

**7 Days
Toward
the Life
You Were
Created For**

*A 7-Day Bible Study by
Brandon Moore*

Introduction

I remember the day like it was yesterday. I was sitting across the table from our FCA Director at the Quads Cafeteria on our campus. We were near the entrance of the cafe at a tall table pushed up against a tall brick beam supporting the building.

I'm certain I had friends going in and out of the cafeteria but I was oblivious to them. For the first time in my life I was comprehending the message of Jesus Christ. I was realizing for the first time the consequences of my sin and the consequences of Jesus Christ's life, death, burial, and resurrection.

It hit me like a ton of bricks. I could do nothing to save myself from my sin, but Jesus took the punishment I deserved when He died on the cross. Yet three days later when He took His first breath He proved that sin and death had no power over Him and sin and death would have no power over those who place their faith in Him.

That day I placed my faith in Him.

I was finally forgiven. I was finally set free from the burden I had been carrying around. I was finally able to live a life pleasing to God. There was just one small problem.

I had no idea what I was doing.

About a month later I met a guy who would change my life. He and I spent at least an hour together every week and he disciplined me. He taught me how to read the Bible, how to pray, how to share the Gospel, and so much more. I wouldn't be here today without his investment in my life.

That's my story, but I'm aware yours may be radically different. You may be a Christian, but you've never had anyone come alongside you and teach you how to read the Bible, pray, share the Gospel, or, well, anything.

That's why I've put together this short study. There's no way this 7-day devotional study can teach you everything. However, it is possible it could jumpstart things for you. It's even possible – no, probable – that your life could change because of doing it.

Why do I say that? Because God's word never returns void.

Any amount of time we spend reading God's Word can and will be life changing if we let it. So that's what we're going to do. We're going to let God's Word change our lives and set us on a trajectory of following Him for the rest of our lives.

In the next seven days we're going to look at several different passages of scripture. There will be some questions associated and some spaces for you to jot down some reflections and answers to those questions.

My encouragement is to stay committed over the next seven days. At the end you'll get a reading plan that will carry you through the next month. Make the decision right now.

You're going to be a person who follows through and follows Jesus. Allow this 7-day devotional study to be a kick starter for you.

I'm proud of you.

— Brandon

Day 1: Consider This a Fresh Start

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

— 2 Corinthians 5:17

Have you ever thought, “Man! I just need a reset.” No? Just me? Well, I think it all the time. Life catches up with me, I’m inconsistent in this area, in that area, and before I know it I’m overwhelmed, stretched too thin, and drowning in my own sorrows.

Sorrows? *Yeah, sorrows.*

Because, to I’m honest, being stuck in old habits and sin patterns is sad. I feel like there could be so much more for me, but I’m stuck doing the same old thing I’ve been doing for so long and it’s. never. good.

2 Corinthians 5:17 is a word for people like me, though. *And I’m assuming people like you.* For those of us in Christ, we are a new creation. The old us is gone, the new us has arrived.

Let me translate this as simply as possible for my brain and yours. We have a brand-new life and can live that

way. Our old life was put in a spiritual casket and our new life has made its debut.

That's because of the phrase *in Christ*. If someone is *in Christ* it means that Christ's life is their life. Meaning: Christ died? I've died. Christ lived? I live. Christ had victory over sin? I have victory over sin. Christ will never die again? I will never die again.

So that brings me to my first question: Are you in Christ? Have you placed your faith in Jesus? If yes, write out that moment here.

If you haven't placed your faith in Jesus, you can do that right now. There's no "magic prayer" but you can give your life to Him at any moment. If you realize your need for Jesus to save you then do the following:

1. Pray to Him and acknowledge your sin and that you need saving.
2. Confess your inability to save yourself and that you believe Jesus's death and resurrection was for you to be saved.

3. Turn away from your sin and commit to following Him in obedience.

If you did that, and genuinely meant it, you're a Christian now and you are *in Christ*. Now you need to follow Jesus in obedience and be baptized.

For all of us, as we move forward in 2 Corinthians 5:17 **I need to ask another question.** Do you *really* believe a verse like this? Do you *actually* believe the old you is dead and a new you has arrived? Answer honestly.

Some days I don't believe it. I see all the ways I'm stuck and it's hard for me to believe a verse like this is *actually* true. But on those days, I'm reminded of one vital truth that overrules my thoughts, feelings, and emotions.

What God says is true, is *always* true.

If God says I'm a new creation because of my belief in Jesus, then by-golly I'm a new creation. If He says the old me is dead, well then, that old me is long gone.

Even if I don't feel like it's true.

