

God

A 21 Day Youth Devotional Through the Book of John

God? What's Your Status?

Welcome to your spiritual growth network. You currently have three friends. God the Father, God The Son, and God the Holy Spirit. How often do you update your status on your profile? Share three reasons why you update your status.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Do you ever wonder about God's status? Do you feel like he hasn't updated his "page" or your life in forever? Well, don't worry, God is alive and well and in this devotional God is going to share with you what He's been up to. You'll have a chance to send Him messages, ask questions and then update your own status after chatting with Him.

Jesus said to him, "Have I been among you all this time without your knowing Me, Philip? The one who has seen Me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? The words I speak to you I do not speak on My own. The Father who lives in Me does His works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me. Otherwise, believe because of the works themselves. **John 14:9**

God wanted to update His status with the human race. He wanted to show who He really was and how much He really loves us. He did this through His son Jesus Christ. So, when you read what Jesus does throughout the book of John, consider that it is God speaking to us and what He is try to tell us about Himself.

What is your status with God right now?

Circle one for each question

- | | | | |
|------------------|--------------|------------|----------------------------|
| God and I are: | Close | Distant | Who's God? |
| I go to church: | Every Sunday | Often | Not Usually |
| I read my Bible: | Always | Some | I struggle with this |
| I pray: | A lot | Some | Only when I need something |
| I see God | Positively | Negatively | Not at all |

God is out changing peoples names

What might God re-name you? What would this new name say about you or make you different than you are now?

"When Jesus saw him, he said, "You are Simon, son of John. You will be called Cephas (which means "Rock")" John 1:42

Change is hard. When you are a teenager change is both a friend and an enemy. Voices change, friends change (almost daily), and your body goes through so many changes it's hard to keep track. Parents, schools and churches tell you you have to change your music, your hair and your clothes.

What if someone came along and wanted to change your status? Status by definition means "the position of an individual in relation to another or others". What if God wanted to change the way you felt about life, about others and about Him?

Jesus changed Peter's status. His real name Simon meant "Obedient". His changed name meant "Rock". If you put that together he was an obedient rock. Peter was anything but a rock in the short term. He was hotheaded, he sank when he tried to walk on water and he denied Jesus three times. Jesus did not name him "rock" because that is what he was, it's possible Jesus named him that because of what he would become. He was the first preacher on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-36) and one of the chief apostles of the early church.

Write your first and last name in a different way.

God is still transforming people today. God is giving people new names. He is wanting to change the way we see ourselves and Him. He names us righteous, forgiven and free even when we do not feel that way. Are you ready for God to change your status? Just pray and ask.

Other name changes: Genesis 17:1-5, 35:9-13,

Send God a comment (prayer). Lord, I want a new identity, I want...

God is going to a party

"When the wine ran out, Jesus' mother told Him, "They don't have any wine." John 2:3

Describe a time when God bailed you out of a tough situation.

I am not a big fan of weddings, except for my own of course. It may be that I don't like getting dressed up or the fact that everyone had a slice of my double chocolate grooms cake but me (but I'm not bitter, or anything). I probably would think differently about weddings had Jesus shown up to a few of them.

Many people think of Jesus as just a "holy guy" who gives speeches, but Jesus was like you and I, in that He enjoyed life. He went to a wedding because he wanted to celebrate this occasion.

In the middle of all the festivities it comes to Jesus' attention that the wedding was running out of wine. At the request of His mother he agreed that the bride and groom should not have to face this shame on what should be the happiest day of their life. God is good about helping us save face some times. Has he saved yours lately? Be thankful!

Offer a prayer of thanksgiving for His grace

This story tells us a lot about Jesus. It tells us He is compassionate for others in a time of crisis, He obeyed his mother, and He makes some mean wine. He made only the best wine when he could have made ordinary wine. He knew how to liven up a party.

Write down an ordinary place(or places) you'd like Jesus to show up.

Jesus is not a party'r as we look at someone who parties today. He did not get drunk or play pranks. He did the miraculous in the midst of the ordinary. You may look at things like school, family, job, church, and a hundred other things as ordinary. Consider taking Jesus with you to all these ordinary places (maybe even a wedding) and watch the party come alive. Maybe I should talk to Him about making me another double chocolate grooms cake.

Jesus also does funerals: John 11:1-44 , Luke 7:11-17

Send God a comment (prayer). God, I need you to show up.....

God is “not in my house”

What is taking up too much room in your life leaving little room for God?

