

DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Afterlife / Week 1

He died for everyone so that those who receive His new life will no longer live for themselves. Instead, **they will live for Christ**, who died and was raised for them.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:15 NLT

DAY 1

We all have that one friend who talks a big game but never really backs it up. We've probably even been that friend ourselves! We say we're going to do something really cool or impressive, but when it comes down to it, we can't really deliver. One of the amazing things about God is that He not only talks a big game, but He can always back it up. God talks about His love for us—the fact that He loves us more than we can ever imagine. But He proved that to be true by sending Jesus to die for us.

Jesus talked the talk and walked the walk, proving we can trust both His words and His actions toward us. **Today, spend a few minutes thanking God for not just telling you that He loves you, but for proving that He does.**

I tell you the truth, anyone who **welcomes** my messenger is **welcoming** Me, and anyone who **welcomes** Me is **welcoming** the Father who sent Me.

JOHN 13:20 NLT

DAY 2

Jesus always had a way of connecting the way we treat people to the way we see Him. In this quote from Jesus, He is reminding His closest friends that when other people accept them and listen to their message about Him, it shows that they are welcoming God in as well. It's like He's saying the way we treat people is connected to the way we view God.

So, how does this play out in your own life? Just think about the way you connect with other Christians. Are you quick to welcome them into your life or is it easier to keep relationships separated between church and "real life?" **This week ask your small group leader for feedback on how well you "welcome" the other people in your group into your life. Listen and learn with an open heart and mind.**

He replied, "What is impossible for people is **possible** with God."

LUKE 18:27 NLT

DAY 3

Have you walked through a difficult circumstance and wondered why this was happening to you? Maybe you've seen someone close to you struggle or suffer and questioned why they had to walk such a difficult road. When we find ourselves in painful seasons, our tendency is to look for an explanation—an answer to the question of why. Often times, we look to Jesus for the answer. But the beautiful thing about Easter is that Jesus gives us something better than an answer; He gives us hope. Hope that no difficult circumstance, or painful season, or struggle, or suffering has the final say over our lives.

That's a hope we can hold on to no matter what we're walking through in life. **This week, write the word "HOPE" somewhere you can see it every day. When you find yourself struggling, fix your eyes on that word to remind you of the hope Jesus brings in all things.**

<p>I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.</p> <p>PHILIPPIANS 3:14 NIV</p>	<p>DAY 4</p> <p>Have you ever worked really hard for a prize? Maybe it was as a kid in an arcade or maybe it was extra work after practice on your current team. Going above and beyond is always worth it when you keep your focus on the prize. Paul, one of the most influential Christians in history, encourages us to approach life in a similar way. We should live with heaven in focus, knowing that eternity with God is our prize.</p> <p>How would this perspective change the decisions you make daily? How would the way you treat people that are different than you change? How would you prioritize what truly matters most in life? Today, ask God to remind you in both the high and low moments of your day of the future He has in store for you.</p>
<p>I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying.</p> <p>JOHN 11:25 NLT</p>	<p>DAY 5</p> <p>Jesus made some BIG statements. This is definitely one of His biggest. The best part is that we can believe it. Especially since right after he made this claim, he raised a dead man back to life. And then predicted His own death and resurrection and pulled it off. Jesus can be trusted, not just because of what He said, but because He did what He said He would do. This means you can believe that the same Jesus who died and came back to life, can give you eternal life. This week, talk to someone you trust about Jesus' BIG statement. Share your questions, doubts, and thoughts about what it means to believe in Jesus. If what Jesus said is true, it's definitely worth talking about.</p>
<p>But God showed His great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.</p> <p>ROMANS 5:8 NLT</p>	<p>DAY 6</p> <p>It's really easy to be selfish, isn't it? We're all naturally pretty good at putting our own needs before the needs of others. But selfishness doesn't look good on anyone, does it? It's never helpful and almost always hurtful. Thankfully, Jesus modeled a better way for us. On the cross, Jesus put the needs of humanity before His own, and it changed the world forever. And it is the humility of Jesus that we are called to model. Humility is powerful, impactful, and compelling to others.</p> <p>When we choose to lead with humility, we're not only impacting someone by putting them first, but we're showing them a glimpse of who Jesus is in us. So today, look for opportunities to humble yourself by putting the needs of others before your own. Lead with your humility to serve someone in your life whose needs might be bigger than your own.</p>
<p>This is real love—not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.</p> <p>1 JOHN 4:10 NLT</p>	<p>DAY 7</p> <p>Try writing the verse on one side of an index card and the reference on the back. Practice reciting it without looking.</p>