

NEW CITY DAILY DEVOTIONAL FOR WEEK OF 8/24/2020-8/28/2020

The following content is based on the message on 8/23/20 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 // AN INSINCERE CONFESSION

Read Matthew 7:21-23. Jesus is telling us that there were greater numbers of people who professed His name than actually followed Him. There were people who did the right things—prophesying, casting out demons, and doing mighty works—but their hearts were not right. Sometimes we actually do good things but with wrong, selfish motives.

It is always about what is inside us that counts the most.

- *Jesus says that on the day of judgment, certain people will list their ministry accomplishments as a justification for their salvation. Why is it tempting to give our works as a basis for entrance into the Kingdom of God? What makes this response so foolish?*
- *Imagine you are one of those people that come face-to-face with the Lord on the day of judgment. What answer would you give as to why you should be saved?*

TUESDAY // WHAT GOD REALLY WANTS FROM US

In Psalm 51, David confesses his sin to God after his adulterous affair and murderous cover-up. He pleads with God for a complete transformation of his heart. He acknowledges that what God really wants is a broken spirit and a broken and contrite heart—in short, He wants us to be humble. **Now read Micah 6:8.** We see a very similar answer to the question of what God wants from us. Simply put, God wants us to be humble and to care about the things He cares about.

We cannot enter Jesus' Kingdom without a humble heart.

- *What is humility and why is it so important to a sincere Christian faith?*
- *In response to his sin, David confesses and pleads with God to remain close to him. Spend a few minutes reflecting on the sins in your heart and then thank Jesus that He has forgiven you and promised never to leave you (see Hebrew 13:5).*

WEDNESDAY // BUILDING A SOLID FOUNDATION

Read Matthew 7:24-27. What makes this second person so wise? Why does their house remain standing? It has to do with the foundation. The foundation of his house is made up of the very words of Jesus. This foundation is strong, secure, and safe. Its strength is derived from God—the One who spoke Creation into being. When we choose to obey Jesus' commands and to live the way He tells us to, we find ourselves on solid ground.

We must make sure the foundation of our life is solid in order to withstand the storms of life.

- *The foolish person, who does not trust in Jesus' words, is forced to build his house on something other than Jesus' commands and promises. What are some other things we are tempted to build our house (i.e. lives) upon?*
- *Is there any part of your life's foundation that needs to be torn up and replaced?*
- *Set a timer for two minutes or more. Sit in silence and reflect on why it is important to build our lives upon the foundation of God's Word.*

THURSDAY // EVERYTHING ELSE IS WORTHLESS

Read Philippians 3:2-11. Paul outlines all of the spiritual qualifications he *could* claim if he wanted to be declared righteous. Instead, he insists that those qualifications are worthless. There is only one way to be declared righteous in Paul's mind—you must personally trust in the person and work of Jesus Christ. We are only found to be righteous because of our faith in Him. In other words, you cannot behave good enough to be declared righteous. But Jesus IS good enough, and that righteousness has been credited to us. If our heart is not connected to Christ, then our good works are meaningless.

Outward Christian behavior means nothing if it is done with a dislocated heart

- *What "qualifications" do some people claim as a basis of their righteousness?*
- *It might be tempting to think that our spiritual works are meaningless if they don't make us righteous. Why is this not true? Why then should we do good works?*
- *Take a minute or two to thank Jesus for his righteousness that has been credited to you.*

FRIDAY // CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD

Read Romans 10:8-13. In this passage, Paul emphatically claims that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. While this might seem to contradict what Jesus said in Matthew 7, it actually reinforces it. To call on the name of the Lord means to cry out to God in your time of need because you recognize that only He can save you. It is not merely calling Him "Lord" or paying Him lip service. You must actually trust in Jesus and believe that He alone can and will save you.

We must call on the name of the Lord only.

- *What role does humility play in our ability to call on the name of the Lord?*
- *Spend a few minutes reminding yourself why you first called on the name of the Lord and why you continue to trust in Him. Thank Jesus for saving you.*