

The Life Transforming WORD



Jewels from John

30 Short Devotions on John's Gospel with audio options

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Devotion # 1 - Whose Approval Should We Seek?

For the Audio Version, click here: [Whose Approval Should We Seek?](#)

"But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men, and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man." **John 2:24-25**

When Jesus ministered here on earth, many people followed Him for various reasons; Jesus taught like no one ever did, he performed mighty miracles no eye had ever seen, He fed thousands, He exercised authority over nature and He even raised the dead. The multitudes who followed Jesus therefore, did so for various reasons too; some genuinely believed, while there were others who just trailed Him with the only intent of finding fault with Him. The very same people who were filled with awe and wonder at all that Jesus did, were also part of the crowd that wanted Him to be crucified. It is therefore not surprising that Jesus did not seek men's endorsement for what He did, or for who He was. The one who looks deep into the hearts of men knew that man is frivolous, and unpredictable.

Strangely however, we live in an approval seeking world. For many people, their day is made or broken, depending on the number of likes on their status in social media. We study to receive our parents' approval, work to receive our employer's approval, and do good to receive people's commendation. What happens in the bargain is that we are disappointed, and disheartened. If only we can understand who we are in God's eyes, what His purpose for our life is, we will be totally transformed and our only goal will be, to seek the Lord's validation.

Paul's exhortations to the Corinthian Church and the Colossian Church are good reminders for all of us: *"For not he who commends himself is approved, but whom the Lord commends."*

2 Corinthians 10:18 (NKJV) and *"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as though you were working for the Lord and not for people. Remember that the Lord will give you as a reward what He has kept for His people. For Christ is the real Master you serve."* **Colossians 3:23, 24** GNT

For the Audio Version, click here: [Whose Approval Should We Seek?](#)



Devotion # 2 - Everything We Have - We Received

For the Audio Version, click here: [Everything We Have - We Received](#)

'John (the Baptist) answered and said, "A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven." John 3:27 (NKJV)

John the Baptist is a great example of a man, who knew exactly who he was and what his life's purpose was. He spelled this out very clearly throughout his life. He was just a 'voice' to introduce Jesus, the one who was 'preparing the way' for Jesus to come and fulfil His mission on earth. After he baptized Jesus, and many of his own disciples decided to leave him, to follow Jesus, some of his own disciples, became quite uncomfortable. They came to him with the complaint that 'everyone was going to Jesus' (John.3:26) and deserting their 'camp.' His response in **John 3:27** is stunning. He answered them 'that a man can receive nothing unless given to him from heaven'. That is why he could say so sincerely about Jesus, "He must increase, but I must decrease." **John 3:30** (NKJV)

If we take a moment to think about it, everything we have in our lives is God's gift to us – our life, our senses, our health, our knowledge, our skills, our birth place, our families; name it - almost everything. If the Lord did not decide to give it to us, we would not have it, no matter how hard we tried. This kind of perspective on life does the following things: It gives no room for any sort of boasting, teaches us to not get overly possessive of anything or anyone, reminds us to be mindful of others who are less fortunate, and most importantly reminds us to acknowledge God in every single area of our lives.

James says it this way, "Every good and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning." **James 1:17** (NKJV)

For the Audio Version, click here: [Everything We Have - We Received](#)



Devotion # 3 - The One Who Perceives But Still Pardons

For the Audio Version, click here: [The One Who Perceives but Still Pardons](#)

The woman of Samaria said, *"Come see a man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?"* **John 4:29 (NKJV)**

(Read John 4: 4-42 for the entire account)

The woman of Samaria had no clue whom she would encounter on that eventful afternoon, as she came to draw water from Jacob's well. What seemed to be a casual request from Jesus for a drink of water, developed into a deep dialogue where the Samaritan woman realized who Jesus was, and also the fact that He knew all about her.

Initially she must have been shocked when Jesus revealed that He was aware of the five husbands she had earlier, and also about the man she was living with, who was not her husband. There must have been something about the way Jesus spoke to her, that caused her not to be embarrassed, scared and withdrawn, but to feel overjoyed at the thought that she had actually met the Messiah; and with this thought she ran to invite the entire village to come and meet Jesus Christ. The outcome was amazing. *"And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, 'He told me all that I ever did.'"* **John 4:39 (NKJV)**

Many of us may have secrets from the past or the present, which we have never disclosed to anyone. Many people are living with a deep sense of regret and guilt, as they don't really know how to handle these issues, and so carry with them a heavy burden of guilt and shame. Some of the reasons people never open up to others is the fear of being betrayed, gossiped about, taken advantage of, belittled, blackmailed or the fear they won't be forgiven.

But here's wonderful news – though the Lord discerns everything about us; knows our inmost thoughts and struggles, knows every secret sin that we have hidden from everyone else, still He stands with wide open arms of love to welcome us, accept us, forgive us and totally rid us of all the burdens of guilt and shame, if we will just come to Him. That is the reason Jesus died on the cross; to take upon Himself all of our transgressions, and to give us freedom from sin and an abundantly joyful life.

Here's the Lord's reassurance for us in **Hebrew 8:12**: *"For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and lawless deeds I will remember no more."*

For the Audio Version, click here: [The One Who Perceives but Still Pardons](#)



Devotion # 4 - What do we Labour For?

For the Audio Version, Click Here: [What Do We Labour For?](#)

"Jesus said to them, my food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work."

John 4:34 (NKJV)

Picture Jesus that day as he sat down near the well in Samaria; he was tired, thirsty and hungry. In spite of His physical exhaustion, He took time to converse with, and convince the Samaritan woman that He was indeed the Messiah. She in turn brought her entire village to Jesus, and eventually many believed on Him.

The disciples of Jesus, who had in the meantime gone to buy food for Jesus were confused, when Jesus declined the food that was brought to him, and instead said to them, *"I have food to eat of which you do not know."* **John 4:32** (NKJV). Jesus later reiterates, in **John 4:34** that His food was to do His Father's will, and to complete the work that He sent Him to do.

A lot of us are caught in the rat race, wherein we push ourselves, and our children to do everything we can, to climb the social ladder, mainly to satisfy our temporal desires. Each of us have two kinds of needs – the one, physical and the other spiritual. Sadly however, most are content with gratifying the physical needs, and have literally starved themselves spiritually. When we don't seek God, read and meditate on His word, pray to Him, search out His will and plan for our lives, bless others, witness to those around, fulfil His purpose for our lives, we are living in the temporal, and losing out on the eternal, because the physical man will die one day, but the spiritual man will live on into eternity.

In Matthew Chapter 4, after forty days of fasting, Jesus was really hungry, and when tempted by the devil to turn the stones to bread, He was so confident about the fact that man does not need only physical food, but also the spiritual nurture that God's word provides. He therefore quoted to the devil, from the book of Deuteronomy, which depicted the condition of the people of Israel as they wandered in the desert for forty years:

"So he made you suffer from hunger and then fed you with manna, which neither you nor your ancestors had seen before. He did this to teach you that a person cannot live on bread alone but on every word that the Lord speaks." **Deuteronomy 8:3** (GW)

For the Audio Version, Click Here: [What Do We Labour For?](#)



Devotion # 5 - When We Have No One

For the Audio Version, Click Here: [When We Have No One](#)

"The sick man answered, 'Sir, I don't have anyone here to put me in the pool when the water is stirred up; while I am trying to get in, somebody else gets there first.'" John 5:7 (NKJV)

The pool near the Sheep Gate in Jerusalem, called Bethesda was a unique place. An angel went down at a certain time into the pool, and stirred the water so that whoever stepped in first, was healed of whatever infirmity they had. The Bible records that a very large multitude of sick, and disabled people were all awaiting their turn.

