

LIFEFAITHFUSION DEVOTIONAL

Above All, Get Wisdom

LIFEFAITHFUSION DEVOTIONAL DAY FIVE

SCRIPTURE STUDY

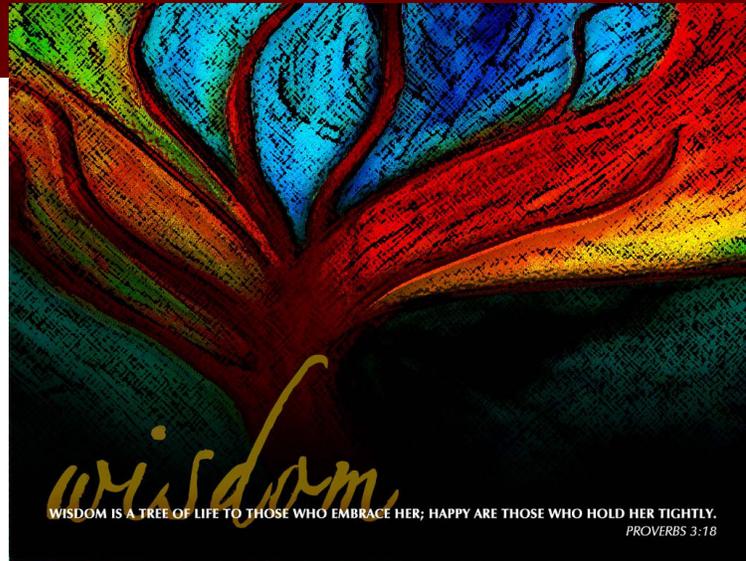
Hebrews 3:1-3
John 1:1-5; 14:6
Ephesians 1:3-14
1 Peter 5:8
Ephesians 6:14-17
Philippians 4:19

SCRIPTURE FOCUS

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning....The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:1-2,14 NIV)

PRAYER FOCUS

Dear Jesus,
“You are the embodiment of truth. Teach me to discern between truth and error by revealing Yourself to me, and by giving me understanding of Your Word.” Amen



NEW TESTAMENT WISDOM: JESUS IS “TRUTH”

Jesus is the complete, revealed Wisdom of God, the culmination of centuries of progressive revelation. In the Old Testament, God’s people had only the spoken Word and written Word. In the New Testament, magnificent, all powerful, eternal God disclosed Himself completely to man in the form of His son, Jesus:

“In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days He has spoken to us by his Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, and through whom He made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being...” (Hebrews 1:1-3 NIV)

The four New Testament gospel accounts depict very distinct pictures of the Messiah. Matthew, the tax-collector turned apostle, listened to Jesus talk about the Kingdom of God for three years. When he wrote his gospel, he described his Savior as King. Mark represents Jesus as the humble servant. Luke, the doctor, portrayed His Messiah as a man. But John the apostle, probably Jesus’ cousin, was “the disciple whom Jesus loved” (John 14:23). John’s writings are unique. John’s gospel (John), his letters (1,2, and 3 John), and his apocalyptic vision (Revelation), picture Jesus as God. As mentioned in the previous study, John’s first description of Jesus is seen in the first five verses of his gospel:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.

Through him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made. In Him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.” (NIV)

John further described Christ’s eternal nature: “Christ was alive when the world began, yet I myself have seen Him with my own eyes and listened to Him speak. I have touched Him with my own hands. He is God’s message of life. He was with the Father and then was shown to us” (1 John 1:1, 2b LB). The purpose of John’s entire gospel is to explain that knowing Christ is knowing God the Father—relationally, theologically, and practically. In Genesis chapter one we find “And God said.” numerous times.