He (Jesus) told those who were selling doves, “Get these things out of here! Stop turning My Father’s house into a marketplace!” And His disciples remembered that it is written: Zeal for Your house will consume Me. John 2: 16,17

Why is Jesus angry? I thought Jesus was all about sweetness and kindness? This is a common question. Let’s look at the word zeal. According to Dictionary.com, zeal means, fervor for a person, cause, or object; eager desire or endeavor; enthusiastic diligence; ardor.

Jesus was not passionate about getting a cord and chasing people around. In fact, the cords were for chasing the larger animals, such as the oxen, out of the temple. Jesus was passionate about His Father’s house and what was being done in it.

This incident occurred during a celebration called Passover and many Jews came to the temple market to buy a lamb to sacrifice to celebrate freedom from Egypt. Jesus was filled with great desire to restore prayer to God’s temple. He wanted the religious people of the day, called Pharisees who ran the market, to know that this was not a place for profit but for prayer.

Draw a symbol of what you are passionate about.

How about you? Are you filled with zeal when God does not get his props? Are there things in your life you should be driving out to make room for a passionate pursuit of your faith? Do you need to make room for prayer, Bible Study and gathering with fellow believers for worship?

Get fired up! Grab some rope and chase the suckers out of your life that are holding you back.

Read: Exodus 12:21-28, I Corinthians 3:16,17, Psalm 69:9

Send God a comment (prayer). God, I need to be more passionate about...

God is blowing people's minds

What are some things that "blow you away" about God?

"How can these things be?" John 3:9

In Jesus' day, a very learned, religious leader named Nicodemus had questions about spiritual life; and Jesus blew his mind.

Jesus told Nicodemus he could not see the Kingdom of God unless he was born again. Nicodemus responded by saying :

"But how can anyone be born when he is old?"

Good question. Nicodemus couldn't see past the years and years of religious training (or church going) to see the simplicity of what Jesus was telling him. Jesus told him,

"I assure you: Unless someone is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God."

Think of the day you accepted Christ and were born again. Throw yourself a spiritual birthday party. What would this look like?

Jesus was saying that we all must be born the first time, through water, physically, through our mothers womb. He also said we must be born spiritually. We must move from being dead in our sins to alive in Christ.

Jesus offers the final mindblower when he said "For God loved the world in this way: He gave His One and Only Son, so that every one who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life."

God loves us. He sent His Son to die for our sins. We only have to believe. Simply, mind blowing.

Read: Romans 10: 9,10, John 3:36, John 5:24

Send God a comment (prayer). God, you blow me away by....

God is thirsty

List your top five favorite thirst quenchers. What was the last drink you had?

"Give me a drink" John 4:7

This seems like an odd request from the one made the oceans of the earth but maybe it wasn't about the water. In addition to His physical thirst Jesus was thirsty to meet the needs of others.

In these days, women did not have equal rights. In fact, this woman had less than equal rights because she was a Samaritan. Samaritans were considered second class because of their ethnicity and beliefs (John 4:9).

Jesus wanted a drink but more than that, He wanted to strike up a conversation with this woman. He wanted to talk to her about her life, her relationships, and her beliefs. He was thirsty for water but he was also thirsty to know this woman's story.

In the end Jesus received what He was thirsty for (water) and the woman received what she was thirsty for (friendship with God)

How thirsty are we for God? What do we do when our soul runs dry? Do we chug the latest cultural phenom or search for a Youtube video to make us forget our thirst? Maybe we seek a relationship, but as we found out from the Samaritan woman, it's not the number or quality of those relationships that satisfy.

Are you thirsty? Is your soul dry? God stands by the well of your heart ready to satisfy your deepest needs: to be whole, forgiven, and valued.

Read John 4:1-42, Psalm 42: 2, Matthew 5:6

Send God a comment (prayer). God, I am thirsty for....

God is can't they just believe?

My last life emergency was.....

"Go" Jesus told him, "Your son will live" John 4:50

Have you ever seen God as your own personal emergency room? Have you been quick to rush the heavens with pray for some crisis but never return to him

"God is always there for us" is a popular thing to say. It is true that God is there for us but the real question is will we believe even if the miracle does not come the way we think it should.

The father in this story turned to Jesus when he had a great need and the story conveys that his whole household believed after his son was healed. This is not the norm. Most of the time, when our crisis is over or we feel better, we forget about God and get on with "real life" or "regular life".