God doesn't command us to act as if our own thoughts, feelings, and emotions are true. He commands us to act based on His Word being true.

So let me ask this question. *If* this verse is true, and it is, list out everything of your "old self" you need to leave behind today. And by everything, I mean, *everything*.

See that list of things? There's probably so much shame, guilt, embarrassment, terrible memories, and pain associated with that list. Now, I want you to imagine every one of those things you listed is a pile of trash in your room. You can scoop up that pile of trash, toss it in a trash bag, take the trash bag out into the dumpster, and never see those things again. You can walk away, free.

Why? Because you're brand new.

This may seem impossible. And you know what? It is if you're doing this on your own. That's why day 2-7 is just

as important as today. Stay with me and keep pursuing Christ.

Before we move on to the next day we need to spend some time reflecting. Use these questions to guide your reflection:

Read 2 Corinthians 5:14-21 altogether. **What stands out to you in this passage?**

Why is the fact you have been made new in Christ good news to you?

What is an action step in light of what you read today?

Day 2: God Knows Best

I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

— **John 15:5**

Growing up I had a really difficult time understanding God. I was sure that my good actions would be what God wanted from me. When I came to faith in Christ and realized it was about His action, not mine, it was extremely relieving. I wasn't stressed anymore. I knew God loved me and my actions couldn't change that.

However, it wasn't long before I fell into another trap... the trap of trying to figure it all out on my own.

Here I was, a brand-new creation in Christ, and I had no idea what to do. So I did what I knew to do best – tried to do the right things, go to church, read my Bible, and so on and so forth.

There was one problem, though. I didn't see much life change. Everything I was doing was in my own power, my own strength, my own good ideas of how I should do things, and I rarely incorporated God into those ideas.

I just hit the ground running and I ran the wrong way.

I found myself just as stressed out as I was before but for a different reason now. I knew I was a Christian but I had no idea how to be a Christian. That is – to follow Christ in every area of my life.

Around that time, I read John 15. In this chapter, and the chapters around it, Jesus is detailing to His disciples how to *actually* follow Him. Right in the middle of that is the verse we're looking at today.

“I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.”

That word *abide* isn't one we use a lot, but you could think of it this way: to remain, to dwell, to wait, to be still, to stay in a place, to make your home.

Jesus is saying, “Whoever makes their home in me bears much fruit.”

Notice what He's not saying. He's not saying:

– “Whoever works really hard to impress me or others bears much fruit.”

– “Whoever reads their Bible a lot bears much fruit.”

– “Whoever can recite all the books of the Bible bears much fruit.”

Fruit is what God wants from us. We produce that when we make our home in Him. Verse 8 in John 15 says, **“By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.”** So, how do you produce fruit and glorify the Father? By staying close to Jesus and making your home in Him.

So, the goal from God for us is to produce fruit and Jesus tells us the way to produce fruit is to abide in Him. That brings me to the first question: **How is this idea of following Christ different from what you’ve heard?**

If this is different, why do you think God’s instructions on how to follow Him are better than what you previously thought?

You and I aren't the same, but I bet we're similar. For me, realizing Jesus had a better strategy than I had for how to grow spiritually and follow Him helped me a lot. I stopped relying on myself and hoping for the best. I was free to ask Him and trust that He would help me. Let me ask you this, **when is the last time you asked God's help in following Jesus?** Take some time to do that now by writing out a prayer in the space below.

Here's the real kicker on all this. In order to abide with Jesus, we need to be actively doing two things:

1. Obeying Him
2. Confessing & Repenting of Sin

Those sound like big, difficult tasks. But if God has a strategy for the way we should follow Him, don't you think He has a plan to help you as well?

Take a moment to do this: read John 15:1-17 and ask two simple questions:

1. God, in light of this, how can I obey you?
2. God, in light of this, what sin do I need to confess?

Take some time to write out what comes to mind in the space below:

Do you want to know how to follow Jesus? Commit to daily Bible reading and daily asking those two questions in prayer to God. The Bible is God's Word and will highlight areas of your life that need to be aligned with God's Will for your life.

As you read it and ask those two questions, you will gain a better understanding of how to follow Him daily in the midst of your everyday routine.

In day 3, it gets even better. Not only does God have a strategy for us to follow Him, He also has a commitment to you that you won't believe.

Before we get there, though. Take some time to reflect:

What stands out to you about John 15:1-17? What do you learn about God in that passage?

What action step can you take as a result of today?

Day 3: God is Committed to You

Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

– 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

Have you ever been asked to do an impossible task?

Sometimes it feels like an impossible task to get up out of bed in the morning. Wouldn't it be nice if we have a personal assistant that gently woke us up and helped us get out of bed in the morning? That sure would make that 8am class easier to get to!