Henry Blackaby points out, “Truth is a Person, not a concept. Jesus said He was the Truth (John 14:6). That means we can never know the truth of our circumstances unless we have first heard from Jesus.” When Jesus and the disciples were in a boat and in a storm, the disciples thought they were going to die. They were long-time fishermen and had been in many storms before, so they should have known if the storm was bad enough that they would not survive. The situation convinced them that the “truth” was their imminent death. “But they were wrong. *Truth* was asleep in the back of the boat! When Jesus spoke, the disciples saw the real truth of their situation. There was calm.” (Experiencing God Devotional” 4/12/06 Henry Blackaby)

The scriptures below are all about Jesus being *truth*. If you are wondering if something is true or not, ask Jesus. He knows.

- Take time to read through the Bible verses below. What are the benefits of understanding and appropriating each of these verses?
- Choose one to personalize and write it out to keep with you.
- “You shall know the *truth*, and the *truth* shall make you free.” (John 8:32 NASB) (emphasis added)
- “But when He, the Spirit of *truth*, comes, He will guide you into all the *truth*.” (John 16:13 NASB) (emphasis added)
- “I do not ask Thee to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one...Sanctify them in the *truth*; Thy word is *truth*.” (John 17:15,17 NASB) (emphasis added)
- “Finally, brethren, whatever is *true*...let your mind dwell on these things.” (Philippians 4:8 NASB) (emphasis added)

TRUTH: YOU ARE SEATED WITH JESUS IN HEAVEN NOW

Our position in Christ is a truth that changes everything! If we know we are completely accepted by God, we don’t have to live in bondage to legalism and self-effort. For example, the person who understands deeply that God accepts him because of Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross will not constantly wonder if God loves him. He can walk through life with peace and confidence. A person who understands that he can overcome Satan’s schemes because Jesus is victor over every force of the enemy will not live in fear and intimidation, but will live by faith. The believer who knows who he is in Christ is hopeful and not anxious for the future because Jesus holds him securely in the palm of His hand, and will guide him like a Good Shepherd. Such a lofty position with Jesus in the heavenlies is not attained after a long set of rules is fulfilled (as Mormonism and Islam teach), but is obtained immediately seated with Him in the heavenly realms.

Ephesians 1:3-14 is a list of privileges that we as believers enjoy because we are seated with Christ. They are as follows: every heavenly blessing is ours, all the grace we need to be holy is given to us, we are adopted as sons to bring God glory, we are bought by Jesus’ blood and are completely forgiven for our sins—both past, present and future. Paul the apostle also writes that God gave us all wisdom and understanding including insight into His mysterious will, and He has planned for everything in our lives to work out for His purposes. Finally, God has sealed us with the Holy Spirit, our “engagement ring” to remind us of the heavenly wedding with Christ when we reach heaven’s glory.

- The following verses speak of our authority over Satan. How does that encourage you and give you confidence in your daily life?

-“Furthermore, when God seated Christ at His right hand...He conferred on Him all authority.” (Ephesians 1:20-21 NASB)

-“He also seated us at His right hand and conferred on us through Christ all authority because we are ‘together with Christ.’” (Ephesians 2:6 NASB)

-“You are seated in the heavenlies with Christ *right now*. You have power and authority over the kingdom of darkness *right now*.” (“Daily in Christ A Devotional” April 3 Neil Anderson)

- At this very moment you are seated with Jesus in Heaven with all His power and authority. How does that knowledge change how you will think and act today?

Are there areas of your life where you need to stand in the truth of God’s power working in you? List them on the back. Spend some time praying over those areas and meditate upon Jesus already hearing and answering your prayer.

(Note—praying through Scripture is a great way to begin trusting God with a problem in your life. Worshipping and praising in God’s presence is another way to build your faith when you have a need that is overwhelming to bring to God.)

