

A scenic view of a wooden canoe on a misty lake at dawn. The canoe is in the foreground, with its wooden ribs and a woven seat visible. The water is calm and reflects the sky and the surrounding forest. The background is a dense forest of trees, partially obscured by a light mist. The sky is a mix of blue and white, with soft clouds.

A 7 Day Student Devotional

On the
Journey

Kreig Todd

Written by: Kreig Todd (kreigtodd.com)

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the Christian Standard Bible®, Copyright © 2017 by Holman Bible Publishers. Used by Permission. Christian Standard Bible® and CSB® are federally registered trademarks of Holman Bible Publishers.

Jesus went up the mountain and summoned those he wanted, and they came to him. He appointed twelve, whom he also named apostles, to be with him, to send them out to preach, and to have authority to drive out demons.

—Mark 3.13-15

What say you?

“But you,” he asked them, “who do you say that I am?”

—Mark 8.29a

Depending on how you count, Jesus asked at least 64 questions in Mark’s Gospel. Questions are an important tool in teaching and in learning. In teaching, questions are used to help students think more clearly about the subject at hand, while in learning, questions are used to help bring clarity to the subject for the learner. Therefore, it is no surprise that the Master Teacher would use questions to communicate profound truth. Of all the questions he asked, the most pressing question throughout time has been: “Who do you say that I am?”

Everyone must answer this question; everyone must figure out who Jesus is. He is either the Son of God or he is not. Some have said that He’s a good, moral teacher and others have said that he was only a prophet. However, any answer that does not begin and end with the truth that Jesus is the Son of God, the Messiah is an answer that is drastically wrong.

So, we begin here: Who do you say Jesus is? How do you answer this question? Can you even answer it all? This is the most vital question in the history of humanity. The truth is, everyone will answer the question...either willingly or by force.

Paul said it best: *“...at the name of Jesus, every knee will bow—in heaven and on earth and under the earth—and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father”* (Phil. 2.10-11).

Read These Verses:

- Mark 8.27-38
- Philippians 2.5-11
- Revelation 5.8-14

Think About This:

- What do the verses you've read tell you about Jesus?

- Who do you believe Jesus is? Why?

Pray:

Jot down some of your prayer points from this devotional.
What/Who did you pray for?

Inscribed Forever

Look, I have inscribed you on the palm of my hands.

—Isaiah 49.16

There have been times in my life that have been marked by painful feelings of loneliness, despair, and a sense of being forgotten by God. When I first encountered this verse, I was reading a devotional by a man named Charles Spurgeon and I was in a dark season of life. I felt alone, forgotten, and in a pit of despair with no end in sight. However, this verse, through the grace of God, was an absolute comfort. I was not forgotten and I was not alone.

At no point can God ever forget his children. He has permanently written us on the palms of his hands. Just think about how often you write notes on your hands when paper is absent. Think about how often you look at your hands. Think about the scars your hands may bear. I am reminded often of a deep cut I received almost ten years ago on my right index finger; the scar is still there and is still visible.

In the same way, we are inscribed on the palms of God's hands. So, when we feel forgotten, alone, and in despair, we can recall the amazing truth that God has not forgotten us. Charles Spurgeon wrote this about today's verse: *It does not say "your name." The name is there, but that is not all: "I have engraved you." Consider the depth of this! "I have engraved your person, your image, your circumstances, your sins, your temptations, your weaknesses, your wants, your works; I have engraved you, everything about you, all that concerns you; I have put all of this together here."*

Take heart, dear friend. God has not forgotten you, nor will he ever forget you.

Read These Verses:

- Joshua 1.9
- Psalm 34.15-18
- Psalm 94.18-19
- Romans 5.1-5

Think About This:

- When are you tempted to believe that God has forgotten you? Do you feel as though God has forgotten you during this season of your life? Why?

- What are some things you can do to remember God's promise to never forget you?

Pray:

Jot down some of your prayer points from this devotional. What/Who did you pray for?