But seriously. Think of the most impossible task you've ever been given or could ever be given.

Here's my scenario... jumping out of an airplane. First of all, I would never do it. Second of all, if I did jump out of an airplane I would have no idea what I was doing. If someone came to me and said, "I'll give you a million dollars if you hop in this airplane right now, with no training, and jump out of the plane and successfully land using a parachute" I would **not** take the million dollars.

There's no way I'd be successful! My only chance at success is if I actually have help.

Following Jesus sometimes feels like an impossible task and when it comes to our day-to-day routines it feels like we have next to zero help. Sure, we have a pastor or a friend who could probably help but sending them a text every 5 minutes seems a bit extra.

So, we get on with our days, having no clue what we're doing and not sure where to turn to for help.

Let's take a look at our passage. It says, "May the God of peace *Himself* sanctify you..."

Yes, following Jesus may feel like an impossible task but according to this verse, God has taken a personal interest in you and your ability to follow Him.

It's not like God saves you from your sin and then says, "Good luck!" No, He Himself draws near to us and says, "I'm here to sanctify you."

Now, it would be important to know what the word "sanctify" means. There are a few different definitions – all similar – and I would encourage you to look those up. But in this context the writer (Paul) of this letter is referring to this definition: **to free from sin; purify.**

I think it's important to just pause for a moment and consider this: God has taken a personal interest in your spiritual growth. So much so that He is doing the action of growing you.

He didn't say...

- I'll give you a pastor to help you grow!
- Hey, here's a podcast for you!
 - There's a really cool YouTube video you should check out.

Nope, He said He would do it.

So let me ask a question. **How does this change your thinking about the impossible task of growing spiritually?**

Because this is true, how do you think God could grow you over the next 6 months? (Think back to those things you want to stop doing. How could God change you?)

The passage continues and brings clarity. God isn't just interested in part of our lives. He's interested in the entire thing! "...may your whole **spirit** and **soul** and **body** be kept blameless..."

God is interested in everything – from the core of who you are to your everyday actions with the people you see. He wants it all and He's committed to it all. For how long? Until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Aka; He will never not be committed to you and your growth.

How does this change your mind or help you in how you follow Jesus?

There's one more component we need to look at before we go onto the next day. (Tomorrow we'll look at how this actually all works together.)

Verse 24 gives us the foundation on *why* we can believe that this is all true. I mean, it sounds absurd, right? The

God of the Universe, *personally* interested in me and my growth? It's true, though! And how do we know it's true? Because "He who calls you is **faithful.**"

God. Is. Faithful.

He doesn't lie. He doesn't go back on promises. He doesn't change his mind. He is firmly situated as Who He is and His commitment to you is never changing. Not because you have earned it, deserve it, or you've reached a "higher level" of Christianity. Nope. He's committed to you because He is faithful.

How does this change how you view God?

One last thing, if all this is true, and it is list out all the areas of your life you need help in to grow spiritually.

Spend time in prayer asking Him for help in each specific area.

Day 4: How does all this even work?

And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

– Ezekiel 36:26-27

Remember on day 1 when we talked about how God has made those of us who believe in Jesus a new creation? Well, this passage is an inside look at how that actually takes place.

In order to understand this we need to go alllllll the way back to the beginning.

When God made Adam and Eve, they existed in perfect relationship with God. There was no sin in the world so the relationship they had with God wasn't hindered by anything. When God spoke, they responded. When they responded, they were able to respond perfectly.

That's a far cry from where we're at now. The reason it's so different now is actually because Adam and Eve messed it up. (Don't worry though, you mess it up too, they were just the first ones to mess it up.)

Instead of listening to God's voice, Adam and Eve decided to listen to Satan's voice and disobey God. When they disobeyed God, sin entered the world. At that very moment they were forced to face the consequences of their sin – death and broken relationship with God.

They didn't die immediately, but they were never supposed to die. Death was part of the punishment.

The part we're focusing on today though is the broken relationship aspect of the consequences. Adam and Eve *hardened* their hearts and disobeyed God. That *hardened* heart has been passed down generation, to generation, to generation, to you and me.

We have inherited the *hardened* heart that Adam and Eve chose. Left to our own, we continue sinning and continue hardening our hearts.

But that's where God steps in. Notice what the passage says, **“I will give you a new heart...I will remove your heart of stone...and give you a heart of flesh.”**

When we're made new, we're given a new heart. It's a heart of flesh. That word “flesh” though, can be a little confusing. “Flesh” is often a negative word in the Bible. Our fleshly desires tempt us toward sin and we're

instructed to put our “flesh” to death. Even in this verse, our heart of stone is removed from our “flesh” and we’re given a heart of “flesh.”