It was here that Jesus met this man who was bed-ridden with an infirmity for 38 long years. Jesus knew everything about the man and his predicament, and asked him a very important question, *"Do you want to get well?"* His reply was amazing. Not knowing who it was who was asking this question, he replied, *"Sir, I have no man..." John 5:7 (KJV)*. There was no man to help him, assist him or care for him. What no man did or could do for thirty eight years, Jesus did in an instant. At the very words of Jesus he got up, took up his mat, and walked.

Most of us can recall situations in our lives when we were let down by someone whom we trusted in much, or of a time when someone gave their word, and didn't remember or bother to keep it, or when someone did promise to help but pulled back at the last minute. There are other situations, when we looked up to a physician or a specialist hoping they could reverse a diagnosis, only to find that they could offer no hope.

Whatever our circumstance may be, let's shift our focus off of people and look to the Lord who is close at hand. **Numbers 23:19** says it this way, *"God is not like people. He tells no lies. He is not like humans. He doesn't change his mind. When he says something, he does it. When he makes a promise, he keeps it."* (GW)

Here's a comforting thought from **Romans 10:11**, *"The Scripture says, 'Whoever believes in Him (the Lord) will not be disappointed.'" (GNT).*

For the Audio Version, Click Here: [When We Have No One](#)



Devotion # 6 - Hand it Over into His Hands

For the Audio Version, click here: [Hand it Over into His Hands](#)

*Jesus said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread that these may eat? But this He said to test him, for He himself knew what He would do." **John 6: 5-6** (NKJV)*

Jesus often created situations for his disciples, both to stretch their faith in Him, and also that they could truly understand who He really was. When the huge multitude of hungry people needed food, Jesus discussed with Philip, to see if he could find a solution. Like most of us who get logical when it comes to finances, Philip too made a mental calculation, and then informed Jesus that even if they had two hundred denarii worth of bread with them they could never satisfy the hunger of that huge crowd.

Andrew, on the other hand saw a small boy with his little lunch of five barley loaves and two fish. He began to wonder, what this would do when given into the hands of Jesus. The outcome was mind-blowing. Jesus took that small lunch, gave thanks, and then it transformed into a mighty miracle. Not only were more than 5000 people fully fed and satisfied, they were even able to collect 12 baskets full of leftovers.

I wonder which of these two disciples we can most relate ourselves with. The important point for us to remember is that no matter what situation we face, the Lord already knows and He does have a solution for us. However, He is waiting to see if we are willing to turn in our little into His almighty hands, and trust Him to take over. When we surrender those little things into the Lord's hands, everything takes a turn for the better; our sickness turns to health, our trials to triumphs, our needs to plenty, our failures to victories, our sorrows to joy, our weakness to strength, our worries to calmness and our limitations to liberations.

Here's a word of reassurance from Paul in **Philippians 4:6-7**, "*Never worry about anything. But in every situation let God know what you need in prayers and requests while giving thanks. Then God's peace, which goes beyond anything we can imagine, will guard your thoughts and emotions through Christ Jesus.*"(GW)

For the Audio Version, click here: [Hand it Over into His Hands](#)



Devotion # 7 - God's Perfect Timing

For the Audio Version, click here: [God's Perfect Timing](#)

Jesus said to them, *"The right time for me has not yet come. Any time is right for you."* **John 7:6** (GNB)

As long as Jesus was here on earth, He was totally focused on living, and fulfilling the will of the Father who sent Him. In doing so, Jesus was ever so often pressured to do things that didn't really fall in alignment with the Father's will, and timing, but He didn't succumb to the pressure. In **John Chapter 7**, we read how the brothers of Jesus themselves did not understand this, or believe who He really was, and were pushing Him to go into Judea and do great things, so He could make a name for Himself. That is when Jesus responded to them and explained that His work was in total submission to His Heavenly Father's timing. He reiterated this again in **John 7:8**, where he said to them, *"For my time has not yet fully come."*

We are living in a very fast-paced world, and our human tendency is to rush and hurry into everything. This is an age of instant gratification, it's all about instant loans, Instagram, insurance in five minutes and instant food. No wonder it's becoming more and more difficult for us to learn to wait. In **Ecclesiastes 3:1-8**, we read that there is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens. If we desire to do God's will in our lives, we need to wait on Him, and do everything according to His timing.

When we don't wait for God's timing, and try to rush ahead of Him, we invariably end up making choices and decisions that often result in regret, stress and sadness. God has a plan and purpose for each of our lives. In order for God to accomplish that plan in and through us, we must learn to submit and wait for His timing. I am sure many of us have experienced God's timing to be perfect; and if we truly surrender to Him, we will discover He is never a second too late.

Let us learn to trust God's timing, because His word assures us: *"He has made everything beautiful in it's time."* **Ecclesiastes 3:11** (NKJV)

For the Audio Version, click here: [God's Perfect Timing](#)



Devotion # 8 - No Finger-pointing Please

For the Audio Version click here: [No Finger-pointing Please](#)

John 8:7, *“So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, “He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.”(NKJV)*

(Read John 8: 1-11 for the entire account)

Jesus was at the temple, early in the morning, teaching people who had come eagerly to hear His words. The Scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman who was caught in the very act of adultery. Their only aim was to trap Jesus, and to check whether He would keep the Old Testament law as given by Moses (**Leviticus 20:10**), which actually commanded that both the man and the woman be put to death, but for some reason only the woman was brought to Jesus.

They thought they were putting Jesus in a spot, as they awaited His verdict. Strangely, Jesus spoke nothing, but simply bent down, and wrote on the ground with his finger. No one knows for sure what He wrote, but we do know that Jesus took the Old Testament Commandment about adultery in **Exodus 20:14**: *“Do not commit adultery,”* to a whole new level in **Matthew 5:28**, when He said, *“But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”* When they repeatedly questioned Him, that’s when Jesus told them, that anyone standing there who was without sin, could throw the first stone at her. We can almost hear all the stones drop to the ground one by one, as the entire group got convicted, and left - every one of them, from the oldest to the youngest.

How easy it is for us to find fault with others, and not take a moment to see that the very things we accuse others of doing, we often are guilty of. Notice how we promptly cover up the sins of those closest to us, but feel no inhibition to disclose, and speak about the wrongs of others who are more distant.

Something happened that day to the entire group of people, who came in to accuse the woman. The closer they got to Jesus, the more exposed they were to their own sins, and no one could stand in His presence. The only one who had the right to cast a stone at her, sent her off with freedom and forgiveness.

The closer we get to Jesus the lesser we focus on the failings of others, and instead desire to become more like Him.

The next time we are tempted to pick up a stone to aim at somebody, let’s remember Jesus’ words in **Matthew 7:3**: *“Why, then do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, and pay no attention to the log in your own eye?”*

For the Audio Version click here: [No Finger-pointing Please](#)



Devotion # 9 - God Enables the Disabled

For click the Audio Version here: [God Enables the Disabled](#)

Jesus answered, *"His blindness has nothing to do with his sins or his parents' sins. He is blind so that God's power might be seen at work in him"* **John 9:3** (GNB)

Jesus and his disciples encountered a man who was blind from birth. The question that first popped up from Jesus' disciples was, *"Teacher, whose sin caused him to be born blind? Was it his own or his parents' sin?"* **John 9:2** (GNB) This question is a strange one for two reasons; firstly, the reality of the matter is, none of us is without sin, as Paul says in **Romans 3:23**, *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,"* (NKJV), and secondly, there is no way a person could sin before being born. However, Jesus categorically declared to His disciples that their premise was faulty. He then explained to them that the man's blindness would glorify God, and His power would be demonstrated in a dynamic way. Jesus did an unexpected miracle, and restored sight to the blind man.

