

Day 1: Who Is Jesus?

Read: John 1:1–18

It's easy to think of Jesus as simply a good man, a wise teacher, or the central figure in Christmas and Easter. But John's Gospel points to something far larger; a cosmic event, written long before Jesus' birth in Bethlehem.

John's first words take us back to the beginning of time:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."
(John 1:1, CSB)

Jesus wasn't a latecomer to history; He is eternal, present before the creation of heaven and earth. The same Word who spoke galaxies and atoms into being is that Word who, in time, stepped onto the stage of human history. Everything we see, hear, and touch was made through Him (v. 3). What power, authority, and glory!

John goes further. He tells us that the Light, the pure life and wisdom of God, shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot overcome Him (v. 5). In a world broken by fear, confusion, and sin, Jesus is the Author of hope and the only source of true light.

The divine Word doesn't remain distant or unknowable. Verse 14 is stunning:

"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us."

God Himself, without letting go of any part of His nature, wrapped Himself in human frailty. He walked our roads, felt our hunger, shared our joys and pain. He lived among ordinary people, entering our mess to bring us to His grace. As John says, *"We observed his glory, the glory as the one and only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."*

Why does this matter? Because only One who is truly God and truly human could be the Savior we need. Jesus isn't out of touch with your struggles. He meets us as One who knows what it's like to be tired, rejected, or misunderstood, yet He comes "full of grace and truth" (v. 14). He neither shrinks from confronting our sin nor turns His back on us when we come seeking pardon. He alone offers both the truth about our sinfulness and the undeserved favor of forgiveness.

John goes on to say:

"To all who did receive him, he gave them the right to be children of God, to those who believe in his name, who were born... of God." (John 1:12–13 CSB)

This is the greatest offer: you don't have to climb a ladder of success or prove yourself worthy. You need only to receive, by faith, what Jesus has done for you—trusting Him as your Lord and Savior. When you do, you are adopted into God's family, made His child not by human effort, but by His will and love.

So the question isn't simply: Do you know about Jesus? Instead: Have you welcomed Him, the eternal Word made flesh, into the very center of your heart and life? He is the Light and Life for which you were made.

- Who does this passage say Jesus is?
- What does it mean that Jesus is “the Word”?
- What does it mean that Jesus is “full of grace and truth”?

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for sending Jesus, the true Light, to show me who You are. Thank You that Jesus is both God and man, full of grace and truth. Help me to know Him better and trust Him as my Savior. Let His light shine in my heart so I can begin to walk with Him today.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Daily Journal: Taking His Word to HEART

Highlight what stood out for you in the devotional reading:

Express why this has special meaning to you:

Ask questions for further conversation with a fellow disciple:

Relate truth to life: what needs to change and how should you live in obedience to truth?

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Day 2: The Problem of Sin

Read: Romans 3:19–26

Have you ever tried to measure up at work, in relationships, or even in how you see yourself? The Apostle Paul, in Romans 3, holds up the ultimate measuring stick: God's law. He writes,

"Now we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are subject to the law, so that every mouth may be shut and the whole world may become subject to God's judgment."

(Romans 3:19, CSB)

It's sobering to realize that God's standards don't just expose a few flaws, they reveal the truth about us all. No one, no matter how religious, moral, or well-intentioned, can claim innocence before a holy God. Paul makes it clear:

"For no one will be justified in his sight by the works of the law, because the knowledge of sin comes through the law."

(v. 20)

Sin is far deeper than mistakes or slip-ups. It's our natural bent to go our own way and resist God's way, a rebellion that leaves us helpless to make ourselves right. At this point, the Bible could end with despair. But it's here, at our lowest, that God's astonishing grace breaks through.

Paul continues:

"But now, apart from the law, the righteousness of God has been revealed, attested by the Law and the Prophets."

(v. 21)

God's answer is not for us to try harder or clean ourselves up, but to provide a new way apart from legal performance. His righteousness (right standing with Him) is offered through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe (v. 22). In Jesus' life and death, God demonstrated both His justice and His mercy.

"They are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. God presented him as an atoning sacrifice in his blood, received through faith, to demonstrate his righteousness..."
(vv. 24–25)

Here's the heart of the gospel: God doesn't ignore our sin. By sending His own Son, Jesus, to take the penalty we deserved, He upholds justice and sin is paid for, not swept away. At the same time, by faith, He justifies the sinner by declaring us not guilty, but righteous, simply as a gift. We bring only our sin; God gives us Jesus' perfection in return.