TRUTH: EVERY DAY WEAR GOD’S BELT OF TRUTH

In the Christian life we battle against powerful evil forces, headed by Satan, a vicious fighter. 1 Peter 5:8 “Be careful—watch out for attacks from Satan, your great enemy. He prowls around like a hungry, roaring lion, looking for some victim to tear apart.” (LB) To withstand attacks, we must depend on God’s strength and use every piece of his armor:

“...Satan is constantly battling against all who are on the Lord’s side. We need supernatural power to defeat Satan, and God has provided that in his Holy Spirit within us and his armor surrounding us.” (LB)

The great enemy of truth is deception. In our lives, we must continually make choices to discern between that which is true and that which is false. Satan’s greatest pleasure is to deceive Christians, just like he duped Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden when He tricked them into disobeying God’s command. Jesus said Satan “...was a murderer from the beginning and a hater of truth—there is not an iota of truth in him” (John 8:44 LB). In Ephesians 6:14-17 we are to “put on the whole armor of God so we are able to stand safe against all strategies and tricks of Satan” (James 6:10 LB). One piece of the armor is the “strong belt of *truth*” (LB). “Satan fights with lies, and sometimes his lies *sound* like truth, but only believers have God’s truth which can defeat Satan’s lies.” (LB)

We would never consider walking out the front door of our house stark naked. But we don’t think twice about living our lives spiritually naked and vulnerable. SWAT teams would never enter a crime scene without bullet-proof vests. Doctors would never enter the room of a quarantined patient without the proper masks and gloves. A hasmat team would never enter a chemical fire without protective suits and oxygen masks. But how often do mature Christians enter the front-line war zone of Satan in their underwear? Such naiveté can prove to be disastrous.

So what does “dressing for success” look like in the spiritual realm? Every morning upon awakening, we put on the full armor of God as described in Ephesians 6:14-17. We begin with prayer, thanking God for protection from deception and blind spots. Then we visualize standing before Him—holding our armor as we put on each piece—thanking God for it and asking Him to guide, direct, and protect us throughout the day. Every night before going to sleep, we petition God to protect our thoughts and dreams. Our minds are like computers: during the day everything that happens goes into short term storage, but when we sleep at night it goes into long term storage. We give permission to God, and only the “One, true, living God” to have access to our minds and dreams during the night so all the information during the day is stored as God wants it stored, in truth, not influenced by Satan’s lies. We must pray this protection morning and night for our loved ones as well. The Armor of God that is provided for every Christian, at all times. In verse 13 of Ephesians 6, Paul

advises us to use every piece so that whenever the enemy attacks, we will remain standing.

[Note: “In the Christian life we battle against powerful evil forces, headed by Satan, a vicious fighter. 1 Peter 5:8 ‘Be careful—watch out for attacks from Satan, your great enemy. He prowls around like a hungry, roaring lion, looking for some victim to tear apart’ (LB). To withstand attacks, we must depend on God’s strength and His armor. Satan is constantly battling against all who are on the Lord’s side. We need supernatural power to defeat Satan, and God has provided that in his Holy Spirit within us and his armor surrounding us.” (LB)]

- The Battle is the Lord’s, but the choices are ours. He provides the Armor, but we have to wear it. Will you accept the challenge: “I choose to put on the Armor of God every morning and I will protect my mind every night by asking God to protect my thoughts and dreams”?
- Have you ever identified a time in your life when you were deceived? What circumstances precipitated this deception? Did you discover this deception yourself, or did a mature Christian point this out to you?

Think of some times in your life when God protected you. What were they? How did they impact your faith? Spend some time thanking God for His protection and care.

TRUTH: IT IS YOUR CHOICE

All of life comes down to choices. Some are mundane, some have profound consequences. The wise person makes a fundamental choice to follow Jesus every Day. Joshua vowed before entering the Promise Land: “...as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:15b NASB). When our passion is to live and speak truly, we will readily respond by choosing Jesus and His truth first in evaluating our options, and following His will.

[Note: “Other than the Holy Spirit in your life, the greatest power you possess is the power to choose. Someone has said that pure Christianity lies in the exercise of the will.” Often you sin because you are trying to meet your own needs in your own way through the world, your flesh, or Satan. Your other choice is to let God meet all your needs. (Philippians 4:19) As you grow as a Christian you will find yourself depending on God more and more. (“Daily in Christ Devotional” Neil Anderson)]

- List some of the choices you’ll need to make in the near future. What are they? Ask God to reveal His Word to you in a personal way, and then pray for grace to follow His will.