In a country like India, we have a staggering 2.68 Crore (26.8 Million) persons with some form of disability (Census of 2011). Not sure how many of us encounter them (children or adults), in our day-to-day lives. A few may be seen outdoors, but a majority will never venture out of their homes, as they are often targets of ridicule. Not only are the disabled ostracized, but their families are also ignored.

It is indeed a sad situation that even the church has not welcomed them, and so almost 95% of families who have a child or person with any form of disability, never attend church. The reason is, a majority of churches don't welcome, or support the disabled, or their families.

Let us remind ourselves that all of us (including those with disabilities) are made in the Image and likeness of God. I would like to personally believe that the image of God is almost untarnished in a person (especially children) who are challenged in any way as they are more aware of God, and are more dependent on Him because of their weaknesses. May the Lord use us to be channels, who will demonstrate His power and love to those who may not be as able as we are, and let us teach our children to be kind and loving to those who are challenged and struggling.

When God called Moses to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt, Moses made many excuses to refuse the call. He specifically told the Lord that he was not eloquent, and could not speak well. *"The LORD said to him, "Who gives man his mouth? Who makes him deaf or dumb? Who gives him sight or makes him blind? It is I, the LORD."* **Exodus 4:11** (GNB)

In **1 Corinthians 1:27-28**, Paul says it this way, *"Instead, God chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise. And he chose the things that are powerless to shame those who are powerful. God chose things despised by the world, things counted nothing at all, and used them to bring to nothing what the world considers important."* (GNB)

Let's do all we can to connect with, and love families, and persons who are challenged in any way.

For click the Audio Version here: [God Enables The Disabled](#)



Devotion # 10 - When the Blind See What Others Fail To

For the Audio Version click here: [When the Blind See What Others Fail To](#)

Then Jesus said, *"I have come into this world to judge: Blind people will be given sight, and those who can see will become blind."* **John 9:39** (GW)

Read John chapter 9 for the entire account

When Jesus healed the man born blind, there was an uproar among the people. Some of his neighbours and people who had seen him begging earlier, even doubted his identity, and totally disbelieved the miracle. The Pharisees on the other hand questioned him, and disbelieved Jesus for the sole reason that He healed the man on the Sabbath. Strangely, the parents of the man who knew all about their son's condition from birth, were unwilling to stand with him, only for fear of the threats of the Jews, to excommunicate anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Christ.

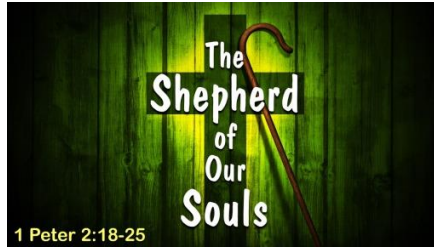
In the midst of all of this confusion, the blind man who was healed, was firm in his faith. When he went and washed in the pool of Siloam to receive his sight, he did so, fully believing Jesus' words. He had not yet seen Jesus, but when questioned by the religious leaders, he unreservedly acknowledged that Jesus was probably a prophet, a devout man and one sent from God, all based on the fact that Jesus did something for him that had never been done before - restoring the sight of one born blind. The consequence the blind man faced was expulsion from the synagogue. That's when Jesus met him, and revealed to him that He was the Son of Man. The man bowed down in worship, and acknowledged the Lordship of Jesus over his life.

It was at this time that Jesus told the Pharisees and the Jews that they who claimed to see were actually blinded to who He really was. On the other hand the man born blind, readily recognized Jesus' identity. The things that blinded the religious leaders and Jews, were disbelief and traditions. "Jesus told them, "If you were blind, you wouldn't be sinners. But now you say, 'We see', so you continue to be sinners." **John 4:41** (GW). The parents, on the other hand, were blinded by fear of men, and by the need for approval from men.

Let us not rejoice that we can merely see with our physical eyes, but may we search our hearts to recognise all those areas of our lives where we might be blinded by sin, disbelief, traditions and fears. Let us allow the light of God to shine in our hearts, so that all the areas of blindness will be expelled.

Here's an admonition from **John 12:36**, *"Put your trust in the light while there is still time; then you will become children of the light."* (NLT)

For the Audio Version click here: [When the Blind See What Others Fail To](#)



Devotion # 11 - The Shepherd of Our Souls

For the Audio Version click here – [The Shepherd of Our Souls](#)

"I am the good Shepherd. The good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep." **John 10:11** (NKJV)

The Prophet Isaiah explained the condition of mankind this way, *"All of us like sheep, strayed away. We have left God's path to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on Him the sins of us all."* **Isaiah 53:6 (NLT)**. It was to this lost and sinful world that Jesus chose to come down, and decided to be that Good Shepherd, who willingly laid down His life for us, His sheep.

Ever wondered what makes Jesus the one and only Good Shepherd? Here are some qualities listed in John Chapter 10. He has a personal relationship with us, which is real and vibrant; not only does He know us by name, but we can also know Him. He goes before us, and His word promises in **Psalm 32:8** that *"He will instruct us and teach us in the way we should go."* When He is with us we are assured of His divine protection. In **Psalm 46:1** we are guaranteed that *"God is our refuge and strength and an ever-present help in trouble."*

Most importantly, He is the only, true and loving Shepherd who willingly laid down His life for us. **Romans 5:8** captures this most beautifully, *"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."* The best part of it all, is that the Good Shepherd warrants His sheep with eternal life and security. In Jesus' words, *"And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand."* **John 10:28-29** (NKJV)

All of us can recall a time when we went astray and chose not to follow the Good Shepherd. But, it is for our own eternal good that we must desire to follow Jesus, the Good Shepherd and the Only Guardian of our souls. Peter reminds us in **1 Peter 2:25**: *"Once you were like sheep who wandered away. But now you have turned to your Shepherd, The Guardian of our souls."* (NLT)

For the Audio Version click here - [The Shepherd of Our Souls](#)



Devotion # 12 - There's Hope beyond the Grave

For the Audio Version click here: [There's Hope Beyond the Grave](#)

*"Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die." **John 11:25** (NKJV)*

Lazarus, Mary and Martha were close friends of Jesus, and He loved them dearly. However, when the news that Lazarus was sick reached Jesus, He did not panic or hurry to visit him, but rather chose to stay on where he was for two more days. There was a reason for this calmness in Jesus. He knew that, *"This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it."* **John 11:4** (NKJV). At the outset this statement may seem contradictory, for Lazarus indeed died from the sickness, and he was also buried, and when Jesus went to visit Mary and Martha, Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days.

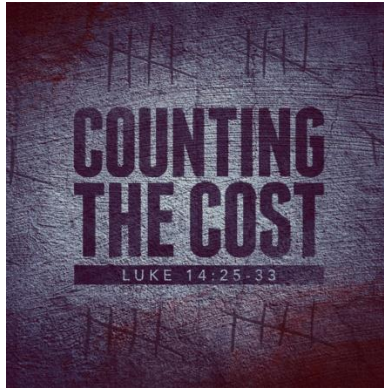
Jesus, full well knew that Lazarus had died, and informed his disciples, "Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go to that I may wake him up." **John 11:11**. When the disciples were puzzled, Jesus then told them plainly that Lazarus had died. On reaching Bethany, and seeing the sorrow of Martha and Mary, He wept along with them. In a most astounding miracle recorded in the Bible, Jesus called forth to the dead man, and Lazarus came out alive and well.