What was the last way God came through for you? Did it increase your love or commitment for Him? Why or why not?

Jesus ran into this with a group of 10 lepers (Luke 17:11-19). He healed all ten lepers but only one came back to thank Him. Jesus never gets tired of helping, healing, or saving us. But how many miracles is going to take before we believe?

According to the New Testament, Jesus performed 35 miracles. John records that Jesus did so many things (miracles possibly among them) that the world would not have enough room to contain them (John 21:25). So many people saw them and later ignored them. Look around, look in and look up and believe.

Read John 4:46-54, Luke 17:11-19, Romans 1:20

Send God a comment (prayer). God... I believe.....

God is heading to the pool

If you could describe your best friend with just one word what would it be? What word would they use to describe you?

Describe the kind of friend you really want to have.

Pray about becoming this kind of friend.

He said to him, "Do you want to get well?" John 5:6

The pool is usually a fun place to be but not this one. This pool was special. The pool of Bethesda was where many of the lame, sick, and blind would gather. The story goes that an angel would come and trouble (or stir up) the water and the first one on would be healed.

Jesus met a man there who has been paralyzed 38 yrs. Jesus asked a strange question, "Do you want to get well?" The man responded by saying that he did but had no one to bring him into to the pool.

How about you? Do you want to get well? The man was counting on others to bring him to the water and could not find any willing to sacrifice time or energy to help him. Do you have friends who, if you were sick, would do anything to heal you?

There is another story which is the polar opposite. There was a man who was paralyzed who wanted to get well. He had a few friends who knew where Jesus was speaking. When they arrived there was no room. So what did they do? They tore the roof off the house and lowered their friend into the room, right in front of Jesus, where he was healed and forgiven.

If you need to be well and forgiven, pray and ask Christ to do this. If you are unsure, find a Christian friend to pray with you. If you are a Christian consider talking with a friend who is not well physically or spiritually and introduce them to Jesus, the healer of body and soul.

Read John 5: 1-15, Mark 2:1-12, Proverbs 17:17

Send God a comment (prayer). God, send me the kind of friends....

God is having some guests for dinner

What are some of your favorite fast food places?

When they were full, He told his disciples, "Collect the leftovers so nothing is wasted" John 6:12

In this story, Jesus takes the term fast food to a whole new level. Many people had been following Jesus because of the miracles He was doing. The crowds had travelled far and were hungry.

Jesus had a plan but just for kicks, asked his disciples where were they going to get enough bread to feed everyone? Peter had noticed a little boy and his lunch of five loaves and two fishes but expressed his doubt that so little would feed so many.

Who do you identify with in this story? The hungry crowd? The little boy? Or the disciples? Why do you relate to them?

Jesus, takes what we have and multiplies it. You may think you do not have enough of something. Maybe you don't have enough time, friends, patience, love, joy, or peace.

Have you ever been like the crowd? Do you follow Jesus, excited about your faith and then suddenly it seems you run out of whatever was keeping you going? Have you been like the disciples in the middle of a crisis and not enough resources? I have. Ultimately we have to turn back to the object of our faith, Jesus Christ.

Maybe we should be like the little boy. If we give what we have to Jesus, He will multiply it in abundance. God is the God of over abundance. He never wastes anything. No part of our lives is a waste. God collects the good and the bad all and uses them for His glory.

Read John 6:1-15, I Kings 17: 8-16, Matthew 7:7-12

Send God a comment (prayer). God, I feel like I am running out of.....

God is freaking out his friends

Share a time you've been through a storm. What was it like afterwards?

But He said to them, "It is I. Don't be afraid." John 6:20

Living in Florida means living with storms. Storms you can prepare for are different than storms that just show up. You feel safer if you are boarding up the windows with plywood; at least feel like you had a part in your own safety.

The disciples found themselves in a place of vulnerability. They were on the open waters and the seas got rough. They rowed hard for 3-4 miles against the bucking sea. Tired and afraid, they looked up and there was Jesus, walking on the water. The disciples could have thought this was the end when they saw Jesus walking on the water to them. They thought he was a ghost.

Rough waters are a part of life. When we accept Christ as Savior we maybe tempted to think there is smooth sailing ahead. Jesus warned his disciples, and us as well, "You will have suffering in this world." John 16:33 HCS. This is not the end of the story though. In the next sentence Jesus reminds us, "Be courageous, I have overcome (conquered) the world."

God knows our storms. He sees them coming. He helps prepare us for the storms. Jesus may even quiet your storm Matthew 8:26.

