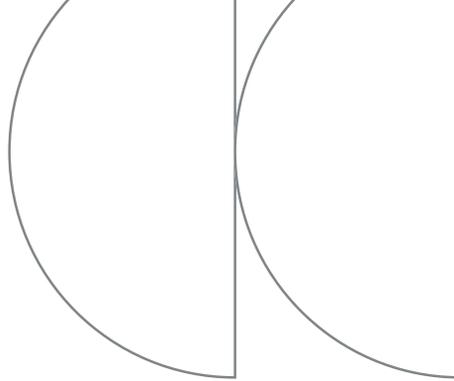


DAY 7

Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth."

Matthew 28:18 NLT

If we want to follow God more in our everyday lives, we have to first know what He said—that's why memorizing Scripture is important. Write this verse on a sticky note. Then put the sticky note somewhere you'll be able to see it every day: your bathroom mirror, your bedroom door, your laptop. If you're in the process of learning a new language, try translating the verse. Or read the verse out loud as many times as you can in 30 seconds. Then see if you can say it without reading it.



Horizontal lines for writing notes.

DAILY DEVOTIONAL

FOR AN **everyday faith.**

THE UPSIDE DOWN KINGDOM/WEEK 1

HIGH SCHOOL

DAY 1

Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation.

Colossians 1:15 NLT.

In this letter to some of the earliest Jesus followers, Paul, the writer, reminds them of something really important. Jesus is the best reflection we have of God. And, Jesus, while human, was in charge of everything. In fact, Jesus said so Himself in the verse you will memorize this week. He wasn't just the lead-guy of His friends or the pastor at his church. Jesus had and has all authority. So what did He do with that kind of power? He paid attention to hurting people and outcasts. He healed people and served them. He gave his life for the people He was leading. In other words, Jesus used His power and authority to show us a whole new way to live—one where the most power is found in serving, not being served.

This week, pay attention to areas where you have the freedom or the power to do what you want. When you notice you have power, ask yourself, "how can I use this power to serve others the way that Jesus did?"

DAY 2

I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me— just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep.

John 10:14-15 NIV

Have you ever had a great coach or teacher? Chances are that leader went beyond what they had to do or what they were paid to do to help you or your friends. Maybe they even gave up something or sacrificed their time because they cared so much. That's what great leaders do, and that's exactly what Jesus is describing—a shepherd who loves the sheep so much He gets to know each one personally and even gives his life for them. Essentially, Jesus is saying that's how He feels about you. You're the sheep! Maybe you've never felt like you were important enough for Jesus to know your name, but He does. He loves you so much He was willing to give up everything to keep you safe because that's what a Good Shepherd does

Today, instead of praying, write a letter (or a text thread) to Jesus.

DAY 3

All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, “God opposes the proud, but shows favor to the humble.”

1 Peter 5:5b NIV

Humility has always been a difficult thing to live out. Why? Because it means putting others before yourself—and that includes adults in your life as well as the people in your classes or on your team. The more life we experience, the easier it is to think we have this whole thing figured out. Peter tells us in this passage though that refusing to learn from older people is pride—the literal opposite of humility. It isn't good for them and it isn't good for us. So what do we do? Peter says “clothe yourselves” with humility. In other words, put it on the same way you put on your shirt and shoes. Make a decision to have an attitude of being humble, of putting others first, of deciding to learn from someone older or a little farther down the road than you.

Set a reminder for tomorrow morning. As you get dressed, ask God to help you have a humble attitude, a learning attitude toward others—especially those a little older.

DAY 4

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit.

Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

Philippians 2:3-4 NIV

Have you ever been in a situation with unspoken rules? Maybe in your friend group there is an unspoken rule that nobody likes mainstream music or everybody likes Hot Cheetos. No one says it's a rule, but it kinda is. One unspoken rule we all live with is this one: Look out for yourself. In other words, do what it takes to make you happy or successful or winning. Everybody knows that rule. That's why it's so interesting that when Jesus came, He introduced a new rule, an opposite rule, an upside down way of living that puts others first. In fact, today's verse is from a letter Paul wrote to some early followers of Jesus, reminding them to live like Jesus told them to, to live in a way that puts others first. Paul knew it would be complicated so he gave them some examples specific to their situation. Chances are you and I need some specific examples, too.

Sometime today, text your small group leader or a trusted friend and talk about this question together, “what does someone do differently if they put others first in high school?”

DAY 5

Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.

Matthew 7:24 NIV

Listening (for most) is easy; “doing” is something else entirely. We've learned a lot throughout these past five days, but Jesus' words in this most recent passage tell us in order to be wise people, we have to do more than listen. We must hear these words AND put them into practice. He goes on to say that foolish people also listen, but they don't put His words into practice (Matthew 7:26). In the same way, obedience to Jesus' words doesn't come from simply repeating these words. We aren't being told here to learn Jesus' words, we're being told to DO SOMETHING because of them.

Today, look back at the previous verses and make a list of some things you could actually do this week to live and lead more like Jesus.

DAY 6

Remember your leaders who taught you the word of God. Think of all the good that has come from their lives, and follow the example of their faith.

Hebrews 13:7 NLT

Written by Matthew R., age 15 from Sanford, Florida, USA

Who is someone you looked up to as a kid growing up? For some of us it's our parents, older friends or if you are like me, it was an athlete. I've always looked up to Steph Curry. I wanted to be like him. Most of us know him as the greatest shooter in NBA history, but he is also a great husband, father, and follower of Jesus. As we look up to people, we begin to be like them. The writer of Hebrews says to think about the leaders who God has placed in our lives. We should look to how they live their lives to see positive examples of people in leadership. We should want to have lives like theirs. Make sure that whoever you look up to is a positive influence. Jesus is the perfect example of a leader who we should all try to be like. He is someone we can trust and follow.

Whenever you are put in a position of leadership or authority, even if it's just over your siblings or friends, I challenge you to lead like Jesus does.