

November 18 – Don't Forget to Ask!

READ

Acts 18:24-19:20

1 Corinthians 1:1-3:23

1 Corinthians 1:21, *“For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.”*

THINK

Have you ever had an upcoming test you'd known about for a while but didn't prep for until the last minute? A semester's worth of information turns into one all-nighter, and you only retain a portion of the material long enough to brain dump on the test. At the next class, the teacher reminds everyone while passing out the failed papers, "This wasn't something you could just study for the night before."

Wisdom is like that. It leads us through a process that prepares us for when the next crisis strikes. It's not something we cram for last-minute – it's gained gradually over time as we grow to know God more and seek to do life His way. Wisdom is a gift from God that's not merely about learning more information, but about the transformation it induces within our lives.

We should constantly seek God's wisdom because it far outweighs anything we can comprehend on our own. Our intellect pales in comparison to what He offers us. Why, then, do we so often pray for things such as strength, endurance, guidance, and patience, yet we forget to include wisdom? Because the Bible says God gives wisdom to all who ask without judgment. That means regardless of the circumstances or our past failures, all we have to do is ask and accept His amazing gift.

God wants you to live the best life possible. He desires for you to know how to navigate crises and relate well with others. You have an infinite source of wisdom on tap 24/7 — so seek it and be blessed!

PRAY

Lord, Thank you for the gift of transformational wisdom. Today, I seek wisdom in the following situations _____ and ask for Your guidance in the application of it. In Jesus' name, Amen.

November 16 – Image is Everything!

READ

Acts 17:16-18:3

1 Thessalonians 1:1-5:11

2 Thessalonians 1:1-3:18

Acts 17:26-28, *“From one man He made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and He determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek Him and perhaps reach out for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us. For in Him we live and move and have our being.”*

THINK

A little girl was drawing with bold strokes when her teacher said, “Tell me about your picture.” The little girl responded, “I’m drawing a picture of God!” “But nobody knows exactly what God looks like,” exclaimed the teacher. “They will when I’m finished!” the little girl replied authoritatively.

We may not have laid eyes on God, but here is an enormous truth — to be human is to be God’s image. But what does this mean? As God’s imagers, we are put on this earth to function as His representatives, something unique to humankind and not shared by any other part of creation. Our purpose is to steward God’s good world as though He were physically present.

By placing our faith in Him as Lord, we are made right, with the ability to truly reflect who and what God is! Unfortunately, though, humans have made a mess of this tremendous responsibility. Our unbelief and sin have marred our unique status as God’s imagers and thus distorted our roles as His representatives on this earth. But Jesus, the ultimate image of God, is the answer to our dilemma.

So, next time you look in the mirror, take a moment to truly reflect on who’s staring back at you. Let it be a reminder that the image you see isn’t merely you — it’s a reflection of God. Allow Him to shine through you as you move about the rest of creation in everything you do and say. It’s a big responsibility, but don’t worry. If God made you in His own image, then you’re definitely up for the task!

PRAY

Dear God, Help me to fully recognize what it means to be Your imager. May my public lifestyle, as well as my private personal life, be a reflection of You! In Jesus’ name, Amen.

November 15 – Get In!

READ

Acts 15:22-17:15

Acts 16:31, *“Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved.”*

THINK

Countless action movies have "cliffhanger moments." Inevitably, the main character, facing imminent death, has nowhere to turn when, suddenly, someone shows up just in time in a car or a helicopter and says, "Get in!" and the character lives to fight another day. Often, such storylines seem cliché and far-fetched. But, in reality, we all face spiritual cliffhangers. We are all sinners in need of a Savior to rescue us from our fear, dysfunction, and depravity.

One bad day, one impure thought is enough to separate us from a righteous and holy God. And there's absolutely nothing we can do to span the gap between our side and God's divine side. Knowing this, God made a way. He sent His only Son to step down through time and space to bridge this cosmic chasm. Jesus died on the cross for our sins and rose again, making it possible for us to enter into God's holy presence. He is our "vehicle" to safety. Our only responsibility is to place our trust in Christ and accept Him as our personal Lord and Savior.

Have you surrendered to Jesus? Have you placed your trust in Him? It's the best and most important decision you will ever make. Because, right now, Jesus is on the scene, offering you His nail-pierced hand and saying, "Get in! Believe in Me, and I will lead you to safety and take you places you never dreamed possible."

PRAY

Heavenly Father, Thank You for meeting me right where I am and sending Jesus to die on the cross for my sins. I place my trust in You and seek Your wisdom and discernment to be who You want me to be. In Jesus' name, Amen.