Paul sums it up:

"so that he would be righteous and declare righteous the one who has faith in Jesus."
(v. 26)

This means you can stop pretending, striving, or fearing that your past disqualifies you. In Christ, the verdict is already issued: you are justified by His grace, as a gift. What God requires, He provides. Trusting Jesus today means every sin past, present, and future, has truly been forgiven and you are welcomed into a right relationship with God.

Are you still trying to prove yourself before God or will you rest in the righteousness He offers through Jesus? The cross shouts that you are loved, and the empty tomb ensures that you are free.

- What does Romans say is true about everyone?
- How does God provide a solution for our sin?

I admit I have sinned and fallen short of Your perfection. Thank You that You didn't leave me without hope but sent Jesus to make me right with You. Please forgive my sins. Thank You for saving me by Your grace through Jesus' death and resurrection. Help me believe and rest in Your gift of forgiveness.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

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Day 3: Saved by Grace Through Faith

Read: Ephesians 2:1–10; Acts 3:19

Remember a time when you felt powerless; stuck in a situation you couldn't fix, or hopeless about changing yourself? That's a glimpse of what Paul describes as our spiritual condition without Christ. In Ephesians 2:1–3, he says: "You were dead in your trespasses and sins... we were by nature children under wrath." We were spiritually lifeless, following the crowd, and cut off from relationship with God. No amount of self-improvement or good intentions could rescue us. We didn't just need help: we needed a miracle.

But then comes the most beautiful turn in all of Scripture: "But God, who is rich in mercy, because of his great love that he had for us, made us alive with Christ even though we were dead in trespasses. You are saved by grace!" (Ephesians 2:4–5, CSB).

God steps in, motivated by His overflowing mercy, not because of anything we bring, but out of His own generosity and love. He doesn't just patch up our lives or give us spiritual tips; He resurrects us, giving true, lasting life where there was only death. His grace isn't a reward for good behavior but a gift for those bankrupt and empty.

Paul goes on: "For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift—not from works, so that no one can boast." (Ephesians 2:8–9)

No one can claim credit for their salvation; there are no spiritual gold stars, only the open hands of faith receiving what Jesus has already done. Our story (your story, my story) is one of unmerited kindness, where all the glory belongs to God.

But this gift of new life always leads to a new way of living. Paul says, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do." (Ephesians 2:10)

We're not saved by our good deeds, but we're most certainly saved for them. God

transforms us, plants new desires in us, and shapes our lives to reflect the beauty of Christ in the world. The good we do is evidence of His work in us, not the payment required, but the fruit given by a changed heart.

How do we step into this new life? The apostle Peter gives the answer in Acts 3:19: "Therefore repent and turn back, so that your sins may be wiped out, that seasons of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord."

To repent is more than feeling bad about the past; it's a decisive turn, a new allegiance. It is running from sin and running to Jesus, trusting Him as Savior and Lord. When we do, we don't just get spiritual refreshment; we experience life that is real, durable, and overflowing with hope.

Today, if you're weighed down by your failures, know that God loves to bring the dead to life. If you've been trying to earn God's approval, lay down your striving and receive His gift. And if you're already walking with Jesus, let your life overflow with the good works He's prepared for you, as a joyful response to the miracle He's already done.

- How are we saved?
- What role do good works play according to these verses?

Gracious God,

I know I can't save myself by my own efforts. Thank You for offering me new life through Jesus by grace, not by works. I turn from my sin and trust in You alone. Please help me walk in the good works You have prepared for me and let my life show Your love.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

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Day 4: New Life in Christ

Read: 2 Corinthians 5:14–21

What motivates real change in a person's life? Paul says it's not guilt, pressure, or fear but the overpowering love of Jesus Christ.

"For the love of Christ compels us, since we have reached this conclusion: that one died for all, and therefore all died." (v. 14)

The cross was not just a dramatic story, but an invitation to join Jesus in His death by letting the old self, marked by sin and going our own way, be crucified with Him. When you trust Christ, you participate in that death, and through faith, you also share in His resurrection.

Paul continues:

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!" (v. 17)

This isn't just a cleaned-up version of you. In Christ, you have a new identity. God does not hold your failures against you anymore; instead, He credits you with the very righteousness of Jesus. You are reconciled; a word that paints the image of an old friendship restored, of enemies now brought into close relationship.

"All this is from God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ..." (v. 18)

This restoration isn't something we could ever earn. It's God's initiative, His loving heart moving toward us, while we were still estranged from Him.

But amazing grace doesn't stop at what we receive. It calls us outward with purpose and urgency.

