



WEEK FIVE

Week Five, Day One

Worship

Worship is “giving God His worth by responding appropriately to Him.” Worship is so much more than singing songs on Sunday or Wednesday. This spiritual discipline is more than a habit: it is a way of life. It is the moment-by-moment opportunity to please and honor God that begins with your obedience to Him, and it can happen when you are alone or when you are with a group of people. Because God is not limited by time, place, or circumstance, our worship of Him is not limited by time, place or circumstance.

Study Romans 12:1-2.

Include the following in your personal prayer time:

- **Tell God who He is to you. Thank Him for being a God worthy of your worship.**
- **Ask God to broaden your view of worship and increase your desire to worship Him.**

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

Study Psalm 100-101:3.

Week Five, Day Two

Right Attitude in Worship

Study Mark 12:30-31 and John 4:24.

Include the following in your personal prayer time:

- **Consider each area of worship mentioned in Mark 12:30-31. Ask God to show you any area of your life that you do not live in worship to Him. Give it to Him.**
- **Ask God to show you how to worship without worrying about what other people think of you.**

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

Study Luke 7:36-50.

Week Five, Day Three

Moral Character

A person's moral character is "the sum total of all the choices an individual makes" and is an outward expression of inner faith. You live what you believe. If Jesus is truly your Lord, your life shows it. You are a walking illustration of God's ability to change the human heart, a poster child for the salvation and the exciting life available to everyone willing to let Jesus take control of their life.

Study 2 Corinthians 5:17 and John 10:10.

On the other hand, if you are one of those "believers" who tell people that Jesus is your Lord and then continue to live in a way that is not like Jesus' plan for you, then you are a walking contradiction. Not only are you interfering with God's plan to rescue the lost, but you are missing out on a very satisfying adventure of following Jesus and you are probably making decisions along the way that you regret.

Include the following in your personal prayer time:

- **Tell God how much you want to please Him.**
- **Ask Him to give you the desire to live like a new creation so that others will want to know Him like you do.**

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

Study Galatians 2:20.

Week Five, Day Three

The Different Life

As you learned yesterday, accepting Jesus as your Savior is the beginning of a brand new life for you. What does that new life look like? How is your life different from the life that you lived before or would be living if you had not accepted Christ as your Savior? Let's find out.

Study Galatians 5:19-26. Which kind of life sounds more stressful? More enjoyable?

Include the following in your personal prayer time:

- **Ask God to give you a clear picture of what your new life in Christ should look like.**
- **Ask God to give you the desire and strength to get rid of the habits in your life that don't please Him.**

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

Study Ephesians 4:31-5:2.

Week Five, Day Four

Different? Yes. Weird? No.

God requires His children to live a life of obedience to Him. That obedience causes us to stand out from the crowd. It makes us different, but it doesn't make us weird. God intends for us to lead people to Christ, not alienate them.

So, if you live a consistent life of obedience to God, depending on the Holy Spirit for strength and direction, people will be drawn to Christ in us. At least those seeking truth and life will be. That's not weird, it's awesome!

Too many believers think that they have to work at "taking a stand" for Jesus. Their devotion to God causes them to strike out on a misguided mission to be "odd for God," something God never intended. All God requires is obedience. He will do the rest. In fact, going above or beyond what God has asked of you can actually interfere with His activity in the lives of others. Listening for the direction of God and being obedient to God's direction is the best option.

Study 1 Corinthians 9:22-23 and 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12.

Do these passages support the idea that you have to be weird to be a follower of Christ? Do you have to work at standing out?

Include the following in your personal prayer time:

- **Thank God for the chance to lead others to Jesus through your obedience.**
- **Thank Him for making you "one of a kind" and allowing you to be yourself while living for Him.**

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

Study 1 Peter 2:9-12.

Week Five, Day Five

Friendship with Christ

The different life that we lead as followers of Christ gives us the chance to be friends, real friends, with Jesus.

Study John 15:14-15.

