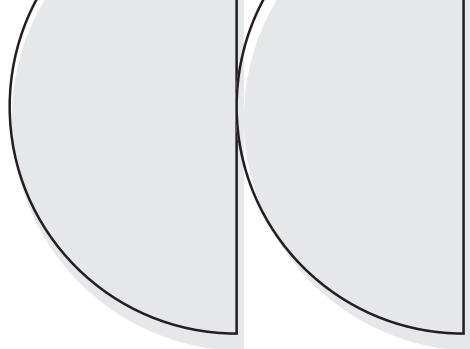


DAY 6

Look straight ahead, and fix your eyes on what lies before you. Mark out a straight path for your feet; stay on the safe path. Don't get sidetracked; keep your feet from following evil. Proverbs 4:25-27 NLT

It's easy to compare ourselves to others, isn't it? We can barely look around a room without catching ourselves thinking about how we measure up next to the people around us. But all that comparison really does is distract us from what is true—from the whole point of our faith! Instead of looking at what someone else is doing, this Proverb reminds us to keep our eyes on God. When our eyes are fixed on God, we'll be able to focus on the path in front of us instead of what's going on around us.

The truth is that comparison is not just something you deal with in middle school—it's something everyone deals with! So today, ask a wise adult you trust (a small group leader, a parent or guardian, an older sibling, etc.) what advice they would give you about keeping your eyes focused on God.



DAY 7

"For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love." Galatians 5:13 NLT

Often, memorizing God's Word is one the best ways to remember the point of our faith. Freedom is the goal—the point of following God—and verses like this help us keep that in mind.

Memorize this verse one word at a time. Say the first word without looking. Then, say the first and second words without looking. Then, say the first, second, and third word without looking. Continue until you have the entire verse memorized word for word.

DAILY DEVOTIONAL

FOR AN
everyday faith.

THE WHOLE POINT / WEEK 2

MIDDLE SCHOOL

DAY 1

"Work with enthusiasm, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people." Ephesians 6:7 NLT

Have you ever been assigned a task, chore, or project that you weren't 100% excited to do? We've all been there! But the cool thing is that a simple change in our perspective can make that thing just a little easier. When you approach what you're doing with enthusiasm or positivity, it makes the thing in front of you easier to do. As you grow in faith, let God help you change your perspective and build your enthusiasm to do the things in front of you.

Whether you are taking on a complicated science project, mowing the lawn, preparing family dinner, or even taking out the trash, make it a goal to have a positive attitude while you do it this week!

DAY 2

"So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and immovable. Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless." 1 Corinthians 15:58 NLT

Do you ever have moments where you're not sure what you do really matters? If you invite that new kid to sit with you, will they actually want to be friends? Why is being kind to your siblings important? Does doing your homework every night really matter? Whether it's something that seems big or small, it can be hard to actually do something when you don't know if it will pay off. The next time you feel that way, remember that God knows how it will be worth it even when we don't! God not only wants you to have faith but to know that everything you do can be done for God.

Today, be honest with God about something you're struggling to do right now. Then, ask God to remind you this week that nothing you do is wasted when you do it for God.

DAY 3

“We serve God whether people honor us or despise us, whether they slander us or praise us.” 2 Corinthians 6:8a NLT

We all have those people in our lives that might make us feel like we don't measure up. But remember, it's not the opinions or words of others that matter; it's the truth from God. It's easier to believe the truth found in God's Word when we remember that God loves and values us no matter what. God always has and always will see you as valuable! And the more you connect with God and grow in faith, the more you'll believe that to be true.

Set a goal this week to memorize this verse. Keep coming back to it so that you can remember it when someone makes you feel as though you're less than who God created you to be.

DAY 4

“Serve only the Lord your God and fear him alone. Obey his commands, listen to his voice, and cling to him.” Deuteronomy 13:4 NLT

Sometimes it can be hard to know what it really looks like to live for God. With so many voices telling us so many different things, it can be hard to know what God really wants for us. But remember, when the noise around you becomes distracting, we can understand God's plan for us by remembering these words: serve, obey, listen, and cling. That's what a person does when they're living for God. It's the whole point! It's what we need to do if we want to follow God.

Write these four words down: serve, obey, listen, and cling. Place them somewhere you can see them often this week as a reminder of what it looks like to live for God.

DAY 5

Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ. Galatians 1:10 NIV

Written by Amelia, age 14, from Alpharetta, Georgia, USA

When I was in sixth grade, my friend wasn't being nice to others. She would disobey teachers, talk badly about others, and get into trouble. At the time, I felt like I needed to be her friend. I wanted her to like me! In fact, it actually became something that eventually got in the way of my relationship with God. I was seeking her approval instead of God's!

Have you ever been there before, too? I think we've all found ourselves trying to get someone else to like us instead of focusing on what God thinks of us. So, I decided to really listen to God, and through that, God reminded me that I needed to focus on God's approval instead of the approval from others. I knew if I focused on God instead of getting my friend to like me,

I'd be able to live the life that God has planned for me. I learned that God's approval was the most important!

So today, keep your focus on God. And how do you make God your focus? There are lots of ways! Go to church, talk about God with others, read your Bible, pray, listen to worship music, or go for a walk through God's creation. Try one of these things today, and while you do, remember that God's approval is what matters most!