It has been said that we spend life either going into or coming out of a storm. Either way, I am glad Jesus comes along for the ride.

Read John 6:16-21, Matthew 8:23-27, John 16:33,

Send God a comment (prayer). God, I'm going through a storm....

God is my brothers are so lame

What does it feel like when people do not believe you or in you?

"For not even his brothers believed in Him." John 7: 5

Jesus had some family issues. If you read about the birth of Jesus in Matthew 1 and 2, Mary, Jesus' mother, is under scrutiny for having a baby out of wedlock. Now, Jesus' brother are mocking his calling and daring him to go to the Feast and show His works there.

We cannot control where we are born or to whom we are born but we all have control of how we deal with our families.

Jesus plainly told his brothers He was not doing because it was not His time to go. Do you have brothers, sisters or friends who try to push you into doing something you know you shouldn't do? Jesus had a sense of timing. He knew when to speak and when to listen. He knew when to show up and when to be absent.

Have you ever been mocked for your beliefs? What was your response?

When we become Christians some will mock us like Jesus' brothers. They will say things like "Show us a miracle" or like what Jesus heard on the cross, "Where is your God now?" We are not responsible to answer these questions, we are responsible stay on course. There is a time to answer honest questions about faith and a time to ignore mocking questions.

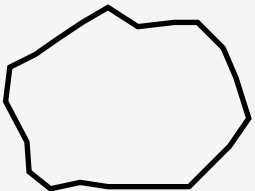
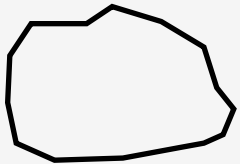
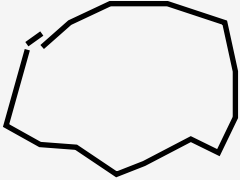
Jesus' brother did not believe in Him. They, may have been jealous like Joseph and his multi-colored coat (Genesis 37). They took no risks and therefore received no trouble. Jesus believes in you even when others do not. Stay on course.

Read John 7, Genesis 37, I Peter Proverbs 16:1, Colossians 4:5,6, Matthew 5:11

Send God a comment (prayer). God, whether anyone believes in me or not I am going to....

God is put down that rock

Write a name inside each rock of someone you have recently judged unfairly.



Consider going to them and apologizing.

"When Jesus stood up He said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" John 8:10

Too often we see God as the one who wants to do us in for any mistake we make. I used to think that everything that happened to me, like falling off my bike or some good thing not happening to me, was the result of God punishing me for some mistake I had made in the past.

Here we see Jesus defending a woman who had been caught in a compromising position. Instead of agreeing with those who wanted to stone her He defended her. He challenged the angry mob that whoever was without sin could cast the first stone. They dropped their rocks one by one.

What is to be learned from this?

1. God forgives us
2. God does not like bullies ganging up on the weak.
3. God warns us to go and sin no more
4. God does not condemn us when we blow it.

There will be times when God has to discipline us like the paralyzed man you learned about in an earlier story (John 5:14) God also desire that we do not judge or condemn others. If we have been forgiven we should also forgive others. Do you have any rocks in your pocket stored up for anyone? Empty your pockets and forgive.

Read John 8:1-12, Matthew 6:12-14

Send God a comment (prayer). God, forgive me because i completely misjudged.....

God is thinking of a funny story

Since becoming a Christian what have your eyes been opened up to that you were blind to before?

"You don't want to become His disciples too, do you?" John 9:27b

You've probably heard in the movies or on tv, two characters talking to each other about a person who is standing right there but they are talking about them like they are not. The person being talked about says, "Hey! I'm right here."

That is how this story begins. The disciples asked Jesus about this blind man whether he or his parents sinned. The blind man is hearing all this and may be thinking, "Hello!? I'm right here."

Jesus heals the blind man by using spit and mud (funny all by itself) and a series of events unfold involving the mans parents and the religious leaders of the day, the Pharisees.

The Pharisees try to get the blind man to back off his story of Jesus healing him but instead the blind man turns the tables. He says, "Whether or not he is a sinner I do not know, one thing I do know: once I was blind, now I can see."

We make knowing Jesus too complicated. The Pharisees were so busy trying to figure Jesus out or trying to discredit him they missed the obvious: He was who he said He was.

So, of you want to share your faith with someone who does not know Christ? My advice is to be like the blind man and tell them you were blind and now you see.

