesus praying for (v. 20)? Why does this matter?

John 17 is often known as the “High Priestly Prayer.” Jesus offered these words to His Father before He went to the cross. In this moment, Jesus chose to pray not only for His

disciples there with Him but also for those who would believe in Him in the generations to come. He was praying for you and me, and He hasn't stopped (Heb. 7:25).

Jesus prays for us. Jesus followers pray for one another. Samuel said he wouldn't sin by failing to pray for the people of Israel (1 Sam. 12:23). Paul prayed for almost every church to whom he wrote in the New Testament. If Jesus followers are to be rightly related to one another, we must pray for one another.

Do you take it seriously when someone asks you to pray for them? What demonstration gives evidence that you do?

If not, what does that reflect about your feelings toward prayer?

DO

Obey the teaching of Scripture with your life.

Perhaps the greatest ministry you'll ever have in the lives of others is to consistently pray for them. Paul begged the churches in the New Testament to pray for him. There are some things God will do in the lives of others only if we pray. He has chosen to work that way. We need each other, and we desperately need to pray for one another. It's a great honor and privilege to lift the name of one another up to God in prayer. If you fail to pray for others, you're missing out on one of the greatest kingdom opportunities God has given you.

Who is in your life that God may be asking you to pray for on a regular basis?

DAY 2

JESUS FOLLOWERS

ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER

READ

Read the following passages slowly and carefully.

Matthew 14:22-27

Acts 4:36

Acts 9:26-27

Acts 11:25-26

Hebrews 10:24-25

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.

Everyone needs encouragement. Thankfully, God has designed it so that believers encourage one another. He desires that our walks with Him be personal but never private. One of the reasons He has given us each other is because we all need encouragement from one another in order to continue in the Christian life.

Scripture is filled with multiple examples of believers encouraging one another. This practice is rooted in the life of Jesus. He encouraged His weary disciples simply by His

presence. Jesus continues to do that through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. In Acts 9, we see Barnabas ministering to Paul through encouragement. Barnabas gave him the necessary recommendation and support to earn the trust of those in Jerusalem.

1 Thessalonians 5:11 tells us to encourage one another and build one another up. Are there any corrections you need to make in light of this instruction from Scripture?

Who needs your encouragement right now? What is one small way you can encourage them today?

DO

Obey the teaching of Scripture with your life.

Later in Acts 11, Barnabas traveled to Tarsus to look for Saul, later named Paul, who had evidently become discouraged in the ministry and gone home. The encouragement of Barnabas made an eternal difference in Paul's life. God knows every believer intimately and personally. He knows when we need encouragement and is kind enough to send it to us through the words, prayers, and presence of other believers.

There are a myriad ways to encourage one another. Ask God to bring to mind or to put in your path today someone whom you can build up and encourage.

DAY 3

JESUS FOLLOWERS *ARE MEMBERS OF ONE ANOTHER*

READ

Read the following passages slowly and carefully.

Romans 12:1-5
Ephesians 1:22-23
Ephesians 4:14-16
Ephesians 5:30

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.

What does it mean that we're members of one another?

DO

Obey the teaching of Scripture with your life.

Romans 12 exhorts us to offer ourselves to God as holy and living sacrifices. In Christ, we present ourselves to Him daily as living, holy, and acceptable sacrifice for Him to use as He pleases. From there, Paul discussed how believers relate to one another in the body of Christ. We can offer ourselves to God by offering ourselves to one another.

It's impossible to be a Jesus follower and not rightly relate to His Body—the church. Every believer is connected to every other believer by virtue of the fact that we all make up one body—the body of Christ. This body has many parts. Not every part does the same function, but all are important. The overall health of the entire body and each individual member is dependent upon each part functioning properly. Again, we're members of one another.

We see this most clearly in the local church. The Bible describes the church as a body with many members. Not all members have the same function, but all are important. What one member does affects every other member. Jesus grows His body, but He does so as the parts of the body help each other grow. Thus, the overall health of the Church is directly related to Jesus followers being connected in community with one another. The relationship between believers in the body of Christ has no parallel in the world. We're members of one another. Tomorrow we'll learn more about how we rightly relate to one another in the Body of Christ—the Church.

Do you contribute to the overall health of your local church, or do you hinder it?

Are you willing to ask God to show you how you can specifically offer yourself as a living sacrifice in order to help the church grow? In what ways?

DAY 4

JESUS FOLLOWERS *ARE MEMBERS OF ONE ANOTHER (PT. 2)*

READ

Read the following passages slowly and carefully.

1 Corinthians 12:11-27

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.

In the spaces below, write the verse number in the blank that teaches the principle after it. You may have to read the passage several times. The first one is done for you.

11 *The Holy Spirit decides who has what gifts and responsibilities.*

___ *Those member with less prominent roles deserve more honor.*

___ *The body isn't complete without every member functioning properly.*

___ *If every member had the same function, the body wouldn't be complete.*

___ *We need each other.*

___ *There are member but one body.*

___ *No member is less important than any other member.*

___ *God adds to the body as He desires.*

___ *If one member suffers, all suffer.*

___ *The less prominent parts are absolutely necessary.*

___ *There shouldn't be any division in the body.*

DO

Obey the teaching of Scripture with your life.

Jesus is concerned about and active in His church. He is the Head, and He is in charge. Our role and responsibility in the church is up to Him. He even adds to the body as He sees fit (v. 18). He has so designed it that no member can work in isolation from any other member. We need each other. The health of the Church is dependent upon us rightly relating to one another.

How can God use you to serve His church?

DAY 5

JESUS FOLLOWERS

ARE GIFTED TO SERVE ONE ANOTHER

READ

Read the following passages slowly and carefully.

1 Corinthians 12:4-11

1 Peter 4:10-11

Romans 12:6

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.

In 1 Peter 4, the word Peter uses for gift comes from the word that is often translated grace in the New Testament. This means that spiritual gifts are the result of God's grace in our lives. They're undeserved, gracious, divine gifts.

At the moment of salvation, every believer is uniquely gifted by the Holy Spirit to serve one another. Gifts are not a substance; they're a manifestation of a Person—the Spirit. Thus, only when we're in right relation to Him will we use our gifts properly. The Holy Spirit decides who has what gifts. To compare and covet the gifts of others is therefore

to question the wisdom of God. Peter breaks down the gifts into serving and speaking. Both bring glory to God.

The Bible makes a few things clear about spiritual gifts. Every believer has at least one gift (1 Pet. 4:10), and no one has all the gifts (1 Cor. 7:7). The use of spiritual gifts without love is worthless (1 Cor. 13:1-3). When we're rightly following Jesus, we see the church not as a place that exists to meet our needs, but as a community where Christ in us can meet the needs of others through the gifts He has given each of us.

How has God gifted you to bring Him the most glory?

If you don't use your spiritual gifts, what are you depriving the church of?

DO

Obey the teaching of Scripture with your life.

Spiritual gifts are best discovered by being an active part of your local church. Spiritual gift tests may help, but ultimately over time and through involvement you'll discover areas of service where you're most fulfilled and fruitful. You'll learn, and others will notice. Those are likely areas of gifting.

If you don't know how God has gifted you, who is a minister or church leader you can connect with about serving? When will you contact them?