It was a mighty miracle (unimaginable and unheard of), that Jesus performed. That was only to prove what He told Martha in **John 11:25**, that He is the resurrection and the life. To those who believe in Him, death has no dominion over them. Though we may die physically, we will live with Jesus eternally, and the fact of the matter is, for those who live and believe in Jesus, their souls will never die.

Though we all know death is an eventuality, most people are gripped with fear, and apprehension at the very thought of it. For many, death spells an irrevocable finality, so they choose never to speak about it, and are therefore shattered at the face of death. Here's the most comforting thought for those of us who have experienced the death of a loved one, or are with a dear one who is close to death. The Lord Jesus broke the curse of death by His death, burial and resurrection. The grave could not hold Jesus, and Jesus proved that it could not hold Lazarus either. Only when we place our faith in Jesus, do we have the blessed assurance of resurrection from the dead, and of life eternal with Him.

*"For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him." **1 Thessalonians 4:14** (NIV)*

For the Audio Version click here: [There's Hope Beyond the Grave](#)



Devotion # 13 - What Are We Counting?

For the Audio Version, click here: [What Are We Counting?](#)

“But Judas Iscariot, the disciple who would soon betray him, said, “That perfume was worth a year’s wages. It should have been sold and the money given to the poor.” **John 12:4-5** (NLT)

(Read John 12:1-8 for the entire account)

Most of us might have attended a memorial service of a loved one who passed away, but Jesus was invited to a ‘Thanksgiving Supper’ to celebrate the new lease of life He had given to Lazarus, when He raised him from the dead. As Lazarus reclined at the table with Jesus, Martha served, Mary anointed His feet with a very expensive perfume, and each of them expressed their gratitude to Jesus in their own way.

However, there was something exceptional about what Mary did. She took a twelve ounce jar of exorbitant perfume, anointed Jesus’ feet, and wiped it with her hair. It was probably, as some say, a huge part of her inheritance, and extremely precious to her. Mary’s heart was overflowing with love, and indebtedness for what Jesus did for her brother Lazarus, that she could hardly reckon the cost. The exuberance of her love resulted in a fragrant aroma that filled the entire house.

On the other hand, Judas Iscariot was so blinded by his love for money that all he could calculate was, that the perfume Mary poured on Jesus’ feet was worth a year’s wages. He even thought up a way in which the money could have been used, namely, help the poor, when in actuality he cared nothing for them. He was so used to holding the money bag, and stealing from it, that he could hardly bear the thought of Mary lavishly pouring it all, on Jesus’ feet.

It’s good to evaluate ourselves, to see if we love Jesus the way Mary did, or do we find ourselves withholding, and counting as Judas did. If we were to ponder on the manifold blessings the Lord has showered on us, we would, like Mary, pour out our lives in love and service to the Lord; and would not, for a moment, count the cost, when we consider that it cost Jesus His very life to save us, and nothing we do could ever repay Him for what He has done for us.

We can ponder as the Psalmist did in **Psalms 116:12**, *“What can I offer the Lord for all He has done for me?”* (NLT) and remind ourselves that, *“We love Him because He first loved us.”* **1 John 4:19** (NKJV)

For the Audio Version click here: [What Are We Counting?](#)



Devotion # 14 - The King is Coming Again

For the Audio Version click here: [The King is Coming Again](#)

“They took palm branches and went out to meet Him, shouting, ‘Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the King of Israel!’” John 12:13 (NIV)

“Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion; see your king is coming, seated on a donkey’s colt.” John 12:15 (NIV)

The multitudes of people who gathered that day, came for two reasons – one was to see Jesus, but the other was also to catch a glimpse of Lazarus, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. The crowds did something spontaneously that day, unaware that they were actually fulfilling the prophecy found in **Zechariah 9:9**...*“Behold your King is coming to you; He is just and having Salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.” (NKJV).*

Indeed Jesus was the king - the king who came to save (that’s what Hosanna means) His people from their sins. He was also the righteous and just king, who came to free us from all fears. He was indeed the humble king who rode on a donkey, who came not to be served but to serve, and give His life as a ransom for many. That day many people recognized Jesus for who He really was, and put their trust in Him.

Jesus died, was buried, rose again on the third day, ascended into heaven and promised that He will return again. The second coming of the Lord Jesus will not be like the first. Firstly, He will come again as the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lords with His holy angels. Jesus said in **Matthew 16:27**, *“For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.” (NKJV).*

Secondly, He will come all of a sudden, and without warning. In **Matthew 24:36**, *“Jesus Himself said, But of the day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.” (NKJV).*

Finally, Jesus will come to judge, and reward each one of us for what we have done. **Revelation 12:22** says, *“Look, I am coming soon, bringing my reward with me to repay all people according to their deeds.” (NLT).*

Only a few people acknowledged Jesus as King the first time He came; however, when He comes again, there will be no way anyone can not acknowledge Him as King and Lord. As Isaiah Prophesied in **Isaiah 45:23**, *“Every knee will bend to me, and every tongue will declare allegiance to me.” (NLT)*

For the Audio Version click here: [The King is Coming Again](#)



Devotion # 15 - When Death Brings Life

For the Audio Version click here: [When Death Brings Life](#)

Jesus replied, *“The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.”* **John 12:23, 24** (NKJV)

In the above mentioned verse, it seems, at first glance, that Jesus is talking about two contradictory subjects. He is speaking about the Son of Man being glorified, and in the same breath also talking about His death. Strange as it may sound, it is a reality that only when a seed is buried into the ground, and dies can it actually produce a good crop.

Have we ever pondered on all that Jesus had to give up when He came down to earth? **Philippians 2:6-9** spells out a few of the things that Jesus gave up – His equality with God, His divine privileges, His exalted position, His divine form, as well as all the power and authority that were duly His. In his own words in **Mark 10:45**, Jesus explained it this way, *“Even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.”* (NLT) Jesus willingly chose death, so we could experience abundant, and eternal life.

It is therefore mandatory for anyone who wishes to follow Jesus to live as the Master did. If we were to examine our lives closely we will identify things we need to die to – our ego, our selfishness, our pride, our worldly desires, our prejudices and every sinful habit. It’s only in dying to these things, that we can truly live a life that is fruitful, and a blessing to others.

As Paul puts it very aptly in **Galatians 2:20**, *“My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”*(NLT)

For the Audio Version click here: [When Death Brings Life](#)



Devotion # 16 - Why Not Believe?

For the Audio Version click here: [Why Not Believe?](#)

"Then Jesus cried out, "Whoever believes in me does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me." John 12:44 (NIV)

(Read John 12:37-50 for the entire account)

While Jesus was here on earth, he performed so many mighty miracles. He healed people with various infirmities, cast out demons, raised the dead, fed thousands, calmed the sea and even walked on water. However, in spite of the multitudes having witnessed these astounding signs and wonders, **John 12:37** says *"...they still would not believe in Him."* This was a group of people, who as the Prophet Isaiah described in **Isaiah 6:10**, were blinded by unbelief, and whose hearts were so hardened that there was no way they could perceive, and understand God's ways or His thoughts, and were therefore unable to receive God's healing.

