

Immerse

THE AIM

On the Go Devotional Guide

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Fundamental Notes:

Purpose: Explore, discover. Grow. The purpose of this devotional is to provide another way for us to engage God and God's Word, reassuring us that God is with us wherever we are, no matter what we might be doing. This devotional is not a substitute for church. This devotional is not meant to replace the focus or importance of being in community with others in our faith exploration, discovery, and growth.

Goal: The last time I checked, none of us have all the answers. The goal of this devotional is to wrestle with God's word and open the door (window) for God to speak to us. When we wrestle, we provide a platform of opportunity to be shaped and formed (like a potter at the wheel) to God's intended purpose. Asking questions on our own, rather than simply take another person's word for it, helps us develop our independent character and grow stronger in self.

Structure: At the front end of this devotional guide are things meant to center your focus. You may read them one at a time and one each day, or you can dive in head first and double team them. The one activity I would like to encourage everyone to take time on, is "Yes And." This activity gets at the core of validating the importance of all we learn through our faith and involvement in church and all we learn by participating in extracurricular activities.

One a Day. Two a Days. Two sides of the coin: As you reach the core lessons, you will find that they are labeled as A and B. Sometimes, there is even a "Consider This" addendum. There are many consistent themes throughout scripture and as we might already know, there are often two sides to consider within each theme. The layout of this devotional is meant to give the flexibility to explore the devotions one each day, if you are away for a weekend, or if you have a group gathered, you are welcome to take each topic in its entirety. The "Consider This" addendum provides further thought to consider and dig deeper. In essence, the hope is for you to use how it works best for you.

Initial Thought: This thought comes at the beginning of each devotional as insight to what and where the devotional topic might be leading. This thought is meant to give you a taste of what is to come and make you hungry to dig deeper.

What Now? This thought comes at the close of each devotional as an ending challenge or question. What we explore and discover through the devotions should not end with the turning of each page. Our growth through this journey will be dependent on our ability to listen and learn and leverage our knowledge throughout our lives. This thought will work to help us build a bridge back to the church or worship community that grounds us. It will remind us of how we can stay connected when we are away, and if the opportunity presents itself, challenge us to come back and share our experiences and discoveries with others. We are all called to be the light and a candle is only as good as the light it shares.

Consider This: This section is for digging deeper. None of these devotions cover everything there is to know about the topic. This section provides additional scripture references, reflections, or stories to consider.

Practice: The scripture readings for each devotional are cited, but you are strongly encouraged to open the good book, open an app, look in the top drawer of the hotel dresser, or pack a bible-to-go.

The Aim

“It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless.
The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.”
(John 6:63)

The all-important thing, Jesus says, is the life-giving power of the spirit. The flesh is of no help.

One way to understand this is to accept that the most important thing is the spirit in which any action is done. Someone has put it this way: **“All human things are trivial if they exist for nothing beyond themselves.” The value of anything depends on its aim.**

If we eat food simply for the sake of eating food, we become gluttons, and it is likely to do us far more harm than good; if we eat food to sustain life, to do our work better, and to maintain the fitness of our body at its highest peak, then food has a real meaning and significance.

If we spend a great deal of time on sport simply for the sake of sport, we are at some extent wasting time. But if we spend time on sport to keep our bodies fit and athletic, and thereby to do our work for God and each other better, then sport ceases to be trivial and becomes intensely important.

The things of the flesh all gain their value from the spirit in which they are done.

Jesus says, “My words are spirit and life.” It is Christ alone who can tell us what life is, can put into us the spirit in which life must be lived, and who can give us the strength and the power to live it.

Life is like any other activity. It takes its value from its purpose and goal. **It is Christ alone who can give us the aim in life, the spirit of life, the purpose for life; and it is Christ alone who can give us the life, the strength, the power to work out that spirit and aim and purpose against the constant opposition that comes to us all from without and from within.**

The spirit of life and the strength for life are found in God.

(William Barclay- New Testament Scholar, Professor, and Pastor)

What Now?

When we participate in activities, “why” we do something is just as important as “what” we are doing. As a matter of fact, when we have clear purpose for doing something, we will be more successful at what we are doing. When we know “why” we don’t have to work as hard to convince ourselves to participate or complete a task.

Ask yourself why you do what you do? Is it because you are good at it? Is it because someone is making you? Is it because you believe it will help you get ahead (i.e. resume builder, looks good on a college application)? Is it because you love it?

There is no greater joy in life than to do and be and live for God. God makes everything better, and when we stay true to the aim, we experience true life as God fully intended.

Notes: