

DAILY DEVOTIONAL

It's Personal / Week 4

"I tell you the truth, anyone who welcomes my messenger is welcoming me, and anyone who welcomes me is welcoming the Father who sent me."

John 13:20 NLT

DAY 1

Do you have a friend who lives far away? A family member who moved to a new city? A neighbor you love to hang out with who just moved to the other side of town? It's hard when someone you love isn't close to you physically. That makes spending time together, staying close, and being a part of each other's lives more difficult. That's one of the cool things about Jesus. He cared so much about us that He came to Earth to actually be with us. He wanted to know us in a real, close way. And when we get to know Him, we're getting to know God Himself in a personal way. Today, thank God for the fact that He came to the world to show His love for you.

"I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener."

John 15:1 NLT

DAY 2

Have you ever planted something? If you have, then you know that it can be a lot of work! That's why working with a gardener can be helpful. They know what they're doing and can guide you as you work to grow something beautiful. Just like plants need soil, water, and more to grow, we also need certain things to thrive. We need the help of a God who can provide what we need and guide us as we grow. The more we stay connected to and close to Him, the more we will grow and thrive as people. Talk to a friend or Small Group Leader and ask them to encourage you to stay connected to God this week.

"Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine."

Luke 22:42 NLT

DAY 3

This verse is actually not just a passage in the Bible. It's part of a prayer that Jesus Himself prayed in the face of great suffering and challenges. And it's something we can pray when we find ourselves in the same circumstances. We can ask Jesus to change what is causing our pain. We can pray for His help to make things different. But we can also recognize and accept that He is in control. No matter what happens, we can trust that His plan is good. And that is something we can tell Him as well! What difficulty or struggle are you facing right now? Pray about it, asking God for help and thanking Him for knowing the perfect plan for your life no matter what.

DAY 4

“There was a man there named Zacchaeus. He was the chief tax collector in the region, and he had become very rich. He tried to get a look at Jesus, but he was too short to see over the crowd.”

Luke 19:2-3 NLT

One of the cool things about Jesus is that He makes it personal with us. And not just those of us who are good, or get it right all the time, or even the ones we think deserve it. No, Jesus makes it personal with *all* of us. He wants to know each and every one of us in a real way. No matter who we are, what we’ve done, or what other people think about us, Jesus wants to have a relationship with us. That’s what He demonstrated here with Zacchaeus! And it’s what He demonstrates in His love for us still today. Spend time today thinking, writing, or journaling about what it means to know that God wants a relationship with you just as you are.

DAY 5

“Either way, Christ’s love controls us. Since we believe that Christ died for all, we also believe that we have all died to our old life.”

2 Corinthians 5:14 NLT

Do you ever wish you could get a fresh start? That you could leave all the mistakes and mess ups you’ve made in the past? Well, the good news is that with Jesus, you can! When you get to know Him in a real and personal way, you start a new life. And your old life? Well, you no longer have to feel the guilt, or shame, or embarrassment about anything from before. Instead, you can walk forward knowing that God has forgiven you and wants to help you start again. Is there something you want to leave behind you? Pray today and ask God to remind you that in Him, you have been given a new life and a new chance to start fresh!

DAY 6

“Jesus responded, “Salvation has come to this home today, for this man has shown himself to be a true son of Abraham.”

Luke 19:9 NLT

Have you heard that word, “salvation,” before? It’s one that comes up often in Christianity. Why? Because it’s so important for our faith. When we talk about salvation, we’re talking about the way that Jesus saved us from our sins. His death on the cross paid the price for all of our mistakes, and when we believe in Him, we find salvation. Jesus rescues us from the weight of mistakes and the opportunity to start a relationship with Him. That’s a pretty big deal, and it’s what makes salvation such a gift. Find a trusted friend, Small Group Leader, or other adult you know who follows Jesus. Ask them what salvation means for their life and talk to them about what it might mean for you, too.

DAY 7

“For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost.”

Luke 19:10 NLT

Sometimes we hear that God is personal. We hear that He wants to have a relationship with us. We hear that He loves and knows us. But honestly, at times we struggle to believe it because we don’t feel it. That’s where memorizing Bible verses can be so helpful. When you wonder where He is or doubt what He’s doing, those verses are there to point you back to what’s true. They’re there to help you experience Him. This week, work to memorize this verse. Memorize just the first couple of words to start. Then, the next day add on the next couple of words. As the week goes on, work to memorize the entire verse!