



NO SERMON NOTES THIS WEEK

DEVOTIONAL GUIDE ON THE NEXT PAGE

ASBURY DAILY STUDY GUIDE *April 17-22, 2023*

These devotionals were originally used with the "Christian: It's Not What You Think" sermon series in February-March 2015

INTRODUCTION

Our devotionals for this week were originally used in conjunction with a series about the core of the idea of what a "Christian" is in a series called *Christian: It's Not What You Think*. Pastor Eric preached this series in 2015. As we bask in the afterglow of the Easter season, take time each day to consider what your life as a follower of Christ is meant to be.

Monday: Acts 11:25-26

The word "Christian" only appears three times in the Bible. The first time it appears is in this passage from the book of Acts. First-century Christians didn't call themselves Christians. It was actually a derogatory term used by outsiders to describe followers of Jesus. How would you define "Christian?" Does the word have positive or negative connotations for you? Why?

Tuesday: John 13:33-36

Jesus gives his disciples their marching orders to love one another. He said this act of love was how others would know we're really his followers - not by the lengths of our prayer, how loud we preach, or what we do on Sunday mornings. How is Jesus' description of what it looks like to be his disciple surprising to you?

Wednesday: Matthew 9:9-13, John 13:34

Matthew was a despised tax collector. However, Jesus called him to be a disciple. The other disciples were not happy about Jesus calling a tax collector to be part of their inner circle. The application of Jesus' command is for the disciples to love one another like Jesus loved Matthew. Think about someone in your sphere of influence who is difficult to love. What is it about that person that makes him or her difficult to love? What is one thing you can do this week to show that person love?

Thursday: Acts 6:7, 9:26, 9:36

These passages are examples of the followers of Jesus being referred to as disciples. "Disciple" means a learner, pupil, apprentice, adherent, or follower. A disciple learns and grows by obeying and imitating his or her master. Discipleship isn't as simple as going to church services or believing a set of facts or observing rituals or celebrating holidays; or being born into the right family or behaving morally. Being a disciple is active: it requires effort...and sacrifice. What's most intimidating about the idea of being a disciple of Jesus? What's most compelling about it?

Friday: Matthew 7:1-6

For some people the term "Christian" has a negative connotation. Many non-Christian young adults say that Christians are judgmental and hypocritical. This perception may lead to a negative perception of Jesus. How have your interactions with Christians shaped your perception of Jesus?

MOVING FORWARD

Can you imagine what your workplace and community would be like if you loved the way Jesus calls us to love? Can you imagine what would happen in our nation and our world if Christians everywhere began living like disciples? If you are a follower of Jesus, try it this week: to the best of your ability, by God's grace, love the people around you. This isn't a means to an end; you're not going to fix people. This is better. This is being a disciple. It has the power to change your heart, your relationships, your community, and even the world.