

DAY 6

MARK 10:21 NLT

What is one thing you own that you don't think you could ever part with? It might be something meaningful to your family, like an antique family heirloom. Or it might be something personal to you, like your favorite hoodie. We all have stuff that we can't imagine life without, right? Letting go of those things would be incredibly difficult. In Scripture, we find an encounter Jesus had with a very rich man. Jesus encouraged this man to sell everything he had, not because those things were bad but because they were standing in the way of his ability to authentically follow Jesus. Maybe, if we're honest, we'd admit the same is true for us sometimes. It's hard for us to let go of the things we think define us. It's hard to walk away from what we know. But when we're walking toward Jesus and answering that invitation to, "Follow me," we can trust that what we're walking toward is better than anything we'd leave behind.

Is there something in your life you're struggling to let go of? Something holding you back from authentically following Jesus that you're struggling to leave behind? Pray today that God will give you the courage to release it and choose to follow with your whole heart.

DAY 7

ROMANS 12:2 NLT

Have you ever tried to tell the difference between a real something and a fake? An authentic and artificial? If you have, then you know just how tricky that can be sometimes. Unless you're looking closely at what makes the original stand out, you may not see the difference between it and the copy. As followers of Jesus, that's why we're called to stand out. We must live authentically in a way that shows the world that our lives aren't the same as everyone else's. To model what it means to be changed because of Jesus in our lives.

To help you remember that this week, work on memorizing this verse. Find two or three sticky notes and write this verse out by hand on each of them. Post them in a few places you'll see throughout the day. Every time you look at one of your notes, read the words out loud to yourself to help you remember the truth in them.

DAILY DEVOTIONAL

FOR AN
everyday faith.

A.I.: ARTIFICIAL IDENTITY / WEEK 2

HIGH SCHOOL

DAY 1

LUKE 12:21 NLT

It's easy to think that the good life will start when we get where we want to be in life, when we have the things we want when we make enough money, when we gain more followers, and when we get more influence. The bad news? If that's the life we're chasing, we'll never get out of the race. The good news? Because of Jesus, we can be sure that the good life starts right here and right now. Not with stuff, not with money, not with more friends or more influence. The good life doesn't start with any of the things that the world can offer us; it starts with following Jesus. When we put our focus there, we can trust that we don't have to wait for the good life to begin. Rather, we can know we're living it now in Christ.

Today, as you spend time in prayer, ask for help to remember that the good life begins with Jesus.

DAY 2

MATTHEW 5:13 NLT

Have you ever had someone call you "salty"? In worldly terms, this isn't really a compliment. But in a spiritual sense, it's just about the best thing you could be named. Jesus calls His followers the "salt of the earth." In other words, Jesus is calling His followers to be something different. In a world that chases a lot of the same things, we're called to authentically stand out for Him. Think about it! Food just isn't the same without salt, right? It's bland and boring on its own, but salt brings flavor. In that same way, followers of Jesus bring something different to the world around us. We get to live a way of life that finds happiness in the unexpected. That finds joy even when things are hard. That has hope when no one else does. We get to be "salty" in the best way possible.

Today, write down a list of things that the world around you needs. It could be joy, peace, laughter, or just a kind word. Whatever you write down, ask God to help you be a part of bringing it to the world.

DAY 3

LUKE 14:11 NLT

If you had to eat one food for the rest of your life, what would you pick? Chances are, if you had to eat the same thing every single day, you would get sick of it no matter what it was. It would eventually become the thing you wanted the least. In a similar, seemingly backward way, Jesus tells us that if we exalt or gas ourselves up all the time, we'll end up with little to show for it. But if we choose authentic humility, that's when God can work in our lives to lift us up. When we puff ourselves up, we paint our own picture of what is best, but if we look at Jesus' life and words, we'll see that we already have access to the best, most authentic way of life. In our humility, God will lift us up, and that's the best thing we could hope for.

Today, spend a few moments in prayer. Ask God to show you the spaces where you can show humility. Pray that you'll be reminded that in your authentic humility, you'll see God at work to bring out the best in you and lead you toward God's best for your life.

DAY 4

MARK 12:17 NLT

Did you know that Scotland's national animal is a unicorn? America has the bald eagle, England has the Lion, and Scotland has the unicorn (which is arguably the coolest national animal on the planet!). Why am I sharing this random information? Well, the national animal of a country is supposed to tell you certain things about that country. The animal defines things about them. In that same way, what we use to define ourselves shows us something about who we are. In Scripture, Jesus tells the Pharisees that some things belong to Caesar (who is like their king), and other things belong to God. When it comes to what defines who you are, that right belongs to God alone. Not money, stuff, behaviors, mistakes, or anything else. If you're going to let anything define who you are to the world, let it be the fact that you were made and created by God. That is the most authentic thing about you!

Take a few moments right now to close your eyes and take a few deep breaths. As you do, tell yourself out loud that only God can define who you are.

DAY 5

HEBREWS 13:5 NIV

Written by Graham, age 19, from Monroe, Georgia, USA

Social media, influencers, celebrities, and even friends can make us look down on ourselves or wish we had more. Ultimately, this leads to comparison and coveting someone else's belongings. Instead of falling in the comparison trap, we should be content and thankful for the lives and possessions God has provided for us. These words in Hebrews are an encouragement to us as believers because we see that Christ will never leave us or forsake us. Your family might be in a financial crisis, struggling to pay your car insurance, or even praying for a miracle in funds for your college tuition. Instead of getting upset about this or adding to the stress, our call is simply to trust God. Remember that you are in God's hands. God is in control of your situation. Instead of being discouraged, be hopeful

and trustworthy toward God in all your circumstances.

Pray that you might be content with what the Lord has provided for you today as well as remember that Jesus will never leave your side.