How can you recognize a real friend of Jesus? How will he/she stand out? Let's look and see.

Study John 15:12, 17 and John 13:35.

Include the following in your personal prayer time:

- **Ask Jesus to pull you into deeper friendship with Him.**
- **Ask Jesus to teach you how to love Him by loving others.**

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

Study John 15:13.

The Weekend

Suggested Reading: Genesis 37.

This is just the beginning of the story of Joseph. As you study this passage, consider how it relates to what you learned this week about worship, attitude, moral character, and living a life that stands out. Was Joseph a good role model in these areas in his younger years? What did God allow to happen in order to shape this young man for leadership? What can you learn from his mistakes?

Make sure that you know Psalm 119:11 by heart. We will learn a new verse next week!

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WEEK SIX

Week Six, Day One

Dying to Self

To be Jesus' friend, you must "die to self."

Before you accepted Jesus as your Savior, you were powerless to live the kind of life that God wanted for you. Without the Holy Spirit leading, guiding, and warning you, you lived in sin and were unaware of your sinful nature. When you accepted Jesus as your Savior, He freed you. He gave you the power of the Holy Spirit, who came to live inside of you, so you could enjoy peace and freedom in Christ.

The problem is that we humans are creatures of habit, bad habits mostly. Though complete freedom and peace are ours, we tend to wander back, over and over again, to the sin that once held us.

"Self" is our natural tendency or desire to live life on our own and for ourselves, and it leads us into sin without fail. Self is difficult to overcome because it is engrained in us. It takes the supernatural power of God to fight it. If you truly want to stay out of the cage of sin that once held you, you have to "die to self." You must permanently sever all ties to the sin that controlled you before you were made new by Jesus. The more that you practice letting God take control and direct your daily focus, the easier it will be to live life away from your old life.

Study Romans 6:6-7, 20-23.

Include the following in your personal prayer time:

- **Thank God for setting you free from the sin that once controlled you.**
- **Ask God to teach you how to let go of things that keep you from living the way He intended and enjoying the blessings that He has for you.**

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

Study Romans 6:11-14.

Week Six, Day Two

Freedom in Christ

Freedom in Christ is the ability to live outside of the control of sin. Because Jesus' blood paid the price for all of your sin, past, present, and future, you are guaranteed a place in Heaven. Some immature believers take advantage of this "free pass" from sin, thinking that they can do whatever they want because it won't keep them out of Heaven. They take advantage of God's grace and willingly choose sin, thinking to themselves, "I can always ask God to forgive me, and He will (1 John 1:9)." This attitude is both foolish and arrogant and shows no respect, gratitude, or love for the Heavenly Father who sacrificed His Son to give us that freedom. It is also very short sighted. Sin is sin because it has consequences in this life. When God directs us away from sin, he is directing us toward a life that is free of the consequences of our bad choices. God directs us toward a great life when he directs us away from sin.

God had more in mind than Heaven when Jesus died on the cross. He wants to give you a fuller, better life right here on earth, but you will only experience it if you live within the guidelines that He has set for you.

Reread John 10:10 and study 1 Corinthians 6:11-12.

Include the following in your personal prayer time:

- **Thank Jesus for setting you free from sin.**
- **Ask God to give you the desire to live within His guidelines and the strength to make choices that will bring you the fuller life He has for you.**

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

Study Galatians 5:13.

Week Six, Day Three

Attitude

What kind of attitude should a follower of Christ have? Let's find out.

Study Ephesians 4:22-32.

Include the following in your personal prayer time:

- **Ask God to shape your attitude toward Him and toward other people.**
- **Ask God to give you the chance to serve someone willingly today.**

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

Study Ephesians 5:1-8.

Week Six, Day Four

“To guard my heart, I choose not to look at some of the commercials and stuff on TV... A lot of things that people watch for pleasure just end up making them feel bad and wrong instead. It’s not worth it.”
Hunter, middle school student

Guarding your Heart

In order to live a life that pleases God, you have to guard your heart.

