

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 7

VANCE PITMAN



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WEEK 7

SHARE:

THE MISSION

IS BIG

DAY 1

A JESUS FOLLOWER

INVESTS IN GOD'S ACTIVITY

READ

Read the following passages slowly and carefully.

Philippians 1:3-5

Philippians 4:15-20

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.

Since the beginning of the movement that you and I know as following Jesus, radical generosity has always been a common expression of the gospel through the church. God's plan has always been to provide for His mission through His people.

Philippians shows us an example of one church that saw giving as an opportunity to join in God's activity in the world. God is at work all around us. One way He invites us to join in what He is doing is through generosity. Jesus followers have always regularly given a portion of what God has given to them as an investment in His mission. And at times—as we see in Philippians—Jesus followers have given in ways that involved extreme sacrifice. We don't give in order to be good Christians. We give with hearts of joy, in response to God's greatness, and out of the overflow of the impact of His glorious

gospel in our lives. We don't give to a church but through a church as an investment in God's activity locally and globally.

Can I honestly say I live generously, investing in God's activity in the world? If not, what needs to change?

Do I regularly, proportionately, and sometimes sacrificially to join in God's kingdom work?

DO

Obey the teaching of Scripture with your life.

We're never more like Jesus than when we give. The gospel at its core is a message of generosity. John 3:16 states that God so loved the world that He gave. As Christ begins to live His life through us, one expression of that is radical generosity. Part of living generously as an investment in God's activity is establishing the right target for our lives when it comes to stewarding God's resources.

What will you give, do, invest in God's kingdom activity this week?

DAY 2

A JESUS FOLLOWER *LIVES SENT*

READ

Read the following passages slowly and carefully.

John 17:3-11
John 20:21

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 longest conversation recorded in Scripture between God the Father and God the Son is found in John 17. This powerful chapter provides a glimpse of the intimate relationship between Jesus and the Father and allows us insight to the moments just before Jesus is arrested, beaten, and crucified.

In a significant and precious moment, Jesus spent time praying for His Church. You'll notice, in praying for His Church, Jesus didn't pray for buildings, worship services, an address, or an event. Jesus prayed for people, His people—the Church! The Church Jesus established was and is a community of people who have been called and then sent out to share in His mission. Jesus said, "As You sent Me into the world, I also have

sent them.” The word “sent” indicates deployment with a purpose. The reality is that the people of God have been deployed as missionaries into the world. That means as a Jesus follower, God has sent you as a missionary.

How can you leverage your influence for the sake of His kingdom?

What often hinders you from living sent as a missionary where God has placed you (e.g. fear, busyness, etc.)?

DO

Obey the teaching of Scripture with your life.

God passionately loves the peoples of the earth, and He desires for them to be transformed by the gospel. He has sent His people, the Church, into the world as missionaries to leverage their influence for the sake of His kingdom. God has strategically placed us as His missionaries in workplaces, neighborhoods, schools, and cities in order for our lives to demonstrate His life to the world.

Take a moment and surrender your hindrances to God in prayer.

Now, pray that God will invest you in those strategic places.

DAY 3

A JESUS FOLLOWER *MAKES DISCIPLES ALL OVER THE WORLD*

READ

Read the following passages slowly and carefully.

2 Timothy 2:2

1 Thessalonians 2:1-12

Mark 3:14

Matthew 28:18-20

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.

Based on the previous Scriptures, in your own words answer the following questions:

What is discipleship?

What is the activity of discipleship?

DO

Obey the teaching of Scripture with your life.

Jesus said to His followers in Matthew 28, “make disciples.” He had modeled it to them for three and a half years. He had poured His life into a group of twelve men and was now calling them to do the same. All Jesus followers can make disciples. All Jesus followers may not go about it in the same way, but all can do it.

Discipleship is investing into the life of another so that the life of Jesus may be reproduced in them. It’s more than teaching. It’s more than a class. It involves your life.

