

NEW CITY DAILY DEVOTIONAL FOR WEEK OF 11/23/2020-11/27/2020

The following content is based on the message on 11/22/20 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 // LOVE YOUR BROTHER

Read 1 John 2:7-11. John uses the word “brother” to describe who we should love. This refers to other brothers and sisters in Christ. In other words, we are called to love people within the church. Now, that doesn't mean that we should hate people outside the church, but it means that we need to especially love those who have been adopted into the family of God. Sometimes the hardest people to love are the people to whom we are closest. It is easy to see the faults of people who are the closest to us. Instead of loving each other, this can cause us to divide and hate each other. Hate is not from God. It's true that, in love, we should point out sin in others. However, we must be motivated by the love of God in us.

All that we do should come from a heart of love.

- *How does the lack of love in your life cause you to feel like you are walking in darkness?*
- *Set a timer for two minutes. Use this time to reflect on how God loves your enemies.*

TUESDAY // “JUST AS I HAVE LOVED YOU”

Read John 13:34-35. Throughout the book of 1 John, John quotes much of his teaching from Jesus' last night on earth. John was in the upper room listening to Jesus teach before He'd go on to die. These words impacted John deeply. In order for the world to know that we are disciples of Jesus, we must love each other. Jesus talked a lot about love, but ultimately He would show us what love means. Jesus selflessly gave Himself up as a sacrifice for us. In order to love others, we have to believe that Jesus loved us first.

The only way that we have the ability to love comes from being loved by God first.

- *How should the love of Jesus motivate you to love others? If someone looks at the ways that you love others, could that person tell that you love God?*
- *Set a timer and reflect on how deeply God loves you.*

WEDNESDAY // JESUS ON YOUR JOURNEY

Read 1 John 2:12-14. John is reminding us that God is faithful. He is highlighting people on different stages of their spiritual journey. In each stage, God proves Himself faithful. He proves Himself faithful by forgiving us, regardless of how sinful we feel like we are. He proves Himself faithful by strengthening us through His presence with us. He promises to be with us, and we can trust Him in that because of what He has done

for us. Jesus overcame the world so that we don't have to be enslaved in the evil systems of the world. In this passage, John reminds us that we have overcome the world because Jesus has overcome the world.

Regardless of where you are on your journey, God proves Himself faithful to you.

- *How does Jesus overcoming the evil systems of the world give you hope for your current season in your life?*
- *Set a timer and reflect on how Jesus has proven Himself faithful to you.*

THURSDAY // OBJECT OF OUR LOVE

Read 1 John 2:15-17. God wants us to love each other. However, he juxtaposes what we should not love. John tells us that we should not love the world. But what does John mean by “the world?” In this instance, the world is an organized earthly system controlled by the power of the evil one that has aligned itself against God and God's kingdom. If we are supposed to love God with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength, then we cannot love what is aligned against God's kingdom. John says that we over-desire things in the world. Love and desire come from deep places within us and therefore must be put in the right places. For the Christian, the object of our love must be both God and other people.

Christians are called to love God and love people, who are made in the image of God.

- *How can you know when you are over-desiring things of this world rather than loving God and others?*
- *Set a timer and reflect on what you love.*

FRIDAY // LOVE IN THE WRONG PLACES

Read Galatians 5:19-26. We are looking for love in all the wrong places. Humans have a tendency to fulfill “natural” desires they have that are contrary to God's will. When we try to fulfill our desires, we have the tendency to be captivated by the outward show of things, without enquiring into their real values. When we over-desire those things, we find that ultimately, they are against the kingdom of God. Only God can fulfill the deep longing that is within us. When God is fulfilling the deep longing, then we will walk in step with the fruit of the Spirit.

The world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

- *Why do you think Paul says that both the world and the desires of the world are passing away?*
- *How do you change the object of your desires to desire the things of God?*
- *Set a timer for two minutes. Use this time to reflect on how God fulfills your deepest longings.*