There was another group of Jewish leaders who did believe in Jesus, but they were so fearful of the Pharisees, and that they could be expelled from the Synagogue that they refused to acknowledge who Jesus was openly. They were people-pleasers and **John 12:43** describes them this way, *"They were more concerned about what people thought of them than about what God thought of them."* (GW)

If we were to reflect on ourselves for a moment we will be surprised to know that not only do we blindly believe, and accept all of the knowledge the world offers us, but that we also have no qualms in entrusting our lives to mere men. We trust our education system, transport system, financial system, health system, communication system, and every other possible man-made system, knowing full well that they could be faulty and could also defraud us.

Isn't it sad then that there are so many who are unwilling to believe, and put their trust in Jesus, the only one who will truly never fail us, even for a second. The blessings of believing in Jesus is that He is the only one who can lead us to the Father, save us from our sins, help us overcome all the darkness of sin, walk in the light of His holiness and give us eternal life. (**John 12:44-50**)

Though Thomas was one of the twelve disciples of Jesus, he too doubted the resurrection of Jesus, and was filled with unbelief. In **John 20:27** Jesus reappeared to his disciples, and showed His scars specifically to Thomas, and admonished him with these words *"Stop doubting and believe."* (NIV) to which Thomas answered and said, *"My Lord and My God."* (**John 20:28**)

What Jesus told Thomas that day applies to us today. He said in **John 20:29**, *"Because you have seen me you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."* (NIV)

For the Audio Version click here: [Why Not Believe?](#)



Devotion # 17 - Let's Get Down to Serving

For the Audio Version click here: [Let's Get Down to Serving](#)

Jesus said, *"You call me. 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and you are right, because that's what I am. And since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other's feet."* **John 13:13-14** (NLT) **(Read John 13:1-15 for the entire narrative)**

That day, when Jesus took a basin of water and stooped down to wash the feet of His disciples He did so, fully aware of several things. He knew His hour had come to depart from the world, that Judas Iscariot was conspiring to betray Him, that the Father had handed over all authority into His hands, and that He came from God, and was going back to God. **(John 13:1-3).**

So what was it that prompted Jesus to go down on His knees, and wash all of His disciples' feet including that of Judas? There were a few key reasons mentioned; the first one was His immense, and unconditional love for His disciples. **John 13:1** spells it out this way, *"Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end."* (NKJV). Secondly, when Peter refused to let Jesus wash his feet, Jesus told Him something profound *"If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."* **John 13:8** (NKJV). He was demonstrating to them that it was not just the outward washing of the body that was important, but the inner cleansing of our sins, which only the shed blood of Christ could accomplish for us. Thirdly, Jesus was setting an example for them to follow. He explained to them in **John 13:13-14** that if He, their Lord and Master could wash their feet, then they, His followers had the obligation to serve one another with love and humility.

Jesus further explained this in **John 13:16**, *"Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him."* He was simply telling them, that they were merely servants and messengers, for the only one who was worthy of all honour and glory, is God Himself.

To serve as Jesus did, we need to demonstrate the love and humility that He modelled. A love that is even willing to love those who don't love us, and intend to harm us. The humility that enables us to give up our position, our authority, our rights, gives us grace to serve one another and esteem others better than ourselves.

We can conclude with Jesus' words in **John 13:17**, *"Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them."*

For the Audio Version click here: [Let's Get Down to Serving](#)



Devotion # 18 - A Faithful Friend

For the Audio Version click here: [A Faithful Friend](#)

Now Jesus was deeply troubled, and He exclaimed, "I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me!" **John 13:21** (NLT)

Let's for a moment, put ourselves in the place of Jesus to try and understand the pain, and heartache He must have gone through, knowing that one of His twelve chosen disciples - Judas Iscariot, was conspiring to betray Him, for a measly thirty pieces of silver.

Judas' association and friendship with Jesus was for three and a half years; he stayed with Jesus, ate with Him, heard all His teachings, experienced first-hand, all the miracles and wonders He performed, was in-charge of the group's finances, had his feet washed by Jesus and was the recipient of Jesus' unconditional love. No wonder Jesus was deeply troubled, and sorrowful at the thought that His friend to whom He had entrusted so much, had turned his heel against Him.

Some of us may have been through a similar situation where someone close to us, whom we loved and trusted, turned against us. Most often our initial response to such an experience, is hurt and anger. If not dealt with, this often turns to bitterness, and distrust of people in general. This kind of response, is not beneficial to us, and definitely not what God desires of us. Instead we can choose to model after Jesus, deciding to forgive, and love those who have been unfaithful to us.

It is also a good reminder to us that we should strive to be those loyal, and loving friends whom others can depend on. In **John 15:13**, Jesus said, *"Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends."*(NKJV) and that's what Jesus did for us, when He willingly laid down His life for us on the cross of Calvary. He is not only our best friend, but the greatest example of the kind of friends we should be to others.

Let us imitate Jesus, our faithful friend who commanded us to *"Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another."* **John 13:34** (NIV)

For the Audio Version click here: [A Faithful Friend](#)



Devotion # 19 - Know The Way – Go His Way

For the Audio Version click here: [Know The Way - Go His Way](#)

*Thomas said to Him, Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way? Jesus said to him, “**I am The Way**, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” **John 14: 5-6** (NKJV)*

When Jesus told His disciples that heaven had many mansions, and that He himself was going ahead to prepare a place for them, Thomas asked the pertinent question ‘*Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?*’ He must have been astonished when Jesus replied “***I am The Way***” and no one can come to the Father except through me.

Today there are countless ways and options that people are being offered to get to God. This has left many confused and bewildered, not knowing which way to choose. Jesus was categorical to His claim that He was ‘*The Only Way*’. Throughout His life here on earth Jesus established this fact by the many signs, wonders and miracles He performed, but most importantly through His death, burial, resurrection and ascension.

The first step then, is for one to believe that Jesus is indeed ‘*The Only Way to God.*’ The next step is to choose to follow in the way that He has set for us. In **Matthew 7:13-14** Jesus said, “*Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.*” (NKJV)

There are two ways placed before each of us. One is the ‘*Broad Way*’ which is clearly more attractive, popular and easy to take, but sadly, the end of which is destruction. The ‘*Narrow Way*’ on the other hand is not so appealing, it’s hard, it’s a way of no compromise, sometimes lonely too, but that’s the way Jesus went, and it sure leads to eternal life. Jesus was forthright in saying that only few would choose the ‘*Narrow Way.*’ Let’s choose to be among those who walk the ‘*Narrow Way*’ by faith and obedience to the Lord Jesus, knowing that, though the road may be tough, the end will be glorious.

May we be able to say what Job said in **Job 23:11**, “*For I have stayed on God’s paths; I have followed his ways and not turned aside.*” (NLT)

For the Audio Version click here: [Know The Way - Go His Way](#)



Devotion # 20 - Truth That Sets Us Free

For the Audio Version click here: [Truth That Sets us Free](#)

*Jesus said to him, "I am the way, **The Truth** and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."* **John 14:6** (NKJV)

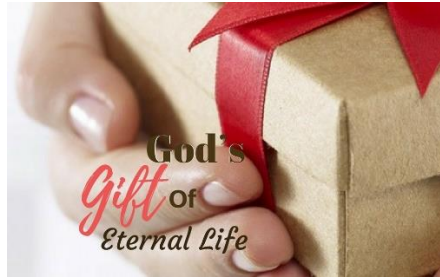
Jesus not only claimed He was the way to the Father, but He also affirmed that He was also 'The Truth.' In **John 8:32**, when Jesus said to the Jews, "*And you shall know the truth, and the truth will make you free,*" they were perplexed. As the descendants of Abraham they believed that they had never been in bondage to anyone. However, what Jesus was talking about was a bondage to sin that no one, but He alone, could liberate one from. He went on to explain to them in **John 8:36**, "*If the Son sets you free, you are truly free*" (NLT). The point Jesus was making was that, He is indeed the embodiment of truth that can truly set one free.