Study Proverbs 4:23-27. Isn’t it interesting that those who chase after sin looking for a fun life destroy the source of that life in the process?

CHALLENGE

It’s time for a new memory verse! Let’s add Proverbs 4:23 to our arsenal. If you are feeling ambitious, keep going and add the rest of today’s passage a verse at a time. Remember to read it, write it, and post it. Learn it a phrase at a time and don’t get frustrated if it takes you a while. The important thing is that you are working at it!

Include the following in your personal prayer time:

- Ask God to take control of your mouth.
- Ask God to help you keep your focus on Him and make wise choices.

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

Study Matthew 12:34.

Week Six, Day Five

Purity

Study Psalm 119:9.

Include the following in your personal prayer time:

- Ask God to give you an intense desire for purity and the peace that it brings.
- Tell God how much you want to be close to Him and to know Him more.

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

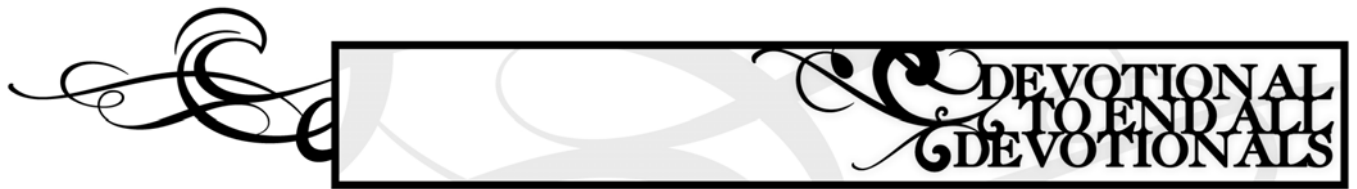
Study Psalm 24:3-4.

The Weekend

Suggested Reading: Genesis 39-40.

This is a continuation of the story of Joseph. Study this passage closely. Has Joseph begun to reflect the presence of God in his life yet? How did God use difficulty to shape Joseph? What can you learn from Joseph’s example in relation to the topics that you studied this week?

Work on your new memory verse(s) this weekend! When you are ready, practice out loud to someone else.



WEEK SEVEN

Week Seven, Day One

Honesty

Study Proverbs 12:22 and 2 Corinthians 8:21.

It's helpful to practice using the ACTS prayer guide from time to time. (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication....remember?)

Today, practice using the ACTS acrostic and include the following in your personal prayer time:

- Thank God for His truth.
- Ask God to give you the courage to speak the truth.

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

Study Colossians 3:9-10.

Week Seven, Day Two

Influence

Study Proverbs 27:17 and 1 Corinthians 15:33.

Include the following in your personal prayer time:

- Commit to let God choose your closest friends.
- Ask God to mold you into the type of person that draws others into a closer relationship with Him.

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

Study Proverbs 13:20.

Week Seven, Day Three

Healing Broken Relationships

Because we struggle to “die to self” on a daily basis, we followers of Christ don’t always get along with one another. We get selfish. We make mistakes. We get mad. Sometimes, we even try to get “even.” None of it is God-honoring, and none of it is acceptable in God’s eyes. When His children are at odds with each other, God’s message is loud and clear, “I don’t care who started it, just fix it!”

Study Matthew 5:23-24.

God requires more than emotional forgiveness or a new attitude, things you can take care of within yourself without having to interact with someone else. He expects us to take action and be the first one to try to make things right in a relationship that has gone wrong.

Include the following in your personal prayer time:

- **Ask God to help you kill the human desire to be “right” and justify your actions in order to “win” an argument.**
- **Commit to make God’s glory your only priority when faced with conflict.**

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

Study Romans 12:18.