Read John 9: 1-41, Psalm 119:18, Psalm 146:8, Matthew 13:16

Send God a comment (prayer). God, now I can see

God is out tending the sheep

**Are you easily influenced?
By who or what?**

"I am the good shepherd, I know my own sheep, and they know me." John 10:7

Shepherding is a dirty business. It involves protecting sheep from wolves and other wild animals, feeding, leading from one place to another and let's not forget the fabulous aroma.

We are sheep. We are easily distracted and prone to go our own way without some kind of leadership. God stepped out of heaven and was born in a manger, a feeding stall for animals (Luke 2:12). You could say shepherding was a job Jesus was born to do.

We, as followers of Christ, can become easily distracted. Everyone wants to lead us their way. Our friends want us to be like them. The culture says, "dress this way, listen to this music, play these video games, etc etc." We have to be careful who we are following otherwise they may lead us right off a cliff.

How can you change this?

**Who do you influence and
how can you leader others
the right way?**

As a sheep, you have to remember who is the real leader. Jesus said, "I am the door to the sheep pen". I am the only way into the Kingdom of Heaven. God illustrates to us how much loves us by leaving 99 sheep to find the lost one (Luke 15:4-5)

Who else will feed us, protect us and put up with our smelly mistakes besides Jesus? Let Jesus lead you. Listen for His voice.

Read John 10:1-18, Psalm 23, John 14:6, Psalm 95:7, Luke 15:1-7

Send God a comment (prayer). Lord, lead me

God is about to screw up a funeral, LOL

What sinful habits would like to see dead?

"Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in Me, even if he dies, will live."
John 11:25

Jesus was on his way to his friend Lazarus' funeral. The conversation with the disciples were like watching a cartoon. The disciples thought Lazarus was sleeping. Jesus finally just said, "He's dead." I can just hear the disciples now, "Oh, now we get get it"

Jesus said, "I have come to give life and life more abundantly." John 14:6 It doesn't get any more livelier than to raise the dead. Jesus can walk into the worst situation in our lives and make things come to life.

This was not the first time Jesus has done this. He raised a little girl back to life. (Matthew 9:24) What we see as dead, Jesus sees as only sleeping.

What spiritual habits would you like to see come to life?

Jesus saw a funeral procession passing by one time and raised the young man back to life (Luke 7:12-17). He had compassion on the boys mother and gave him back to her.

The Apostle Paul said, "So, you too, consider yourself dead to sin and alive to God in Jesus Christ." Romans 6:11

What's dead in your life? Your faith? A dream? A relationship? Jesus can bring life to those things that are in His control. Put your dreams, your relationships and your faith in Him and watch things come back to life.

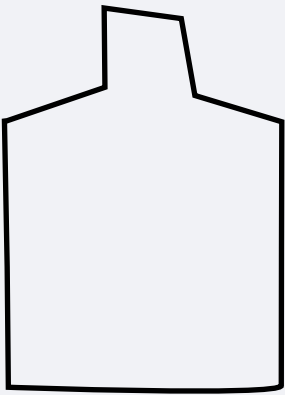
Write up a plan and work to accomplish it.

Read: 11:1-44, Matthew 9: 8-26, Luke 7:12-17, Romans 6:1-23

Send God a comment (prayer). Father, life-giver, bring me new life in this area.....

God is wearing expensive perfume

Write inside this perfume bottle the best thing you could offer Jesus.



Write down some ideas of how you could give God your best.

Jesus said, "leave her alone; she has kept it for the day of My burial." John 12:7

Have you heard the phrase "Saving up for a rainy day"? Well, it was about to pour. Jesus was going to the cross soon. The woman who anointed Jesus was Mary, Lazarus' sister whom He had just risen from the dead. She used the oil to prepare Jesus for his burial.

The perfume, or nard as it was called then, was worth a years wages. In our money the perfume was worth about \$10,000. Mary broke many taboos this day; here are a few of them:

- Mary also sat at Jesus feet as any other disciple would. This would have been acceptable if she was a man but was out of order because she was a woman.
- In addition, she let down her hair and wiped Jesus' feet. A woman was not to let down hair in public. It was considered by some to be too sexual.

Do you take any risks to give Jesus the worship he deserves?

Like Judas, there will always be those who will want to rob God of the worship He deserves. How are you loving and worshipping God? Are you offering your best as Mary did? Mary was commended by Jesus and He told her her story would not be forgotten. How do we know this is true? I am telling it to you over 2,000 years later.