One of the greatest struggles for most of us is to be a truthful people. The situations, and the pressure to conform, and compromise the truth are so many, that many prefer to take the easy way out, to fit in rather than stand up. When the Bible talks about truth there are so many areas where we are expected to put this into practice. Here are a few; speaking the truth to one another, speaking the truth in love, handling God's word truthfully, worshipping God in truth, being truthful in handling money and resources entrusted to us, being truthful in all our relationships and most importantly to think only on those things that are true. If we allow Jesus, who is the Truth to reign in us, truth will permeate every single area of our lives, and truthfulness will become our lifestyle.

Some of us may not tell lies, but we often hide and misrepresent the truth and the result is deceit, which the Lord detests. The good news is that we have the Holy Spirit with us who is the Spirit of Truth, who is there to help, and guide us to be people of integrity.

Let the prayer of David be our prayer, "*Teach me to live according to your truth, for you are my God, who saves me.*" **Psalms 25:5** (GNT)

For the Audio Version click here: [Truth That Sets us Free](#)



Devotion # 21 - The Gift of Life

For the Audio Version click here: [The Gift of Life](#)

*Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the Truth and **The Life**. No one comes to the Father except through Me." **John 14:6** (NKJV)*

Jesus is not only the Way and the Truth but He is also 'The Life.' At the beginning of creation when God made man, **Genesis 2:7** says, "*And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.*" (NKJV). It is of fundamental importance to understand that God is the Creator and Sustainer of our lives. That is why, the birth of every baby is of utmost value.

When Adam and Eve disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden, one of the serious consequences that they, and everyone after them had to face, was death - one that was physical, the other spiritual and eternal. All of man's sacrifices could not free him from the pangs of death, and that is why Jesus came down to earth to live a sinless life, so that He could be that sinless Lamb of God who could take the sins of the whole world upon Himself. He had to face the penalty of death on the cross, and break the fetters of death by his resurrection, so we too could have eternal life. "*And this is what God has testified: He has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.*" **1 John 5:11** (NLT). This is the assurance Jesus gave His disciples in **John 14:19**: "*In a little while, the world will see me no more, but you will see me; and because I live, you also will live.*" (GNT) Everyone who believes in Jesus is assured of this life eternal, which He alone can offer us.

Since God is the source of our lives, He is the one who can teach us how to live this life and help us understand and fulfil His purposes for the same. When one does not recognize this fact, what happens is inevitable; they either don't take care of, or misuse the body, and the precious life that God has graciously given to them.

Not only does Jesus offer us eternal life in heaven, but He also offers us an abundant life (full of love, joy, peace, holiness, goodness and all other blessings we need) right here on earth. He said, "*I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*" **John 10:10** (NKJV)

Let us so live our lives here on earth that God's name will be honoured through us, and His plans and purposes fulfilled through us. As David sought the Lord, may we also seek Him and say, "*You will show me the path of life; In your presence is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*" **Psalms 16:11** (NKJV)

For the Audio Version click here: [The Gift of Life](#)



Devotion # 22 - Peace That Prevails

For the Audio Version click here: [Peace That Prevails](#)

*"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." **John 14:27** (NKJV)*

Many have the misunderstanding that when they come to Jesus, life will transform into a bed of roses, but the truth of the matter is, the life that Jesus invites us to is not a cushy one. The reason is, we live in a fallen world, and so the consequences of sin, and the fall are many; that is why there is so much of poverty, pain, suffering, sickness and death. Being part of this system then makes us also vulnerable to all of the above.

Moreover, when Jesus called people to follow Him, and be His disciples, He was categorical that those who came after Him were most assuredly going down the hard, and narrow way that Jesus walked. Jesus never painted a rosy picture for His disciples but here's what He assured them, *"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."* **John 16:33**

So what is it that Jesus offers that far outweighs all the trials, and hardships one faces in this world? He offers a peace that no one else in this world can give. It's a peace that can calm and soothe our hearts, remove all fears and anxieties even in the midst of all the confusion in and around us. It's the greatest assurance that since Jesus has overcome the world, if we allow Him to live and reign within us, we too can be overcomers.

The next time we are faced with those issues in relationships, stress at work, financial crisis, health issues, death of a loved one, environmental concerns, political unrest, global uncertainties, and anything else that can disturb our peace, let's go to the Lord who can fill our hearts with His divine peace. Someone said it beautifully, 'Peace is not the absence of trouble, but the presence of Christ'

There's also an important word of exhortation by Paul in **Romans 12:18**, *"Do everything possible on your part to live in peace with everybody."* (GNT). Let us make it our resolve to be those channels of peace wherever we are.

Here's an amazing promise from the Lord in **Isaiah 54:10**, *"Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed," says the Lord, who has compassion on you.*" (NIV)

For the Audio Version click here: [Peace That Prevails](#)



Devotion # 23 - Abounding in Fruitfulness

For the Audio Version of this devotion click here - [Abounding in Fruitfulness](#)

Read John 15:1-8 for a detailed account

“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.” **John 15:4** (NKJV)

When Jesus told His disciples, that He was the true vine, His Father, the gardener and they, the branches, it was an analogy that they could easily relate with. For those of us who are interested in gardening, we understand the importance of trimming the branches, and also cutting off those branches which sometimes are completely dry. That’s exactly what the Father has to do when there is no fruit in our lives. Just like a gardener who invests his time, energy and resources on a plant, expects to see the fruit, so also, God who has given us everything we ever need, including Salvation, which is the greatest gift, anticipates a life of fruitfulness.

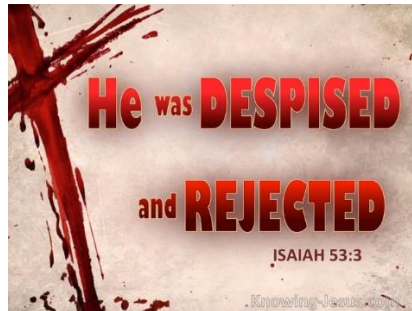
In order to bear fruit there is an important prerequisite, and that is for us to abide in Christ, and that His Words abide in us. It’s really simple; a branch has life and can bear fruit only as long as it is connected to the vine. Once it is disconnected, death is inevitable. Abiding in Christ means acknowledging the fact that we are helpless without Him. What happens as a result of this abiding, is that we become more fruitful, and we have the assurance that whatever we desire will be done for us.

There are two important areas one must be fruitful in. Firstly, in our own personal lives. **Galatians 5:22-23** spells this out clearly, *“But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.”*(NLT) As Jesus clearly stated, the fruit of the Spirit will be evident only in the life of one who chooses to abide in Him.

The next area of fruit-bearing is where we are called to bless others and lead others into the Kingdom of God. In the parable of the sower in **Matthew 13**, Jesus talked about the ones who are good soil, who hear the word, understand it and produce fruit, some hundred fold, some sixty and some thirty. The Lord wants to take and use us to be those fruitful people, who are fulfilling the Great Commission of the Lord Jesus, and bringing many into His fold.