Week Seven, Day Four

“EVERYTHING we say affects people. Words really can’t be taken back. They need to be processed through the right filters and some of them just don’t need to be said. We choose to speak or not to speak. It is a constant battle....I think those within the Body of Christ who have wisdom recognize those times when things shouldn’t be spoken almost as well as those times when it is truly necessary to put voice to conviction....I feel that some of the greatest effect we have on people occurs when most people don’t know that it really happened...it’s in the small right decisions that you just make...one controlled moment at a time.” Mike, Worship Leader

Controlling Your Tongue

Study Luke 6:45 and James 1:26.

Include the following in your personal prayer time:

- **Ask God to make you more aware of the words that you speak and their impact on others.**
- **Commit to right any wrongs that you may have committed with your mouth.**

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

Study Proverbs 12:18.

Week Seven, Day Five

Submitting to Authority

Study Romans 13:1-6.

Include the following in your personal prayer time:

- Thank God for the role that ALL of the authority figures in your life play and have played in God's shaping of you. Think through the people that God has put in authority over you in each place that you go.
- Ask God for the humility to respond to ALL authority figures in your life with the proper attitude, keeping a tight rein on your tongue.

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

Study Ephesians 5:21.

The Weekend

Suggested Reading: Genesis 41-42.

Joseph's story isn't over yet. Finally, his time of testing and preparation are over. Does Joseph rise to the occasion and lead well? As you study, consider this: It's one thing to live a public life that honors God, and quite another to live a private life that honors God. Public life comes with accountability, but the choices that you make in your private life are the ones that show whether or not you have truly "died to self." Do you think that Joseph's heart is fully surrendered to God? Has he conquered his pride? Have you?

Work on your memory verse(s)! If you are ready, challenge yourself and add more of the passage now.

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WEEK EIGHT

Week Eight, Day One

Resisting Temptation

Study 1 Corinthians 10:12-13 and 1 Timothy 6:11.

Include the following in your personal prayer time:

- Thank God for His faithfulness and ask Him to give you the strength to remain faithful to Him.
- Commit to run from temptation.

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

Study 2 Timothy 2:22.

Week Eight, Day Two

Living for Christ Alone

Study 1 Corinthians 8:4-6 and Colossians 3:17.

Include the following in your personal prayer time:

- Tell Jesus who He is to you.
- Ask God to show you whether you serve any other “gods” in your life and confess your worship of those things as sin, accepting God’s forgiveness.

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

Study Exodus 20:3.

Week Eight, Day Three

Loving Others

Study Matthew 5:43-48.

Include the following in your personal prayer time:

- Ask God to teach you to love as Jesus does.
- Ask God to demonstrate His love to others through you.

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

Study 1 John 4:7-12.

Week Eight, Day Four

“When I choose not to forgive someone who has wronged me, I find myself moving farther and farther away from Christ. At that point, I have taken Christ out of control of my life and put myself in charge. When I finally do forgive, I guess the other person feels better, too, but I actually feel better and not so guilty anymore. In the end, it’s always my job to make relationships right between me and other people.”

Aaron, Media specialist

Forgiving Others

Study Matthew 6:14-15.

Include the following in your personal prayer time:

- Thank God for His willingness and faithfulness to forgive you over and over again.
- Ask God to help you kill the selfish desire to hold a grudge and replace it with a real desire to see unity in the body.

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

Study Colossians 3:12-15.

Week Eight, Day Five

Showing Hospitality toward Others

Romans 12:13 and 1 Peter 4:9-11.

Include the following in your personal prayer time:

- Thank God for the hospitality that other believers have shown to you.
- Ask God to make you aware of the needs of those around you so that you can show them hospitality in His name.

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

Matthew 25:31-40.

The Weekend

Suggested Reading: Genesis 43-45.

This is the “conclusion” of the story of Joseph and his brothers. Is Joseph a good example of resisting temptation, loving others, and forgiveness? What can you learn from him? Who received the ultimate glory in the story of Joseph and his brothers? Thinking back over the story, can you see God’s hand in Joseph’s circumstances? Can you see His hand in yours?

Don’t forget to work on your memory verses! Do you still remember Psalm 119:11? Remember to keep the truth fresh in your mind so that it will be there when you need it.