



**NO SERMON NOTES THIS WEEK**

*DEVOTIONAL GUIDE ON THE NEXT PAGE*

# ASBURY DAILY STUDY GUIDE *August 19-25, 2024*

## INTRODUCTION

This week in worship, Rev. Sue Pizor Yoder spoke about the “nones” and “dones” – those who have never been connected to the church as well as those who have been connected to the Christian church at some point but, for a range of reasons, left it. This week, we’ll spend time in our devotionals exploring what the “nones” and “dones” mean for us and what wisdom scripture has for us as we work to “close the gap.”

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### Monday: Nehemiah 2:17

The book of Nehemiah chronicles the rebuild of the city of Jerusalem and the return of the Jewish people to that city – their homeland. Even if you, yourself, have never left a church, you undoubtedly have heard about people who have left a church and agreed with the reasons they did so – after all, churches are still led by fallible humans who make very human mistakes even while working to lead God’s people. Why do you think some people aren’t interested in being part of a church (whether they’re hostile towards the church or merely apathetic towards it)? Do you think there are still ways for a church to build (or re-build) bridges to those people?

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### Tuesday: Mark 10:17-22

The story of the “rich young ruler” is most often used as a cautionary tale about the love of things over the love of Jesus; but for today, let’s focus on the overarching theme of the story rather than the direct circumstances: the story ended with the “rich young ruler” walking away because he had an obstacle to being part of the faith. Note the case of the “rich young ruler,” it was a real obstacle to following Jesus; not simply a disagreement towards being part of a church or faith community. But with that said, was there ever a time when you left or wanted to leave a church – whether for organizational/community reasons or theological/faith reasons? How did you deal with the pain of that situation? What did it teach you about the church? About faith? About yourself?

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### Wednesday: Amos 7:12-15

Throughout the books of the Old Testament we find prophets who are constantly being told to leave communities because they were seen as a threat – the things God was telling them to prophecy about were not well-received and, therefore, the community didn’t want the prophet to be among them. Has there ever been a time when you didn’t feel like you fit in a community that you wanted to be part of? Has there ever been a time when a community you were already part of changed and you felt like you no longer fit in?

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### Thursday: Romans 15:7-13

The New Testament is filled with writings working to help show that there is a place in God’s kingdom for both people who grew up in the Jewish faith and the “Gentiles” – essentially anyone who wasn’t part of the Jewish people. Different upbringings and different cultural practices led to divisions – just as they do today. How does it make you feel to know that there are people who feel like they don’t fit in a church community? Do you think anyone with any viewpoint should be welcomed into a church?

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### Friday: Acts 3

When Peter heals a man who had been unable to walk since birth, people wanted to understand how a man like Peter was able to do such a thing. As Peter explained that it was through the power of Christ, he related the story directly to his audience – people in the temple who were Jews who didn’t (yet) believe in Jesus – by making direct references to the faith they knew and had grown up in. If a local church can’t be everything for everybody, what are some ways that we can still work to “close the gap” for anybody who is separated from a church? What (if any) guardrails does a church need to put in place to make sure it’s not compromising its message simply to be relevant to those who don’t like the church?

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## MOVING FORWARD

This week, spend extra time in prayer for those who are separated from a church community, whether they were part of a church and left it or they have never been part of a church community. Consider ways that you can gently invite someone – to work alongside of you for a service project, be in conversation with you in a small group, or sit beside you in Sunday worship.