So let me explain.

I like the NLT translation here. It says, “I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart.”

So the heart of “flesh” is really a heart that’s tender and responsive rather than stony and stubborn. That’s right. God is removing your heart that can’t respond to Him and He’s putting in you a heart that can respond to Him.

This is a big deal. Without this reality it’s impossible to follow Him because we can’t respond to Him.

Let me ask this question. **Do you remember the moment God removed your heart of stone and gave you a tender and responsive heart to Him?** If so, write it out below.

This passage goes even further than a new heart, though. Not only do we get a heart that's responsive to God, we also get His Spirit. Check it out.

“I will put my Spirit within you...”

Crazy right!? God, who takes a personal interest in your spiritual growth, doesn't just help you out from a distance. He decides to live inside you. And what does He do there?

He **“causes you to walk in His statutes and be careful to obey his rules.”**

**Have you ever felt like God was directing your steps?
If so, when?**

The fact that God lives inside of you and is *causing* you to walk with Him is a game changer. **Why is this good news for us as followers of Jesus?**

I don't know about you, but it's relieving for me to know that I don't have to figure it all out on my own.

Remember day 2? Our responsibility is to abide in Christ or, stay close to Him.

John 15 talks about God abiding (making his home) in us and we abide (make our home) in Him. **This** is how we follow Jesus. We do it in His strength, His power, His direction, His leading, with His Spirit.

Pause and reflect for a moment. **How will knowing this truth help you follow Jesus this week?**

Jot down a few more thoughts Ezekiel 36:26-27 leads you to have about following Jesus.

In the New Testament, Jesus talks about the Holy Spirit a lot. In fact, in John 14, 15, and 16 you could gather that

the Holy Spirit was the main topic of conversation for Jesus.

Go ahead and read John 16:4-15.

What do you learn about the Holy Spirit in this passage?

How will what you've learned there help you follow Jesus?

My encouragement would be to end today with a prayer.

“God, help me be fully aware of how the Holy Spirit is leading me in every situation so I can be careful to obey you.”

Day 5: If it's this simple, why is it so difficult?

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

– **John 10:10**

Read John 10:10 3-4 times slowly. Have you ever seen two more polar opposite objectives?

On one hand, we have the thief. The thief comes *only* to steal and kill and destroy. None of those three words seem friendly, good, or very life giving. Yet on the other hand we have Jesus saying that He has come for people to have life and have life abundantly.

This is like in high school when two people are running for class president and they're stances on how everything should happen are completely opposite. Tensions are naturally going to run high.

Except, this battle we see isn't for some meaningless school election (unless of course you were class president then it was definitely not meaningless).

This battle is for you. For your life. For your soul.

So why is it so difficult for us to follow Jesus? Because there is a battle going on in the heavens and most of us have no idea.

I'm not trying to get all weird spiritual on you or try to creep you out. But Satan has a plan for your life the same way God does. He wants to destroy you. He wants to destroy your walk with God.

So he'll use anything and everything to distract you from being in God's Word. He'll do whatever it takes to discourage you from being obedient to God. He'll implore any method necessary to keep you from praying.

He wants you *destroyed*.

These are all attacks from the enemy and it's important to know. If you were in an ancient battle – like a physical battle with arrows and stuff – and you started getting hit with arrows, wouldn't you want to know where those were coming from?

Ephesians 6:16 says, **“In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one...”**

It's not a question of *if* Satan is coming after you. He is. And he's not going to stop. Take a moment to read Ephesians 6:10-20. After you do, write out your thoughts. Remember the last two days? God is actively working to grow you spiritually and He has put His Spirit in you to cause you to walk with Him?

That's important because it gives us a simple and important promise: No matter how strong Satan's attacks are, God's power will always overcome Satan's power.

When Jesus resurrected from the dead He defeated sin, death, and proved that Satan had no power over Him. It's Jesus's resurrection power that gives Him the credibility to say, "I'm here so they can have life and have it abundantly."

At the same time Satan is attacking you, Jesus is constantly inviting you into abundant life.

How do you think God might be inviting you into abundant life right now? (Spend some time praying and ask Him.)

This abundant life is exactly what you were created for. Life to the full with God and His presence. This is the life you'll have for all eternity. God is giving us a taste now on earth before we get to heaven.

Until recently, I've never really had a vision for what abundant life meant. I knew God wanted to live a life for Him, but I didn't understand abundant life.

