

Devotional day 1:

Two misconceptions about Salvation

[Romans 5:20-21](#), ²⁰ The law was brought in so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more, ²¹ so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Think about the last time you heard of a deal that was too good to be true. One of two thoughts probably popped in your mind:

1. There's no way this is real. Surely, I owe you something.
2. How many times can I take you up on this offer? Cause I want to take full advantage of this!

It's one thing to have those attitudes to a BOGO or coupon at the local grocery store. But those same attitudes can cause us to miss the full, free life Jesus offers.

Just like the people, Paul wrote to in Rome, we often make one of two mistakes about salvation. The first is, believing salvation is something we can earn. This is the lie that leads someone to say, "Let me get my act together and then we can talk about Jesus." It's also the lie that leads someone to pray, "Please God, I deserve this." [Romans 5:20](#) says God gave His people rules so they could see how much they need Him. Not so, they could earn their way to Him.

The second common mistake is not understanding the true cost of salvation. Like a small child handling a priceless antique, we run around living life without realizing what a precious gift we're holding. It's the lie that causes someone to ask the question in [Romans 6:1](#) — "If God has unlimited forgiveness, why not keep on sinning?"

The first assumes sin is something we can stop doing at any time. The second assumes sin is something we can't stop doing, so why try?

The truth about sin and salvation is this: Sin isn't something we do. It's something we're born into ([Romans 5:12](#)). But when Jesus died on the cross, sin's power was broken. When we ask Jesus to save us, we're acknowledging that we don't want to live like we always have and we can't change on our own. In our vulnerability and humility, Jesus does what we can never do. He gives us a new nature, one that is no longer under sin's control. Where before we were slaves to our sinful nature, now we can choose to live like Jesus.

...our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin ([Romans 6:6, NLT](#)).

God didn't have to save us. He didn't have to send His Son, but [John 3:16](#) says He loved us so much that He did. And [Hebrews 12:2](#) says that Jesus, knowing the joy that we would have in being His, was willing to endure death on a cross. For us.

God's grace, the unmerited kindness and favor He shows us, often seems too good to be true. But it's the truth that changes everything. Jesus' offer of salvation is genuine and sincere, and when we respond in kind, it changes us from the inside out.

Thoughts:

- How much do you believe your relationship with God is based on the good you do or the bad you don't do? Why?
- What is one thing you need to ask Jesus to free you from?
- If you have never started a relationship with Jesus, what is stopping you from accepting God's free gift of salvation through faith in His Son, Jesus?

Devotional day 2:

Knowing the Truth Changed You

[John 17:15-19](#) ¹⁵ My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. ¹⁶ They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. ¹⁷ Sanctify them by ^[a] the truth; your word is truth. ¹⁸ As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

Have you ever stared at a [Magic Eye](#) picture, knowing there is something there, but all you see are blurry lines and colors? Some can see the hidden image right away, while others are left frustrated and confused.

Sometimes, our lives feel like a Magic Eye picture. We can't make out what is true, and it leaves us feeling frustrated, confused, and not knowing where to turn.

In [John 17:17](#), Jesus prays, "Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth." This word "sanctify" means to be set apart for the use intended by the designer. We are sanctified when we live according to God's design and purpose for our lives.

Jesus asks God to sanctify His people by the truth. The Bible is truth.

Truth inspires change. The Bible is God's truth that changes us, and changes others through us.

The Bible helps us discover more about who God is and what He wants for His people. It also helps us see our need to turn away from things that do not match God's design for our lives. As we confess and turn from sin, we are being sanctified by the truth from our Creator.

God wants our lives to be full of joy, peace, and freedom. In [John 8:32](#), Jesus tells a group of believers that the truth of God's Word sets us free. When we

apply what we read in the Bible, we are set free from our past and free to live the life He has planned for us. The truth in the Bible sanctifies us, and people around us are changed by the change they see in us!

Thoughts:

- What is one way you are being sanctified, set apart or made more like Jesus, as you read the Bible?
- Who do you know that is being changed because of the change they see in you? How?