"And he has committed the message of reconciliation to us. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us..." (vv. 19–20)

You are not only welcomed home, but you are also sent out. God appoints every believer as His ambassador, carrying the message and invitation of reconciliation to a world that desperately needs hope and peace. Your story, with all its flaws and forgiveness, becomes a living invitation for others to meet the Savior.

The message we offer is summarized powerfully:

"He made the one who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." (v. 21)

Jesus became everything we are so that we could be credited with everything He is. Now, God looks at you and sees His beloved Son; righteous, accepted, and new.

Have you let the love of Christ, not your own effort, be the driving force of your life? Do you see yourself as a new creation, forgiven and called? Who in your life needs to hear the message of reconciliation and will you be Christ's ambassador to them today?

- What does it mean to be a “new creation”?
- How should this change affect your life?

Loving Father,

Thank You for making me new in Christ. Thank You for forgiving my sins and giving me a fresh start. Help me see myself as a “new creation” and live for Jesus, not for myself. Use me to share Your message of reconciliation with others.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

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Day 5: Growing Through God's Word & Prayer

Read: Psalm 119:9–16; John 15:5; Matthew 6:5–13

How does real spiritual growth happen in a believer's life? It's not about attending church or keeping up appearances: it's about a relationship that's deep, daily, and rooted in God's truth.

1. Hiding God's Word in Our Hearts (Psalm 119:9–16)

The psalmist writes,

"How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping your word. I have treasured your word in my heart so that I may not sin against you."

(Psalm 119:9, 11, CSB)

God's Word is more than information; it's protection and guidance for the heart. When we memorize, meditate on, and delight in Scripture, we anchor ourselves to the truth, giving the Holy Spirit space to shape our thoughts, words, and choices. This turns temptation and confusion into opportunities for obedience and worship.

"I will meditate on your precepts and think about your ways. I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word."

(Psalm 119:15–16)

The Bible becomes a lamp, showing us the next step and keeping us from stumbling (Psalm 119:105). Real growth happens when God's Word goes from our eyes and ears down into our hearts.

2. Staying Connected: The Vine and the Branches (John 15:5)

Jesus uses a simple, vivid picture:

“I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him produces much fruit, because you can do nothing without me.”

(John 15:5)

All transformation (faith, love, peace, self-control) comes not from striving, but from abiding. We grow by living close to Jesus, staying connected through daily time in God's Word and prayer. Cut off from Him, we wither; connected to Him, we bear fruit.

Abiding means a dependence on Jesus that never stops. It's like a branch drawing everything it needs from the vine; receiving nourishment, support, and life. This is not a one-time event, but a continuous attitude of reliance.

3. Learning to Pray: The Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:5–13)

Jesus' teaching on prayer is radically personal and humble. He says,

“Whenever you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites... But when you pray, go into your private room, shut your door, and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

(Matthew 6:5–6 CSB)

True prayer is not a performance. It's about coming honestly and often to our Father. Jesus gives us the Lord's Prayer—not just as a script, but as a model.

- **Worship:** “Our Father in heaven, your name be honored as holy.”
- **Surrender:** “Your kingdom come. Your will be done...”
- **Dependence:** “Give us today our daily bread.”
- **Confession:** “And forgive us our debts...”
- **Forgiveness:** “...as we also have forgiven our debtors.”
- **Trust:** “And do not bring us into temptation but deliver us from the evil one.”

This prayer guides our hearts back to God's priorities, provision, and mercy. It keeps us humble, honest, and sensitive to His Spirit.

Growth in the Christian life comes from daily rhythms of Bible intake and honest prayer, all rooted in a living relationship with Christ. Hiding God's Word in your heart, abiding in Jesus like a branch in the vine, and praying as Jesus taught—these are the routines that, over time, produce strong, joyful believers who can weather life's storms and bear lasting fruit.

Where do you need to invest more deeply: Scripture memory, honest prayer, or simply staying close to Jesus? Ask God to help you grow strong roots in Him today.

- Why is God's Word important?
- How does Jesus teach us to pray?

God,

Teach me to love Your Word and build my life on it. Help me to stay close to Jesus, like a branch joined to the vine. As I pray, remind me that You hear and care for me. Guide me so that my prayers honor You and help me trust You every day.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

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Day 6: The Church—God's Family

Read: Acts 2:41–47; Hebrews 10:23–25

Many today view faith as something purely personal, a private matter between themselves and God. But Scripture paints a radically different picture: Christianity is personal but never meant to be private. From the very beginning, God designed the church as a family, a community where faith comes alive and grows strong through relationships.

The Beauty of the Early Church (Acts 2:41–47)

After the first gospel message at Pentecost, thousands believed. The Bible describes what happened next:

“So those who accepted his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand people were added to them. They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer.”