Read: John 12: 1-8, Matthew 26:6-16, I Corinthians 10:31

Send God a comment (prayer). God, I want to pour out my best by....

God is washing dirty feet

What would be the = to washing someone's feet today?

He came to Simon Peter, who asked Him, "Lord are you going to wash my feet?" John 13:6

I know, feet, ewww, gross! Have you ever had to do something for someone who you know did not like you or was out to get you? Jesus did.

Peter was astonished by this act of servanthood. He was not prepared to have his feet washed by the Son of God. Peter knew who he was. He knew how undeserving he was. I imagine a million mistakes must have crossed his mind.

Jesus did not only wash the feet of Peter who would deny him but the feet of Judas who would betray Him. This was an act of absolute surrender and humility on Jesus' part.

Make a list of people you should strive better to serve.

Jesus commented further in the chapter, "So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.

Washing feet was a common thing in those days. A servant would wash the feet of guests who had been traveling the dusty roads. Jesus was setting an example for us. We should serve one another.

The next time mom, dad, a friend or even an enemy asks something of you remember Jesus did it first and set the example.

Read: John 13:1-20, Matthew 18:1-5, Mark 10:45

Send God a comment (prayer). Lord, thank you for your example, I will follow your example by....

God is one last supper with the guys

What would you talk with your friends about if you knew you were moving far away the next day?

"I give you a new commandment: love one another. Just as I have loved you, you must also love one another." John 13:35

Judas has already gone to betray Jesus. Jesus knows there is not much time left. Jesus does not waste any words. There is no idle chit chat recorded, only the important things.

Think about your words. How often do you use the time with those you care about to say what you really mean? My mom and I made a deal when I was a teenager; neither of us would leave the house without saying I love you and neither would leave angry.

Imagine you are seated at last supper. What are you thinking about as you listen to Jesus?

Write the names down of some people you have used some harsh language with.

Jesus was speaking to us when He said these words. He knew we'd be reading those words today. He focused His words because of what He was about to do for us.

God told us to love each other. He did not tell us to really, really love each other. He raised the bar and asked us to love each other the way He loved his disciples.

What will you have to change so others will notice your love for God and others?

Read: John 13:31-35, Matthew 26:26-30, I Peter 1:22-23

How can you sincerely make it up to them?

Send God a comment (prayer). Father, let my words.....

God is making a promise

What the last promise you kept?

"And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Counselor to be with you forever." John 14: 16

Have you ever heard the phrase, "Promises were made to be broken"? It is sad that our world is almost based on this statement.

Consider all the promises that are broken everyday. Marriage promises. Business promises. It's no wonder we don't trust anyone. We expect people to break their promises.

What about God? Can we trust His promises? Jesus promised to send us a Comforter and a Counselor. He promised that His Spirit would come live in us, walk with us, empower us and never leave us. Can we trust God? Yes.

We believe someone's promise based on their character and track record. God passes both those tests. Here are two reasons to trust:

1. Scripture says: "God is not a man, that he should lie." Numbers 23:19, 20. Just knowing God is not like anyone else should give us peace of mind.
2. The Apostle Paul shares his confidence about God's staying power when he says, The Bible says, "I am sure of this, that He who started a good work in you[3] will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." Philippians 1:5-7

God has not given up on us. He is totally committed to a relationship with us. If we'll listen to what He saying to our hearts and through His word; we will discover that God does and will keep His promises.

Read John 14:1-31, Numbers 23:19, 20, Psalm 119:50

Send God a comment (prayer). God, give me strength to keep (live out) what I commit to you.....

What was the last promise you broke? Was there a good reason? Is there ever a good reason to break a promise?

God is it's sooooo about love

Draw a picture of what love looks like to you.

"As the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you. Remain in My love"
John 15:9

Love is complicated isn't it? Well, it is between humans. We wonder if our parents really love us or if our friends really love us. We wonder if our boyfriend or girlfriend really loves us. Love is complicated; for humans.

Love is not complicated for God. The scriptures say "God is Love" I John 4:8. He has no problem loving us. God is not wishy washy like many people we know. Maybe you are not in someone's top friends online. Maybe others reject your friend requests. God never rejects anyone's cry for love and friendship.

