

NEW CITY DAILY DEVOTIONAL FOR WEEK OF 11/16/2020-11/20/2020

The following content is based on the message on 11/15/20 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 // ABIDING AND WALKING

Read 1 John 2:1-6. John implores his readers—men and women he considers his “children”—to both abide in Jesus and to walk in his ways. To **abide** in Jesus is to be relationally connected to Him. We are aware of his presence in our lives and the influence he has on us. In the Bible, walking is synonymous with living. To **walk** in Jesus means to live life as He did. It means our thoughts, actions, and attitudes are aligned with Jesus. John’s point in these verses is that it is critical for followers of Jesus to do both of these things. In fact, he goes so far as to say if we say we know Jesus but don’t walk like Him by keeping His commandments, then we have deceived ourselves.

Followers of Jesus are to be relationally close to Him and live life like He did.

- *What would abiding in Jesus look like for you (be specific)?*
- *What would walking like Jesus look like for you (be specific)?*

TUESDAY // TRANSFORMATIVE ABIDING

Read John 14:23-24. John makes it clear that at the core of abiding in Jesus is our love for Him. This love for Jesus is the only thing that will truly transform us beyond the surface. It makes perfect sense—if we don’t love Jesus, we wouldn’t really want to be like Him and walk the way in which He walked.

True abiding leads to deep transformation.

- *We are most deeply formed by what we most deeply love. Do you believe this to be true? Why or why not?*
- *Spend a few minutes reflecting on specific ways you can deepen your love for Jesus.*

WEDNESDAY // GIFT OF GOD

Read Ephesians 2:8-10. One natural reaction to learning that the way we live is an indicator of our relationship with Jesus is to begin to focus on our behavior/actions (i.e. Jesus’ commandments) as if it will preserve that relationship. In other words, we are tempted to think that by doing good, our relationship with God is secured. Paul addresses this wrong thinking in Ephesians 2 in no uncertain terms. Our salvation is by grace alone through faith in Jesus—not anything we do ourselves. If we had to earn our salvation, then it wouldn’t be a gracious gift. Grace would cease to be grace.

God’s grace cannot be earned—it can only be given.

If you read verse 10, you can see that the outcome of this gracious gift of salvation is that we would walk in the good works God intends for us. This is basically what John is saying—out of our relationship with Jesus ought to flow good works.

- *Why is it important that our relationship with Jesus leads to good works and not the other way around?*
- *While many seasoned Christians fully embrace this truth, they don’t always live it out in daily life. We somehow fall into the trap of believing our good deeds **keep** us in good standing with God. Have you ever experienced this in some form or another?*

THURSDAY // REPENTANCE IS THE KINDNESS OF GOD

Read Romans 2:4. The apostle Paul recognizes that such a difficult challenge to walk like Jesus is accompanied by incredible patience on God’s part. God is patient, kind, and bears with our constant failure to obey His commands. Paul points out that God does this, not so that we can take advantage of His grace and live any way we want, but so that we would recognize it and be moved to change our ways. Living in a way that is antithetical to the Kingdom of God (i.e. kingdom of darkness) is harmful to us and God is calling us to turn from that life because He wants what is best for us.

Repentance is the antidote for living in the kingdom of darkness.

- *How does God’s kindness and patience motivate us to repentance?*
- *Spend a few minutes reflecting on these attributes of God. Thank God that His patience and kindness are inexhaustible.*

FRIDAY // COME HOME TO JESUS

Read Luke 15:20-24. This famous parable of Jesus about the prodigal son highlights the desire for a Father to have his son abide with him. In this story, the younger son chooses to leave the safe, loving environment of his father’s home and wander off to live recklessly (the word “prodigal” means reckless and wasteful). He soon realizes how good life in the father’s home was and longs to be back. If we were honest, many of us are tempted to make our home somewhere other than with Jesus, forgetting how good life with Jesus really is. We are tempted to “leave home.”

Jesus is always calling us home.

But Jesus is always calling us home. We don’t have to clean up our lives perfectly—we just have to come home to Jesus—desiring to abide in Him and walk in his ways.

- *According to Luke 15, how does God feel when we are home with Him?*
- *Spend a few minutes reflecting on the times you may have been tempted to look elsewhere for your spiritual home. Reflect on how good, safe, loving, restful, and peaceful God’s home is. Thank God for this truth.*