(Acts 2:41–42, CSB)

Notice their priorities:

- **Devotion to truth:** They eagerly learned the apostles’ teaching. Growing Christians don’t go it alone—they seek truth together.
- **Fellowship:** This is more than small talk. They shared life—struggles, victories, meals, and material possessions.
- **Prayer:** Their relationships pointed upward, uniting them in dependence on God.
- **Radical generosity:** They “sold their possessions and property and distributed the proceeds to all, as any had need.”

(Acts 2:45 CSB)

Their lives overflowed with praise and this joy became a powerful witness to those around them. The Lord “added to their number daily those who were being saved.” (*Acts 2:47, CSB*)—showing that true biblical community is both warm and outward-looking.

The Call to Persevere—And Gather (*Hebrews 10:23–25*)

Centuries later, believers still needed the reminder:

“Let us hold on to the confession of our hope without wavering, since he who promised is faithful. And let us watch out for one another to provoke love and good works, not neglecting to gather together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging each other, and all the more as you see the day approaching.”
(*Hebrews 10:23–25, CSB*)

We are warned not to drift away from gathering with other believers—especially during hard times. Community isn’t a bonus or a box to check. We need one another to hold fast when the world or our hearts waver. We come together not just to receive, but to “provoke” one another toward love and good works, to strengthen and cheer each other on.

Church isn’t just a place; it’s people. It’s not an event; it’s a family and a mission. Every believer is called to belong and participate, learning and serving together.

The Christian life is hard to sustain in isolation. Finding a gospel-centered church, plugging into a small group, and investing in real spiritual relationships is vital for your growth. When you struggle, brothers and sisters can lift you up. When you celebrate, they will rejoice with you. And together, you become a light to your neighborhood and beyond.

Are you truly connected to a Christian community, or have you settled for a distant, solo version of faith? What can you do this week to deepen your commitment to the family and mission of the church?

- What did early believers do together?
- How can you connect with other Christians?

Father,

Thank You for making me part of Your family through faith in Jesus. Help me find and connect with other believers who will encourage me and help me grow. Show me how to serve and love others in Your church, just as You have loved me.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

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Day 7: Telling Others

Read: Matthew 28:16–20; Romans 1:16

Imagine standing with the disciples on a mountain in Galilee, hearing these words from Jesus, words that would shape the rest of their lives and the lives of millions after them:

“Jesus came near and said to them, ‘All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’”
(Matthew 28:18–20, CSB)

Notice, Jesus didn't say, “If you feel inspired, go do something spiritual.” He commanded—“Go... make disciples.” This assignment is not for the spiritually elite or a special class of Christians. It's the lifelong mission of every follower of Christ. We are to go, cross the street or cross the ocean, step into conversations and into people's lives so that Jesus might be known and followed.

And Jesus calls us to make disciples, not just converts—helping people learn to obey Him, grow in His ways, and identify with His family through baptism. This is how the life of Christ spreads from heart to heart and generation to generation.

But Jesus doesn't send us out empty-handed or alone. He promises His authority which means there's no place, no person, no situation outside His power and care. His presence goes with us every step, even when we feel afraid, unqualified, or weak.

Paul picks up the same spirit of boldness in his own words to the Roman church:

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, first to the Jew, and also to the Greek.”
(Romans 1:16, CSB)

This message about Jesus isn't just news, it's the very power of God. The gospel opens blind eyes, frees hearts trapped in guilt or shame, reconciles people to God, and gives new life that never ends. There is no accomplishment more lasting, nothing more meaningful, than helping another person find eternal life in Jesus Christ. We never have to be ashamed, for God Himself works through our simple words and stumbling steps.

Maybe you feel ordinary. Maybe you think you don't know enough, haven't lived perfectly, or won't have the answers. But God delights to use everyday people those willing to say yes, step out, and point others to the Savior they're still learning to follow. You don't have to convince, debate, or win every argument. You just have to be faithful: love others, live the truth, tell the story of how Jesus is changing your life, and leave the results in God's hands.

Is God prompting you to "go" into a friendship, a family situation, a work conversation, or even a new place? Are you afraid to speak about Jesus? Take courage: you carry the greatest message in the world, and Jesus Himself goes with you.

- What is Jesus' command to His followers?
- Why should you not be ashamed of the gospel?

Lord Jesus,

Thank You for the good news of the gospel. Give me courage not to be ashamed, but to share Your love and truth with those around me. Fill me with Your Spirit and help me make disciples wherever You send me, knowing You are always with me.

Amen.

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