Making disciples involves sharing the truth. Paul told Timothy to “teach what he had learned.” Thus, making disciples demands that you must be continually growing yourself. Making disciples involves time. Paul said that he imparted to the Thessalonians his very life. Making disciples involves work.

Paul modeled this lifestyle of discipleship. Making disciples is like being a father. Where mothers are generally more nurturing, fathers challenge us to move ahead with encouragement and discipline. The ultimate goal is Christ-likeness. The life of Jesus is lived out in individual Jesus followers who then impact and invest in the lives of other Jesus followers.

What needs to change in your own life to give more time and energy to the cause of making disciples?

DAY 4

A JESUS FOLLOWER *WILL FACE OPPOSITION*

READ

Read the following passages slowly and carefully.

Matthew 5:10-12, 44

John 15:18-25

Acts 5:41

Romans 12:17-21

1 Peter 2:23

1 Peter 4:12-16

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 these verses, what is to be our attitude if we suffer or face difficulty as Christians? How are we to respond to God and those who oppose us?

Expect opposition. Following Jesus isn't consistent with the direction the rest of the world is going. Though we may not face death because we're Christians, there will be

opposition if we follow Christ in this fallen world. Jesus said it would happen. The world nailed Him to a cross.

Matthew 5 says we're blessed if we suffer for the sake of righteousness. If you miss out on something or are overlooked by someone because you follow Jesus, you're blessed. Jesus says, "rejoice," your reward will be great. The early disciples rejoiced when they were considered worthy to suffer for His name (Acts 5:41).

Peter said not to be surprised at difficulty as though something strange was happening. He said the Spirit of glory and God rests on those who suffer. He goes on to say that suffering as an evildoer or as one who does wrong isn't pleasing to God. The suffering referred to is due to godly living in a godless world, not for wrongdoing.

What's your response when being a Jesus follower costs you something? Do you rejoice? Do you trust His promises? If not, why not?

DO

Obey the teaching of Scripture with your life.

When others hurt you, laugh at you, leave you out, or pass you over because you're a Christian, the Bible gives you actions to take. You must first respond to God. Trust Him to carry out vengeance and to give you peace. God will take care of you and the situation. Second, we're to pray for our persecutors and do good to them. In that way, you give a powerful testimony to the power of God in your life. This will not come naturally but only as you're led and empowered by the Spirit of Christ.

How do you respond to those who hurt you? Who might you need to pray for in light of these verses?

DAY 5

A JESUS FOLLOWER

PRIORITIZES THE KINGDOM

READ

Read the following passages slowly and carefully.

Matthew 24:14
Revelation 5:9-10
Revelation 11:15
Luke 12:31-32

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.

There are more than 100 references in 16 books of the New Testament to the kingdom of God. And yet the kingdom of God is a concept that the church often misunderstands. The kingdom of God is God's sovereign activity resulting in people being in right relationship with Him. To say it another way, the kingdom of God is the big picture of God's activity all over the world. Here are three realities about the kingdom that will help us understand it practically.

1. The kingdom is believers (Rev. 5:9-10). The kingdom is made up of all the followers of Jesus all over the world.

2. The kingdom is big (Rev. 5:9). It contains believers from every tribe, tongue, people, and nation. The kingdom of God is bigger than any church, denomination, city, or nation.
3. The kingdom is being built (Matt. 24:14). As you read this, God is alive and at work all over the world building His kingdom. We're living in exciting days to be part of God's global harvest.

The way God is expanding His Kingdom is through His church. The local church is the gathering place to teach people about the King and to disciple them in kingdom living. The local church is also the launching pad for the expansion of God's kingdom locally and globally. As followers of Jesus we've all been invited to join in God's activity. We're not simply members of a church; we're citizens of a kingdom that is alive and expanding all over the world.

How can you prioritize the kingdom in your life?

DO

Obey the teaching of Scripture with your life.

What is one change you'll make based on your time in the Scriptures this week?