Let's simplify God's love

1. His love is unconditional. God did not wait for us to clean up our act before dying in the cross for our sins. He offers an open invitation to loving him and Him loving you.. John 3:16
2. His love is unmistakable John 13:35 It is His love that marks us. If we love others, ourselves and even our enemies, others will see His love at work.
3. His love is unbreakable Romans 8:38, 39

It's not the concept of love we miss, it is the remaining part. Jesus said to remain in, follow in, and live in His love everyday. Does your love have lasting, remaining impact? It can.

Read: John 15: 1-17, John 13:35, John 3:16, Romans 8:38,39 Jude 1:21

How good a lover are you in these area? Gove yourself between a 1 and a 10. Ten being best and one being you are a cold fish.

I love God _____

I love my parents _____

I love my friends _____

I love my enemies _____

Circle the one you need to work on and remain in the most.

Send God a comment (prayer). Father, your love for me is

God is clearing a path

What are some things blocking your way to daylight and victory?

"I have told you these things so that in Me you may have peace. You will have suffering in this world. Be courageous! I have conquered the world." John 16:1

I enjoy watching football. I enjoy the big passes for touchdowns but I really enjoy running backs. They carry the ball through dangerous territory. Angry linebackers seek to lay a hit on them that will stop the play or cause a fumble.

Jesus told his disciples that the field (the world) they would be playing on (living out their faith) would be filled with linebackers. Trouble, set backs, death, brokenness, sin, and a host of other bad things fill this world. It makes us wonder, how are we ever going to score a touchdown (reach heaven, live for God)?

What are some things you have overcome to follow Christ?

Jesus made it clear that he told his disciples all these things (read the whole chapter) so they would have peace of mind and heart that everything was going to be o.k. Every running back needs a group of people who will take on the linemen in order to help that running back find daylight, the open space to the end zone.

God has cleared a path for us. He is our lead blocker. He overcame our sin at the cross. He has given us peace for our anxiety. Jesus has overcome the world. We are playing on a field where the game is already won. God has cleared a path for us so we can find daylight and ultimately the eternal life.

Read John 16:1-33, Psalm 44:7, Proverbs 21:31, I Corinthians 15:57

if God were to give you a trophy when you reached heaven, what would it be for?

Send God a comment (prayer). Father, I am looking forward to the day when..

God is praying for you

What are your top 3 prayer requests?

"I pray not only for these, but also for those who believe in Me through their message." John 17:20

So, what does Jesus do all day now that He is in heaven? Is He lounging poolside drinking a latte? Is He on vacation? No, He is praying, for you and me.

Jesus prayed this prayer over 2000 years ago for you and me. He included some pretty important requests:

- That we would believe in Him vs 20
- That we would be one in our faith vs 21
- That we would one day be with Him vs 24
- That His love would be in us vs 25

How does it make you feel to know Jesus prays for us? What does it do for your confidence?

Prayers are very personal words. They reflect our deepest need and desires. When Jesus prayed He was thinking about you and me. These were His deepest desires and are still today.

God has cleared a path and continues to clear a path for us through His prayers. The scriptures says He intercedes for us. That word means: to go to or meet a person, esp. for the purpose of conversation, consultation, or supplication. Jesus prays on our behalf.

Knowing this, let's live with confidence.

Read: John 17:20-26 (it's a short chapter, read the whole thing :)
Romans 8:26-34

Send God a comment (prayer). Father, I can live a life of faith with confidence because....

God is it's on

What words come to mind when you think of Jesus?

"Then Jesus, knowing everything that was about to happen to Him, went out and said to them, "Who is it you're looking for?" "Jesus the Nazarene," they answered. "I am He," Jesus told them." John 18:4,5

Who is it you are looking for? Good question. We all (the whole world) seems so have idea of what they are looking for when it comes to God. The temple police and guards must have thought Jesus was hold up in the garden with AK-47's for the amount of troops they brought.

It is possible the guards thought Jesus was like the other zealot, rabble rousers of their day. They may have thought His followers would fight for Him and Jesus would run. He did not.

Scripture says, "Jesus, knowing everything that was about to happen to Him." Jesus knew the punishment and death He would suffer.

What's your status after reading this chapter?

Some people look for a Jesus they can explain. Some look for a simple Jesus. Some want a soft, Teddy Bear Jesus. Jesus was anything but soft. He knew the pain and the torture He was about to face and He went anyway. I want this Jesus.

Jesus, suffered through all this because He knew our freedom and our relationship with God was at stake.

Who are you looking for? What kind of Savior do you want? Who will you find? Search the scriptures and you will not be disappointed.

Read John 18, Mark 8:27-33

Send God a comment (prayer). Jesus, I am thankful to have a Savior who...