Here is a word of Jesus to treasure in our hearts from **John 15:16**, *“You did not choose me; I chose you and appointed you to go and bear much fruit, the kind of fruit that endures.”* GNB

For the Audio Version of this devotion click here - [Abounding in Fruitfulness](#)



Devotion # 24 - Expect to be Unaccepted

For the Audio Version click here: [Expect to be Unaccepted](#)

Jesus said, *"If the world hates you, remember that it hated me first."* **John 15:18** (NLT)

Read John 15:18-25 for the entire teaching

When we read of all that Jesus taught and did while here on earth, it would make us wonder for which of His truthful teachings, and wonderful deeds did so many hate Him. Jesus however, was not alarmed by this reaction. On the contrary, He told His disciples that for those who chose to follow Him, this was what they too should expect from the world.

Jesus clearly explained the reasons why He was disliked by many; Firstly, He was not of this world and so His teachings and the standards He put forth, were in contradiction to what people chose to live by. Secondly, many did not recognise that Jesus was truly the Saviour of the world, sent by the Father to save all of mankind from their sins. Thirdly, they saw and experienced all the signs and wonders He performed, but their unbelief prevented them from accepting and loving Jesus. It was as Jesus rightly said in **John 15:25**, *"they hated me without a cause."*

As those called to be followers of Jesus, we should therefore not be flustered when we too, encounter similar rejection as He did. We must realize that there is a constant conflict between the standards set by God, and those set by the world. For example, when Jesus calls us to be loving, forgiving, holy, truthful, generous, offering the eternal, the world prefers hate, revenge, depravity, dishonesty, selfishness and the temporal. It should be no surprise then, for us who commit to walk in obedience to Jesus and His words, if we too are not prominent or favoured.

Let's encourage ourselves with Jesus words in **Luke 6:22**, *"Blessed are you when people hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven."* (NIV)

For the Audio Version click here: [Expect to be Unaccepted](#)



Devotion # 25 - The Power of Being 'One'

For the Audio Version click here: [The Power of Being 'One'](#)

"I pray not only for them, but also for those who believe in me because of their message. I pray that they may all be one. Father! May they be in us, just as You are in Me and I am in You. May they be one, so that the world will believe that you sent Me." **John 17:20-21** (GNT)

If we as the body of Christ, deeply desire for the world to believe that Jesus is indeed the Saviour whom the Father sent down from heaven, and if we aspire to make that huge impact on those around us, the secret is unity. Jesus knew this was of utmost importance, and that's why He prayed, not only for His disciples but for all of us who have heard, and believed the message of the Gospel, that we all be one.

One of the crafty tools in the hands of Satan is disunity. Once the seeds of dissension are sown by the enemy, his work is almost fully done. Many are not aware of his evil schemes, and so fall prey to this subtle trap. Disunity and discord often starts within the family, permeates through every section of society and has sadly, become part of the church as well. No wonder then, that we have made little, or no impact on those around us.

Love is the cord that binds, and brings about this unity at every level. Paul explains this beautifully in **Colossians 3:14**, *"Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony."* (NLT) The Apostle Paul reinforces this thought over and over again in his Epistles, that we are 'One Body' and this is true especially for those of us who belong to Christ. Here's a word of admonition from Paul to the Corinthian church which is very applicable to us today. *"I appeal to you, dear brothers and sisters, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, to live in harmony with each other. Let there be no divisions in the church. Rather, be of one mind, united in thought and purpose."* **1 Corinthians 1:10** (NLT)

Let's pray as Jesus prayed, and do all we can to maintain love, and unity in every relationship. There's an encouraging scripture in **Ephesians 4:3**, *"Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace."* (NLT)

For the Audio Version click here: [The Power of Being 'One'](#)



Devotion # 26 - Do They Know Who We Are?

For the Audio Version click here: [Do They Know Who We Are?](#)

'The woman asked Peter, "You're not one of that man's disciples, are you?" "No," he said, "I am not."' **John 18:17** (NLT)

Read John 18:15-18; 25-27 for the entire account

Most of us are familiar with the incident of Peter denying Jesus. However, have you wondered what made it so obvious to everyone that Peter was indeed a disciple of Jesus? He and John entered the courtyard of the High Priest, but somehow, the servant girl and the others identified Peter, even though it was dark. Two of the Gospel's mention that someone recognized him as a Galilean, just like Jesus. His close association with Jesus for three and half years left such an indelible mark, that even a stranger said, *"This fellow also was with Jesus of Nazareth."* **Matthew 26:71** (NKJV). Sadly, at that point however, Peter was so fearful and fainthearted, that he thrice denied knowing Jesus.

There was an amazing transformation that took place in Peter's life after the day of Pentecost. He was filled with the Holy Spirit, and his fear was replaced with an unmatched boldness. Not only were wonders and miracles being performed through Peter, but every time He stood up to preach, thousands were also believing and turning to the Lord. In **Acts 4:13**, we read *"Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marvelled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus."* (NKJV) Once again Peter was recognized as one who had been with Jesus and this time, nothing could deter him from confessing, and boldly proclaiming who Jesus was.

Unlike Peter, who was 'uneducated and untrained,' most of us have received much. We have education, specializations, and even hold prominent positions, but the question is, do people know us as those who belong to Jesus? We could be in one of two places; a place of fear and denial or a place of witness and courage, where everyone can recognize that we belong to Jesus. Only when we are filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, and walk in total obedience to the Lord Jesus will we come to the latter place.

Here's a reminder for us from Jesus Himself: *"If anyone is ashamed of me and my message, the Son of Man will be ashamed of that person when He returns in His glory and in the glory of the Father and the Holy angels."* **Luke 9:26** (NLT)

For the Audio Version click here: [Do They Know Who We Are?](#)



Devotion # 27 - So Close - Yet So Far

For the Audio Version, click here: [So Close, Yet So Far](#)

“Jesus’ trial before Caiaphas ended in the early hours of the morning. Then he was taken to the headquarters of the Roman Governor. His accusers didn’t go inside because it would defile them, and they wouldn’t be allowed to celebrate the Passover.” John 18:28 (NLT)

The time when Jesus was arrested, was the exact time when the people of Israel were celebrating the Passover festival. Every year as they celebrated the Passover, in remembrance of their freedom from slavery in Egypt, little did they realize that it was only the sacrifice of Jesus, the sinless Lamb of God, who could truly set one free from their bondage to sin.

In **John Chapter 11**, when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, and many commenced to put their faith in Him, it agitated the Pharisees and the Chief Priests so much that they planned to put Jesus to death. When the matter was brought to Caiaphas the High Priest here’s what he prophesied. *“You don’t know what you’re talking about! You don’t realize that it’s better for you that one man should die for the people than for the whole nation to be destroyed. He did not say this on his own; as high priest at that time he was led to prophesy that Jesus would die for the entire nation. And not only for that nation, but to bring together, and unite all the children of God scattered around the world.” John 11:49-52 (NLT)*

The irony of the situation was, that as the people of Israel (including the accusers of Jesus), prepared to observe the Passover, Caiaphas as the High Priest not only put Jesus on trial but also handed him over to Pilate to be sentenced to death. By doing so, Caiaphas unknowns to himself, handed over the Lamb of God to be slain for the sins of all mankind.

Once a year it was the practice of the High Priest to enter the ‘*Most Holy Place*’ behind the veil and offer sacrifices, first for his own sins, and for the sins of the people. He would bring the blood and sprinkle it on the mercy seat, seeking atonement for the sins of both himself and of the people.