Better Days Ahead

Then the one seated on the throne said, "Look, I am making everything new." —Revelation 21.5a

I am thankful for the reality that there is more to life than what meets the eye...this world is not the end all, be all. God has promised to make all things new and to bring creation back into order...perfect order. As you and I look around and see the uncertainty, hate, sickness, death, and fear that is prevalent, we long for a better day.

Longing for a better day is not a bad thing; it's actually a good thing. If we are not careful, we might become happy with this life and that will always lead to disappointment. This world cannot offer true peace and contentment, though it claims the ability to offer such things. True peace and contentment are found only in our Lord Jesus (John 14.27; Philippians 4.11-13). While God is making all things new as we speak, there will come a day that we will see the fulfillment of that promise in full.

When God makes all things new, we know that he will wipe away every tear. Death will be no more and mourning, crying, and pain will all pass away (Revelation 21.4). Dear friend, there is coming a day that we will see Christ as he is (1 John 3.2) and what a sight that will be! We will be in his kingdom, free from the presence of sin and free to enjoy, for all eternity, his presence.

So, when things get tough and life is hard, look to Jesus, who is the all-victorious King, and know that he is coming to make all things new.

Read These Verses:

- Isaiah 43.19
- John 14.27
- Romans 8.18-25
- Philippians 4.11-13
- Revelation 21.4-5

Think About This:

- Are you looking forward to the day when Jesus will make all things new and right? Why or why not?

- Is there anything in your life that you wish Jesus would go ahead and make new? What is it and why?

Pray:

Jot down some of your prayer points from this devotional. What/Who did you pray for?

Greater Grace

But he gives greater grace. Therefore, he says: “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”

—James 4.6

Because of the redeeming work of Christ, all those who are in him are new creations (2 Corinthians 5.17). We are not who we once were and we are now alive in Christ (Ephesians 2.5). Unfortunately, we still have remnants of our old self. Those remnants of the flesh (greed, idolatry, selfish ambitions, envy, etc.; see Galatians 5.19-26), still cause us problems. Specifically, the old nature wars against the new nature that God has given us.

There are times that the battle against sin can seem unbearable and we might even feel like we're losing not only the battle, but also the war. What's the solution when this happens? Well, a couple of things. First, we want to set our mind's attention on things above (Colossians 3.2; Philippians 4.6-8). Secondly, we want to submit to God's authority (James 5.7). And thirdly, we want to embrace God's grace.

In the immediate context of today's verse, James told us that conflict comes from the “passions that wage war within us” (James 5.1b). In other words, the tendencies of the old nature actively fight against the new nature we have been given in Christ. Though we be in constant spiritual warfare, we must embrace the reality that God's grace is greater than any temptation we face and is far greater than any tactic the flesh may use against us.

Friend, embrace God's grace and take heart, for “the light shines in the darkness, and yet the darkness did not overcome it” (1 John 1.5).

Read These Verses:

- 2 Corinthians 5.17-21
- Galatians 5.19-26
- James 4.6

Check This Out:

Listen to "His Mercy is More" by Sovereign Grace Music

Think About This:

- Looking at your own life, what sin struggles do you wrestle with? Have you asked God for the grace to submit to him instead of the temptations? Why or why not? Have you confessed your sin to God (1 John 1.9)?

- In what specific areas of your life do you need God's grace to help you pursue him more fully? Maybe you have a problem with language, thoughts, actions, etc. Pray and ask the Lord to help you in these areas.

Pray:

Jot down some of your prayer points from this devotional. What/Who did you pray for?

Kit Up

But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and don't make plans to gratify the desires of the flesh.

—Romans 13.14

If you hear someone say, “Kit up!”, they are telling you to get your things together and to get ready to move. Regardless of what you do in life, every job, activity, and hobby involves you to “kit up,” and so does walking the Disciple’s Journey. After all, the Disciple’s Journey is not an easy journey (Luke 9.23).

Our biggest battle in life is with sin, which is destructive and deadly. In fact, God said that “sin is crouching at the door, its desire is for you, but you must rule over it” (Genesis 4.7). Sadly, as we discussed yesterday, we will always battle with sin and temptation in this life. However, though we will battle sin, we can actively choose to pursue the Lord Jesus, who is the author and perfecter of our faith (Hebrews 12.1-2).