God is taking the heat for you

Any thoughts on what you read?

"So Pilate said to Him, "You're not talking to me? Don't You know that I have the authority to release You and the authority to crucify You?" "You would have no authority over Me at all," Jesus answered him, "if it hadn't been given you from above. This is why the one who handed Me over to you has the greater sin."

John 19: 10, 11

This is a hard chapter to read, but I want you to read it at least three times so you'll understand exactly what Jesus went through. Ask yourself a few question as you read:

- What if I were there? What would I have said or done?
- Who (Peter, etc) are you most like in this real life drama? Why?
- How did this make you feel? What were you thinking about?

This exercise is more important than anything I can write. During this time of reflection, I pray God touches your heart and you will respond as God directs.

Read: John 19 (3x), Isaiah 53 (yes, the whole chapter),
Philippians 2:1-11, I Corinthians 15:3

Send God a comment (prayer). God...

God is rise and shine

Draw a sunrise. What does this mean to you?

"Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of His disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may believe Jesus is the • Messiah, the Son of God, and by believing you may have life in His name." John 20: 30, 31

So, this story has a happy ending. Jesus rises from the dead and reveals Himself to the disciples.

It is an interesting note that Jesus asked Mary a familiar question: "Who is it you are looking for?"

Many people remember Jesus dying but forget He rose again. Easter is a celebration of the death and resurrection of Jesus. Many look for a savior they can control or cast in their own image.

Jesus broke the mold of every other religious leader by rising from the dead. His empty tomb stands today in Jerusalem, as a trophy over death. Jesus promises us, like He promises Mary and Martha in the story you read about Lazarus, "I am the resurrection and the life, he who believes in me, though he dies, yet shall he live."

Since Jesus conquered the grave, all those who believe has conquered it as well. We have no more reason to fear death.

The verse at the top almost sums up this book. Everything written and done was for our benefit, so we might believe.

Read: John 20, John 5:29, Acts 2:31, Acts 24:15, I Peter 1:3

If you could start over, what would you do differently?

Send God a comment (prayer). Jesus, I know because you conquered death I can.....

God is wrapping up loose ends

Read these follow up Scriptures

Proverbs 8:17

Luke 15:3-7

I John 4:7, 8

Romans 5:5-8

I Corinthians 13

"When they had eaten breakfast, Jesus asked Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?" John 21:15

I did not emphasize this, but in John 18, Peter denied Jesus three times. It's important to remember this. Peter and some of the other disciples went back to fishing after all the dust had settled.

When we have an experience with Christ at camp or our church it's easy to just go back to doing whatever it was we were doing before we had that experience.

Here, Jesus teaches us that He does not give up on us easily when we mess up. He goes and find Peter. He looks for the one who denied Him so He could reconnect him. God looks for us.

No matter where you committed your life to Christ (camp, church, home) there will come a time where we are tempted to back to what we know, even if it is wrong.

If you mess up, don't be discouraged. God is still looking for you. He want to forgive us, cleanse us and get us fishing for the right things in the right way.

The question is not whether you love God but how much do you love God? Enough to obey Him? Worship Him? Live for Him?

What is God's status right now and forever?

God

Loves U

Send God a comment (prayer). Thank you God.....

Now, What's Your Status?

Use this section to make a special note about how you feel or maybe what you are determined to change after interacting with your daily devotion. Just fill in your name and then your status.

Sample

Day 1 _____ Bobby _____ is

thankful for life.

Day 1 _____ is

Day 2 _____ is

Day 3 _____ is

Day 4 _____ is

Day 5 _____ is

Day 6 _____ is

Day 7 _____ is

Day 8 _____ is

Day 9 _____ is

Day 10 _____ is

Day 11 _____ is

Day 12 _____ is

Day 13 _____ is

Day 14 _____ is

Day 15 _____ is

Day 16 _____ is

Day 17 _____ is

Day 18 _____ is

Day 19 _____ is

Day 20 _____ is

Day 21 _____ is

Random thought



Paul Turner has worked with teens for over 20 years. He is passionate about this generation knowing and following Jesus.

Paul and his wife Kim, along with their three kids live in Birmingham, Al.. Paul is the part time youth director at Gardendale Mt. Vernon UMC.

Contact Paul <http://www.facebook.com/paulwturner>
<http://myspace.com/bamayouthpastor>
twitter.com/thedproject

Other Youth Resources from Paul



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