November 14 – Rate Your “R”

READ

Galatians 3:24-6:18

Acts 15:1-21

Galatians 6:5, *“You must each accept the responsibilities that are yours.”*

THINK

“Hardworking, honest, flexible, energetic, skilled.” These words are tirelessly used on job resumes — but they’re often just filler words everyone uses. In fact, if you Google “words to describe yourself on a resume,” they’re the first to appear. But there’s another word prospective employees are truly trying to relay to describe their ability to carry out tasks to the end, no matter what. It’s the “R” word — Responsible. So, how would you rate your “R” factor on a scale of 1-10, with one being completely irresponsible and ten being 100% always on the ball?

Sadly, people often avoid owning their responsibilities — either it’s too overwhelming or requires too much effort. They try to push their work onto someone else, find others to blame, or they simply don’t show up for the task! Being responsible is all about taking ownership, making the right choices, jumping on the opportunities given us, and seeing them through to the end.

Jesus Himself modeled responsibility during His earthly ministry. His disciples shared the workload, but, ultimately, He owned the outcome. He even willingly accepted the responsibility of dying on the cross. Imagine the weight of that task and where we would be had Jesus decided against completing the redemptive work that only He could do for our salvation.

Like Jesus, we, too, have tasks and assignments within our families, church, and community that only we can do! When we avoid responsibility, we miss out on the blessing, as do countless others. So, right now, is there something you’ve been putting off or avoiding that needs to be done? If so, do it! Just think of the rewarding feeling you’ll experience when you can stamp it “complete” and enjoy the fruits of your labor!

PRAY

Lord, Thank you for entrusting me with the responsibilities You’ve given me. Help me to own the tasks before me each day and follow the example set by Christ in everything I do. Amen!

November 13 – Don't Miss the Obvious

READ

Acts 14:21-28

Galatians 1:1-3:23

Galatians 2:20, *“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”*

THINK

We've all had those moments when we miss something right in front of us. We look everywhere for our keys and then find them in our pocket. We're certain we have lost our phone only to realize we are holding it in our hand. We miss the obvious.

Too many who claim to follow Christ miss a significant “obvious.” They fail to recognize the truth that Christ dwells within those who call on His name by faith. Jesus didn't come to take our hand and walk beside us. He came to live His life through us. To submit to Jesus' lordship and still see Him beside you is to miss what the Bible states plainly – Christ has taken up residence inside of you!

No other religious movement can claim that the living presence of its founder is in its followers. Christianity embraces the amazing certainty that Jesus resides within those who love Him. He is always with us, empowering and transforming us from the inside, out. How great is that! Remember, if you're a Christ-follower, He has made your heart His home.

PRAY

Dear God, I confess that Jesus is Lord, and I believe that You raised Him from the dead. Thank You for saving me and making my heart Your home. In Jesus' name, Amen.

of changed minds, softened hearts, healed bodies, mended relationships, and the miracle of each infant born in God's image.

So, pay attention and look for God's hand in the unexpected. And never stop being in awe of "everyday miracles" and answered prayers!

PRAY

Heavenly Father, Thank You for answering my prayers. Help me recognize that Your responses often come in unexpected ways. Open my heart and eyes the miraculous works of Your mighty hand constantly at play. Let me always be in awe of Your power and steadfast presence. In Jesus' name, Amen.

November 12 – Why the Surprise?

READ

Acts 12:6-14:20

Acts 12:11-16, *“Peter finally came to his senses. ‘It’s really true!’ he said. ‘The Lord has sent his angel and saved me from Herod and from what the Jewish leaders had planned to do to me!’ When he realized this, he went to the home of Mary, the mother of John Mark, where many were gathered for prayer. He knocked at the door in the gate, and a servant girl named Rhoda came to open it. When she recognized Peter’s voice, she was so overjoyed that, instead of opening the door, she ran back inside and told everyone, ‘Peter is standing at the door!’ ‘You’re out of your mind!’ they said. When she insisted, they decided, ‘It must be his angel.’ Meanwhile, Peter continued knocking. When they finally opened the door and saw him, they were amazed.”*

THINK

Knock-knock! “

“Who’s there?”

“I can’t believe.”

“I can’t believe who?”

“I can’t believe my prayer has been answered!”

Even though, as Christ-followers, we firmly believe in the power of prayer, how many times have we been blown away that God "actually responded" right away? Why does it take us by such surprise? Perhaps it's because, in His infinite wisdom, He often answers prayers differently than we expect. Nonetheless, God *does* answer many prayers "effective immediately" because He is, after all, the mysteriously miraculous, all-powerful Creator of the universe!

Such bewilderment occurred in today's reading as Peter knocked on the door of a house filled with people who had been praying for his miraculous prison release. But as the answered prayer incarnate stood outside knocking, his friends hesitated to believe it was him! They automatically jumped to the conclusion, "It must be an angel" instead of assuming that God had orchestrated a supernatural jailbreak

The group's response is so typical; it's a classic example of how human logic so quickly downplays God's ability and deduces that an answered prayer must be merely a coincidence or stroke of luck. But we can't forget that God works miracles and responds to our needs constantly. We miss it because they aren't wrapped in lightning bolts or flashing neon signs, but in the form