As you think about your own battle with sin, how is it going? Are you battling well, or have you fallen flat on your face? The Apostle Paul struggled with sin, even after his salvation. He wrote “I do not understand what I am doing, because I do not practice what I want to do, but I do what I hate” (Romans 7.15).

Paul did *not* excuse the sin in his life. Rather, he condemned it as something to be hated. He was frustrated by sin and he told us that we are to “discard the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light” (Romans 13.12). Dear friend, do not let sin control you and “don’t make plans to gratify the desires of the flesh.”

Read These Verses:

- Romans 7.15
- Romans 8.1-2
- Romans 13.11-14
- Hebrews 12.1-2

Think About This:

- What are some ways you can “kit up” as you continue to follow Jesus in your life?

- What temptations do you wrestle with regularly? How can you actively battle those temptations?

Pray:

Jot down some of your prayer points from this devotional. What/Who did you pray for?

Make A Note Of It

God said to Jacob, “Get up! Go to Bethel.... Build an altar there to the God who appeared to you when you fled your brother Esau.” —Genesis 35.1

Altars were often built to remember the time and place that God revealed himself (Genesis 8.20; 12.7; 26.25). The altars served as a reminder to both the builder and to others. Though we may not have physical altars (or markers) in our lives, we do have significant dates and events that stand out in our mind. For me, May 4, 2014 is one such date; it is the day I surrendered to ministry.

I’m sure you have dates and events in your life that you remember with fondness and the ability to recall the times God worked is a blessing. Unfortunately, we are often a forgetful people. When life is difficult, we may forget how God has worked in the past and believe that “God has forgotten me.”

In those moments of despair, we can ask the Holy Spirit to remind us of how God has worked previously and then thank him for his faithfulness (2 Thessalonians 3.3). The Psalmist, in the midst of his pain, declared that the Lord is “the God of my salvation” (Psalm 88.1). Though the Psalmist found himself in many troubles, he remembered the gift of salvation.

So, as one author said, “remember to celebrate the milestones as you prepare for the journey ahead.” You will need to know how God has worked in history and in your own life as walk the Disciple’s Journey. As you recall God’s working, you, along with Jacob, will be able to remember, “the God who answered me in the day of distress. He has been with me everywhere I have gone” (Genesis 35.3).

Read These Verses:

- Genesis 35.1-3
- Psalm 89.5-18
- 2 Thessalonians 3.3

Think About This:

- When are you most tempted to forget how God has worked in your life? Why?

- How has God worked in your life previously? How is he currently working in your life?

- What can you do to better recall the moments that God has worked in your life?

Pray:

Jot down some of your prayer points from this devotional. What/Who did you pray for?

Forever the Same

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

—Hebrews 13.8

When I first drove to Birmingham, AL, I was struck by how quickly the geography changes on the journey. By the time you are in Birmingham, you are in Red Mountain, which is apart of the Appalachian Mountains. The journey to Birmingham is beautiful, but the scenery changes quickly. Likewise, though the Disciple's Journey can be fun, it also changes regularly. The journey does not change because God has changed. Rather, the journey changes because we are ever-changing people and our circumstances are constantly changing, too.

The truth is, we often face situations and circumstances we never expected and the challenges may seem insurmountable. However, since God never changes, we face these changing situations with confidence, knowing that God is forever faithful and that he is not phased by anything we may face.

Though you and I may be confused and discouraged because of never-ending change, we can look to the one who is the same from eternity-past to eternity-future. We remain constant in love and hope because our God is the same, always and forever.

Dear friend, if you're discouraged because of the constant change of this life, fix your eyes on the one who never changes.

Read These Verses:

- Malachi 3.6
- Hebrews 13.8

Think About This:

- Have you ever thought about God as never-changing? Why or why not?

- How does the never-changing nature of God impact your life on a daily basis?

A Profound Truth:

“Has it ever occurred to you that nothing occurs to God?”
—Adrian Rogers

Pray:

Jot down some of your prayer points from this devotional. What/Who did you pray for?