Devotional day 3:

This is Not the Peace You are Looking For

[Psalm 27:4-5](#) One thing I ask from the Lord,

this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple.

⁵ For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent and set me high upon a rock.

Every day, we move from task to task, checking items off our ever-growing to-do lists. But no matter how much we check off, we can still feel overwhelmed and underqualified. This constant state of pressure leaves us anxious and exhausted.

In [Psalm 27:4](#), David says, “One thing I ask from the Lord, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.” He earnestly sought to be in God’s presence every single day because he knew only God could provide peace, protection, and provision in his life.

Only God can provide peace, protection, and provision.

An active and intimate relationship with Jesus was where David found peace, security, and tranquility. And God offers the same for us today.

By spending time in His presence through prayer, reading the Bible, and open and honest community with other Christians, we are inviting God to pour out His peace, protection, and provision into our lives. Putting Jesus first, not completing our to-do lists, is the only way to experience true peace and security ([Matthew 6:33](#)).

Thoughts:

- Has the busyness of life been stealing the peace Jesus has for you? What’s one thing you can do today to make time to seek peace in His presence?

- Do you feel overwhelmed by the daily grind? Begin praying specifically about what overwhelms you. Ask for Jesus' peace, provision, and protection in your life.

Devotional day 4:

Not All Who Wander are Lost

[Isaiah 53:4-6](#) ⁴ Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted.

⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.

⁶ We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

When is the last time you were lost trying to get somewhere on time? It is not a good feeling. We use tools to find our way back on track. We call a friend, use GPS, or stop and ask for directions. We don't accept remaining lost in these scenarios. Why would we settle there in our spiritual lives?

Isaiah compared the nation of Israel to sheep that have gone astray. They were a group seeking their own path instead of following the shepherd's lead. [Isaiah 53:6](#) says all of us, like sheep, are lost. Unlike the Israelites at the time, we have the gift of seeing how [Isaiah 53:4-5](#) was fulfilled in Jesus death and resurrection. We have the hindsight of knowing how God fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy.

Jesus suffered, was pained, stricken, afflicted, pierced, and crushed on the cross — for us. He loves us so much that He was willing to take the punishment for our sin ([Romans 5:8](#)).

[Romans 10:9](#) says, “If you declare with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” When we take to heart what Jesus did for us, it changes us from the inside out.

[Isaiah 53:5](#) says, “the punishment that brought us peace” was on Jesus. Do you have peace? Or are you still searching, trying to find your way? You don't have to search or wander anymore. In a relationship with Jesus, we find peace and freedom. He doesn't give up on us when we get off track or force us to submit to His will. Instead, He waits patiently for us to come to Him.

Thoughts:

- Is there an area of your life where you feel lost?
- What is one step you can take today to bring that part of your life to Jesus?
- Have you started a relationship with Jesus? If yes, thank Him for this precious gift. If not, what is holding you back?

Devotional day 5:

The Emperors' New Clothes

[Psalm 119:137-144](#)

In a world that is always chasing the next “new thing,” we can wear ourselves out trying to keep up with what's in and what's not, what's acceptable and what's not. There's a longing in each of us for something real and lasting.

The psalmist declares the Lord's trustworthiness, steadfastness, and righteousness in [Psalm 119:137-144](#). God never changes. His Word never changes. We can trust in His promises.

We can trust that He hears our prayers. We can trust that He calls us by name. We can trust that Jesus will one day return to set things right once and for all. We can trust that He knows what's best for our lives.

When the world leaves us lost and searching for truth, God is always the answer. He loves us. He made us in His image to live in relationship with Him, so it makes sense that only He can provide what our souls long for.

Reflect

- When was one time you searched for truth somewhere other than God? What did you find?
- What's one area of your life where you need to apply the truth of God's Word today?
- The psalmist asks God to give him understanding ([Psalm 119:144](#)). What's one area of your life where you need to ask God to give you a greater understanding of His Word and His promises?