Hebrews Chapter 9 beautifully portrays all that Jesus did, when He shed His blood on the cross for us. Jesus became the ‘*Perfect High Priest*’ who entered the ‘*Most Holy Place*’ with His own precious blood shed once for all, entered the heavens by His resurrection, became the mediator of the New Covenant, bringing us eternal redemption from our sins, so that we may partake of His eternal inheritance.

Is it not a despairing thought then, that there are many today, like Caiaphas and the religious leaders in Jesus’ day, who are so close to the Truth, and yet fail to recognize Him (Jesus), only because of their unbelief?

Here’s God’s word of assurance from **John 1:12**, *“But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God.” (NLT)*

For the Audio Version, click here: [So Close, Yet So Far](#)



Devotion # 28 - All Authority Comes From Above

For the Audio Version click here: [All Authority Comes From Above](#)

(Read John 18: 28 -40 and John 19: 1-16 for the detailed account)

*"Do you refuse to speak to me?" Pilate said. "Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you? Jesus answered, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above." **John 19: 10-11** (NIV)*

Pilate was in a major dilemma when the Jewish leaders, who, not wanting blood on their hands, passed the buck on to Pilate to sentence Jesus to death. When Pilate asked Jesus if He was 'the King of the Jews?' Jesus stunned him by replying, that His Kingdom was not of this world, and hence there were no earthly followers to fight on His behalf. When the Jews told Pilate that Jesus also claimed to be the 'Son of God' it terrified Pilate even more.

Pilate knew deep down that Jesus was not guilty, and as he continued to question Him, Jesus was not willing to answer him anymore. In desperation to get Jesus off his hands, he asked Him *"Don't you realize I have power to free you or crucify you?"* to which Jesus gave this astounding reply. *"You have no power over me if it were not given to you from above". **John 19: 10-12.***

It is imperative for us to understand that all authority on earth comes from God alone. **Romans 13:1** clearly spells this message out to us, *"Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God."* (NLT) This, in a way, takes away any undue fear or restlessness from our hearts as we realize that the Lord is in control over every authority that is established over us.

The other important lesson for us to learn from Jesus, is that we need to submit to the authority that God places over us. If Jesus wanted to, as He mentioned in **Matthew 26:53**, he could have asked the Father to send legions of angels to fight on His behalf, but He chose to submit to human authority only to fulfil the Father's will for His life. In **Titus 3:1**, we read, *"Remind the believers to submit to the government and its officers. They should be obedient, always ready to do what is good."* (NLT)

So what is it that we are required to do for our leaders and those in authority? In **1 Timothy 2:1-2** we read, *"Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence."* (NKJV)

For the Audio Version click here: [All Authority Comes From Above](#)



Devotion # 29 - No Turning Back

For the Audio Version click here: [No Turning Back](#)

*“Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples were together. Simon Peter said to them, “I am going fishing.” They said to him, “We are going with you also.” They went out and immediately got into the boat, and that night they caught nothing.” **John 21:2-3** (NKJV)*

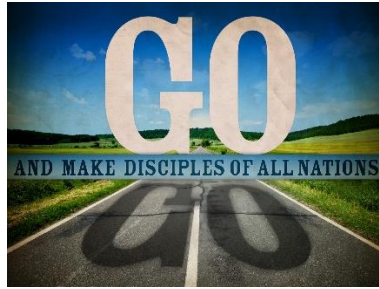
The trial, crucifixion, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, was probably one of the most traumatic times for the disciples of Jesus and also for all those who loved Him and followed Him closely. After having given up their all, having had Jesus their Master, live with them, teach them, provide for them, protect them, pray for them, and love them for three and half years, the absence of Jesus’ physical presence, must have certainly devastated the disciples.

Even though Jesus predicted His death, burial and His rising from the dead on the third day, to His disciples, when all of this actually happened, they were unable to comprehend the full meaning of all that transpired in that period. In spite of the fact that some of them were eyewitnesses of the empty tomb, the risen Christ Himself appeared to them encouraging them with His peace, and breathed on them the Holy Spirit, (**John 20:19-23**) there was still a sense of insecurity and aloneness that prompted Peter (who was accompanied by six other disciples), to go back to what he did before he met Jesus.

Have we at times found ourselves in a similar place the disciples were? After having embarked on this journey of following Jesus, walking closely with Him, loving Him and serving Him, it is possible that we too, when faced with discouragements and hardships, may be tempted to give up. Let’s never lose heart because the risen Lord is with us, and His promise to us in **Matthew 28:20**, “*And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age,*” still stands sure.

For those of us who have decided to follow Jesus, may we press on and never give up. May Jesus’ words to the one who made excuses to follow Him, serve as a caution. “*No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.*” **Luke 9:62** (NKJV)

For the Audio Version click here: [No Turning Back](#)



Devotion # 30 - The Call to Make Disciples

For the Audio Version click here: [The Call to Make Disciples](#)

After breakfast Jesus asked Simon Peter, *“Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?”* *“Yes, Lord,”* Peter replied, *“you know I love you.”* *“Then feed my lambs,”* Jesus told him. **John 21:15** (NLT)

Read John 21: 1-17 for the entire account

When Jesus first called Simon Peter, Andrew, James and John as recorded in **Luke 5:1-11**, they had toiled all night, caught no fish and when Jesus commanded them to throw the net into the deep, they caught such a huge haul of fish, that the nets were breaking, and their boats almost sinking. On witnessing such an astounding miracle, they recognized Jesus as Lord, left everything, and followed Him. Jesus then said to them, *“from now on you will catch men.”*

After the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, the disciples were now back to square one, and Simon Peter along with six other disciples, decided to go back fishing as recorded in **John 21: 1-9**. A strikingly similar situation as the previous one – the disciples had fished all night, caught nothing, were exhausted, probably discouraged, but this time they encountered the risen Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus performed the miracle once again, and filled their empty nets, with a huge catch of fish. The risen Lord had to reassure them once again that He who called them was faithful, He was the same Lord, and He could most certainly take care of all their needs.

Having fed the disciples with a hearty breakfast, Jesus then asked Peter thrice whether he truly loved Him more than anything else. On receiving this confirmation from Peter, Jesus then reinstated Peter to a higher calling from being a *'fisher of men'* to becoming a *'shepherd of God's flock.'*

While being *'fishers of men'* involves bringing people into the kingdom of God, *'feeding the flock'* is the call to make disciples of those who respond to the Gospel. To disciple someone who has decided to follow Jesus means to walk alongside them. Discipling therefore, takes time, energy, consistency, patience, giving of one's self, sharing of one's life, praying for the ones we disciple, and helping them grow in the knowledge of God and His word, so they can become true followers of Jesus.

That's the call and commission of the Lord Jesus to each one of us, as clearly given in **Matthew 28:19-20**, *“Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”* (NLT)

For the Audio Version click here: [The Call to Make Disciples](#)

These devotions are my personal reflections on John's Gospel. They address some important topics, like approval seeking, forgiveness, guilt, death, disability, loneliness, truthfulness, serving, fruitfulness, discipleship and more.

First and foremost, I would like to give all the glory to the Lord Jesus for enabling me to share these devotions with you. May the Word of God encourage our hearts and transform us to become more like Him.

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We pray these devotions will be a blessing to you.

You're most welcome to share this booklet with others.

To read these and other devotions on **The Life Transforming WORD Blog**, *click this link - thelifetransformationword.blogspot.com*

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