

NEW CITY DAILY DEVOTIONAL FOR WEEK OF 7/13/2020-7/17/2020

The following content is based on the message on 7/12/20 at New City Church in Phoenix, AZ. It is not meant to be a full synopsis, but rather a resource to help you analyze and apply the main ideas. To use this devotional effectively, please listen to the message found at <http://newcityphx.com/sermons/>.

MONDAY // PRACTICING OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS

Read Matthew 6:1. Jesus is going to lay out some practical ways that we can practice our faith. These are known as spiritual disciplines. He tells us that there is a wrong way—the hypocritical way—and the way of Jesus. Jesus told us that we shouldn't be like the hypocrites. This is often one of the top critiques about Christians. So what does it mean to be hypocritical? A hypocrite is someone who says one thing and does something else. But Jesus takes it a step further. For Him, a hypocrite is someone who does Godly things only to be seen by others, rather than to experience intimacy with God.

We are all hypocrites in transition.

- *Why is it so tempting to do things to be seen by others?*
- *Pray and ask God to show you a good deed that you can do for someone else. Then go do what God revealed to you without letting anyone else know that you did it.*

TUESDAY // FASTING TODAY

Read Matthew 6:16-18. New City is calling us to fast during breakfast and lunch on Tuesdays. What is a fast? A biblical fast is a personal, willful abstention from something, normally food/drink. It is different from a hunger strike; and it is not a weight-loss plan. The Bible presents fasting as something that is good and beneficial, and even a normal part of the Christian life. So why are we fasting? When you read the Bible, we see there are lots of reasons we would engage in a fast.

1. When you have a major decision to make.
2. When difficult times hit you; when you are mourning.
3. To ask for the miraculous.
4. To call for justice.

God is the main ingredient in our fast.

- *The reasons someone should fast are all coming to the surface right now. This is why New City is calling a fast. Which one of these reasons resonate with you most?*
- *Set a five minute timer. Talk with God about the reason you want to fast. If it is to ask for the miraculous, then plead with God for a miracle. If it is to call for justice, then plead with Him for justice.*

WEDNESDAY // GIVING BACK TO GOD

Read Matthew 6:2-4. Jesus actually doesn't command us to give in this passage. Instead, He assumes that it is already something that we are doing. He doesn't mean that it is wrong to give in public, but He is saying that it isn't God's heart for a person to give only to be seen by others. If someone gives to be seen, then it shows that they are not giving at all. It actually shows that they are giving in order to receive something. We already have all that we need, because God gives it to us. We should give because God has given us all that we have.

We give because it isn't ours to begin with.

- *Look at all you have been given. Spend some time thanking God for giving all of it to you.*
- *Prayerfully, ask God to show you someone that needs something that you have. As anonymously as possible, try to give that thing to the person who God reveals to you.*

THURSDAY // PRIVATE PRAYER LIFE

Read Matthew 6:5-8. To be clear, Jesus isn't saying that we should never pray in public with others. All throughout the Scripture, people cry out to God together. In this passage, Jesus is speaking to the heart of the one praying. Our prayer life should be about connecting with God, not being seen by others. In fact, this reminds us that praying in public should not be the only time that we pray.

You should have a private prayer life before you have a public prayer life.

- *What does your prayer life look like? How often do you spend time talking with God privately?*
- *What would you like to see change about your prayer life? Spend some time asking the Holy Spirit to help you change your prayer life.*

FRIDAY // TEACHING US TO PRAY

Read Matthew 6:9-16. Jesus gives us a model prayer, not to give us empty phrases to pray, but to help us approach God the way Jesus approaches God.

- *Look at the different lines of the prayer. Oftentimes, our prayers are filled with requests to God. However, Jesus shows us so much more. Which one of these themes do you struggle to pray?*

Jesus tells us that we should be asking God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. God's will is done without opposition in heaven. On earth, we expect human systems will not bring God's will to earth. That's not what God plans. God's will for us is to begin to live like we will live in heaven. That might seem overwhelming, but God says that we can ask God for what we need today to live according to His will.

Only God's system will bring the kingdom to earth.

- *Read each line of the Lord's prayer and then pray your own version of it.*