

READY SET FLOURISH

A SEVEN DAY DEVOTIONAL FOR NEW BELIEVERS

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CONGRATULATIONS

You've decided to follow Jesus! Congratulations!!!

We are so excited that you have taken the greatest step of your life by asking Jesus Christ to be your personal Lord and Savior! Honestly, there's no other decision that will change your entire life more than this one. Did you know that the 7 days after you make a decision to become a christian are the most important? These are the days where you are going to take the initial steps towards walking out your new found faith. During this time, you will be forming new habits that will strengthen your walk with the Lord as well as establish you as part of the family of God.

This New Believers' Devotional will help guide you on the path of pursuing a close and personal relationship with Jesus. It will also show you what it looks like to become His disciple. The word disciple basically just means to follow or pattern your life after Christ's example.

We are so proud of you and want you to know that you are loved and celebrated here at Flourishing Church!

DAY ONE

Read Your Bible and Apply It!

As a new christian, one of the most important things you can start doing is reading your bible! The bible is the inspired word of God and it will become your new manual for life. As you begin to read it you will discover that there are many powerful things that will begin to happen.

Here are a few things that reading your bible will do for you:

1- Just like oxygen gives our physical bodies life, taking in God's word gives our spirits life!

Read and highlight Deuteronomy 8:3

2- Reading the bible causes spiritual roots to grow, and causes us to live our lives with God as our center.

Read and highlight Deuteronomy 11:18-20

3- Reading the bible will cause you to FLOURISH in your spiritual journey.

Read and highlight Psalm 1:1-3

4- Reading and obeying the bible will renew our minds to think Godly thoughts, not worldly thoughts.

Read and highlight Romans 12:2

5- If we hide God's word in our heart, it will keep us from sinning.

Read and highlight Psalm 119:11

6- Reading God's word helps us to recognize His voice.

Read and highlight Romans 10:17

7- Studying the bible gives us what we need to live a life that pleases God.

Read and highlight 2 Timothy 3:14-17

So as a new christian, where do you start when you want to read the bible?

-Read a Proverb chapter a day. Follow along with the date. If it's the 15th, read proverbs 15. This works well because there are 31 proverbs so you can read the entire book in exactly one month.

-Read the book of Romans. It's a great book to read about the life of a christian.

-Read through the gospel books (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) to learn about the life, ministry and miracles of Jesus.

DAY TWO Sin, Forgiveness and Repentance

You have been forgiven. Wow. That sentence is packed with so much power. But to understand why it's so powerful, we need to back up and understand what exactly it is that we have been forgiven from.

Sin. Take your brand new bible and turn it to Romans 3:23. You can highlight this verse because it's a really important one. It's basically telling us that ALL (every single one of us) have sinned and fallen short of God's standard. We are all sinners.

Take a look at John 3:16

"For God so loved the world that He GAVE His only son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."

Forgiveness. Jesus was the only sinless one who could stand in our place and take on our sin, and then go to the cross to pay for our wrong doing. The bible also says that His great love for us caused Him to suffer and die so that we could receive Him and be forgiven of every sin that we have ever committed.

Repentance. This is the part that we play in the work of salvation. To repent means to recognize our sinful nature, admit that it is sin and choose to stop doing it. The word repentance means to do a 180 degree turn away from sin and begin walking in the opposite direction toward godliness. This requires us to begin searching through the bible and learning what it looks like to walk in right living with God.

Let's end by saying this prayer: God, I thank you for forgiving me of all my sins. Will you reveal to me any sin I am taking part in? I am asking you to help me walk away from anything that doesn't bring you glory. Show me your ways because I want to be more like you. Amen.

Write a list of things that God reveals to you. After you have written your list, give it to God and ask Him to help you repent (turn away from it and go the opposite direction). Remember, you have been forgiven! This prayer doesn't need to make you feel ashamed. God isn't ashamed of you but He is bringing you into a new place of freedom!!

The gift of salvation started with the greatest moment of surrender the world has ever seen. Jesus surrendered His life to cancel out our sin. Jesus was our model because the bible tells us that we are to die to our flesh and live for Christ. Take a look at Galatians 5:24 “Those who belong to Christ have nailed their natural evil desires to his cross and crucified them there. The true evidence that we have become a christian is that we are different. We’ve changed. We no longer do whatever we want to do, we have surrendered everything to God.

Galatians 5:19-21

19 But when you follow your own wrong inclinations, your lives will produce these evil results: impure thoughts, eagerness for lustful pleasure, 20 idolatry, spiritism (that is, encouraging the activity of demons), hatred and fighting, jealousy and anger, constant effort to get the best for yourself, complaints and criticisms, the feeling that everyone else is wrong except those in your own little group—and there will be wrong doctrine, 21 envy, murder, drunkenness, wild parties, and all that sort of thing. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

When we talk about obeying God and surrendering our lives to Him, it sounds a little bit like losing all of the things we love. This could not be further from the truth! You are about to live a life that is so much more fulfilled, free, and whole. The things you surrender to God will be exchanged for true and authentic fulfillment. That aching void you have always felt will disappear and you will begin to experience a confident peace that only comes from being right with your Heavenly Father.

Read and highlight Ecclesiastes 12:13-14.

What does King Solomon say is the key to a satisfying life?

DAY FOUR

Cultivate a Prayer Life

One of the most beautiful and powerful things that take place the moment you ask Jesus to be your savior is that you have direct access to Him. God is so relational and loving that He removed every obstacle between us and Him. There's no middle man. Think of it this way, God doesn't have grandchildren. He just has children. You are a child of God. He is your heavenly father and He longs for close connection and relationship with you. That personal connection comes through prayer. Prayer sounds so intimidating at first, but you need to know that prayer is just having a conversation with God. It's both talking to Him and just as important, it's also quieting our hearts and minds to listen to Him.

Jesus modeled a prayer life for us by going away by himself to pray. If it was important for Jesus, then it is important for us too! Jesus was an example of peace, tranquility, trust, and power. This resonated from Him after He would go away to pray and it was an example to the disciples and to us.

Jesus taught his disciples how to pray and gave an example found in Luke 11:1-3. We call it the Lord's prayer, you're probably familiar with it. Take a moment to write it down. Use your own words and create your own formula for praying the Lord's prayer.

Prayer empowers us to be filled with faith, gain answers for our life's questions, and be confident.

Read and highlight Philippians 4:6-7 to see what Paul teaches us about praying.

Now take some time to talk to God. You don't need to use fancy words. What gets God's attention is authenticity and a sincere heart. Why don't you give it a try now?

DAY FIVE The Holy Spirit is our Helper

When we accept Jesus Christ into our lives, we are given a gift called the Holy Spirit.

John 16:5 "But now I am going to Him who sent Me; and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?' 6 But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. 7 But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper (Comforter, Advocate, Intercessor—Counselor, Strengthener, Standby) will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him (the Holy Spirit) to you [to be in close fellowship with you]. 8 And He, when He comes, will convict the world about [the guilt of] sin [and the need for a Savior], and about righteousness, and about judgment.

This portion of scripture is Jesus telling his disciples (and us) some of the important things that the Holy Spirit will do in our lives:

The Holy Spirit will Help us. (vs.7)

You are not left on your own to figure out how to live a life of righteousness, but the Holy Spirit is right there with you to guide, instruct and help.

The Holy Spirit will convict us of sin. (vs.8)

As you surrender to God's way of living, the Holy Spirit will cause you to feel conviction when you aren't doing what is right. This is such a gift because you will be able to discern right from wrong with His help.

The Holy Spirit will strengthen us. (vs.7)

No longer do you have to be strong all by yourself. Now you can just ask the Holy Spirit to give you strength and He will.

When you ask Jesus into your heart, you are sealed with the Holy Spirit. He is WITH you. But there is another level of relationship with the Holy Spirit and that is when He FILLS you. It's called the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This is where the true power lies. It's easy to become filled with the Holy Spirit. All that you have to do is ask for it!

Pray this: "Father God, I thank you for Jesus who is my Savior. I thank you that I stand completely forgiven before You. I ask you now to fill me with Your Holy Spirit. I receive this gift now. In the Name of Jesus!" AMEN

DAY SIX

Get Planted!

Getting your life planted in local church is vital to your spiritual health! It's so important to begin building your life with other Christians who are on the same journey as you. The Bible talks often about the importance of community. Fellowship with other believers is what connects you to the body of Christ. The church is not as much an organization as it is a living organism. It is alive and it is a body. This is where you will learn how to actively pursue living a Christian life. Salvation is not a one-time event. That amazing moment where you got saved is just the beginning. We have really good news for you...it just keeps on getting better!

Here are a few reasons why getting planted in a local church is so important:

- 1- God's House is where you will be fed. God gives you pastors, teachers and community within the church to help your spiritual growth.
- 2- It's in God's House where you will begin to serve and build the church with the gifts that God has given you.
- 3- It's in God's House that you will worship together with other believers and your faith will become stronger.

Read and Highlight Matthew 16:17-18

Here are some easy steps to getting connected to your church and taking the next steps on your faith journey:

- join a community group
- sign up for our next water baptism class and then get baptized.
- sign up for ING classes

To sign up for any of these events, go to www.flourishing.church

DAY SEVEN **Go!**

Before returning to heaven, Jesus gave His followers one command.

It's called "The Great Commission". Matthew 28:19-20 Says:

" Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Jesus did not give His people a suggestion. This was a passionate charge. Our job could not have been laid out any more clearly. Once we become followers of Jesus, we are told to GO into the world and tell others about the good news of the gospel. Jesus did not say "if you are a pastor or an evangelist". He gave this charge to every one of us!

Look how He ended the great commission. "And surely I am with You..." When we share our faith, we should be confident that God is right there with us. He will be doing the spiritual heavy lifting by working on the hearts of the ones you begin to share the gospel with!

How do we tell others about Jesus?

1- Tell your story. The best way to share the good news of the gospel is by sharing what has happened to you. Practice telling your story. Get good at sharing how your life has been transformed by Jesus.

2- Be sensitive to timing. Sometimes sharing your faith is by simply loving others. There are many times when you will be led by God to stay quiet and simply be an example of His love. It's important to be sensitive to how God wants you to share the gospel.

3- Our changed life will attract others!! If your actions are the exact same as before you got saved, why would anyone want what you have? But when we begin to live differently and have true freedom and joy, it causes others around us to want whatever it is we have found!

Make a list of the people in your world that need Jesus. Pray daily over those names and ask God to soften their heart toward Him. Pray that the Holy Spirit will give you boldness to share your testimony!



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