Think about this... **according to what you know to be true about God, what do you think abundant life with Him looks like for you in 5 years... 10 years? Who do you see Him making you to be?**

I know it may feel weird to look that far out into the future but think about a marathon runner. A runner is going to lose track of where they're going if there's no running lane, check points, or finish line. They'll run, but they'll run aimlessly.

When we spend time asking God. "God, who are you making me to be? What does the abundant life look like for me?" It gives us a roadmap to live our life by each day.

I realized God was making me to be a present dad, a consistent husband, a non-anxious presence, someone healthy mentally, emotionally, relationally, spiritually, and physically.

So now, with His help (His Spirit in me), I can shoot for that every day. I can cooperate with God on what God is doing in my life. I can know that in each situation He's providing me an opportunity to join His work in my life and become more present, more consistent, less anxious, and healthier.

Let's reflect for a moment. **Why is it important for you, in your life, to know Satan is attacking you?**

Why is it even more important for you to know Jesus is giving you abundant life?

How can you cooperate more with Jesus to live the abundant life this week?

Day 6: We Have a Decision to Make

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

– Colossians 3:1-4

Have you ever come to a proverbial “fork in the road.” You know, one of those moments that we must decide. Am I going to watch Netflix or study for my test? Am I going to get good sleep tonight or am I going to stay up all night playing video games. Am I going to eat the cheese dip or the salsa?

I’m kidding, that last one is obvious. It’s both.

I think we’re at a fork in the road, spiritually, and I think this is where we get stuck many times. We try our best to walk down both paths.

We want to walk the path of Christlikeness and growth spiritually, but we also want to walk the path of comfort and popularity with the people we see every day.

We want to say no to sin and live a holy life, but we also want the pleasure and enjoyment that comes with our sin.

The problem is, we can't have it both ways.

Colossians 3:1-4 implies we're at a fork in the road. Are we going to seek the things that are above? Are we going to set our minds on the things in heaven? Are we going to live like we've died, and our real life is hidden with Christ in God? Or are we going to live like this life is all that matters? Are we going to seek the things on earth and set our minds on the things of this life?

We have a decision to make.

This passage gives us one fundamental truth that makes what we talked about yesterday (John 10:10) real for us.

It says, **“When Christ who is your life...”** Now, I know I stopped there mid-sentence, but think about what this is saying. Christ. Is. Your. Life.

If you have been raised with Christ, as verse 1 says, then this is your reality. You get the abundant life Christ has to offer because you get His life. You get Him. He is your life.

The most miserable people I meet are Christians who aren't setting their minds on the things above or seeking heaven. Why? Because they're going against *who they are*.

Let's reflect for a second... **Most often, what would you say you seek or set your mind on?**

How would key areas of your life change (relationships, mental/emotional health, relationship with God) if you set your mind on the things that are above? Take time to really imagine the abundant life God has given you in these areas.

There's one more piece here in this passage we need to look at before we move on. I'll go ahead and finish the sentence I stopped in the middle of earlier. The passage

says, **“When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.”**

There is a day coming when Christ will return. He will appear to the entire world in the fullness of His glory. And in that moment, you will appear *with Him in glory*.

Think about that for a second.

Seriously. You will appear with Jesus Christ in the fullness of His glory.

Which means, on a very practical level today, you and I can miss out on some things here on earth. Our glory is *there*. Our glory is *with Him*. Why does it matter if we miss out on the latest trends? Or he cringy show everyone else is watching? What good does popularity on earth do for us when the glory we *really* exist for will appear when Christ fills the earth with *His glory*.

This is forces us to ask the question. **What do I live for? Glory here on earth? Or to find my life in Christ?** Do some reflecting on where you're at currently and where you want to be.

Day 7: You Are More Than a Conqueror

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

— **Romans 8:31-39**

If there's one chapter in the Bible I would encourage you to read every single day, it's Romans Chapter 8. This chapter is known as the pinnacle chapter in the most significant book the Apostle Paul ever wrote.

It's so, so, so good.

For the sake of our time today, we're going to focus on the last few verses of the chapter.

I can almost read your mind. Especially if you're someone who has tried to "kickstart" your relationship with God several times before. You've probably been secretly trying to shove away the thoughts of, *"Yeah, this 7 days has been good but I'll probably stop being consistent once it's over."*

Because of your past experience you've become a slave to your negative thinking.

But what if I told you it doesn't have to be that way? What if we took seriously the promise found in the passage we're looking at today. **"Who shall bring any charge against God's elect?"** *You* are God's elect. Who can bring any charge against you? Can *you* bring any charge against *you*? No. No, you can't.

Can you condemn yourself? No. Can anything or anyone else condemn you? No. Christ Jesus, the one who died for you and was raised for you, is interceding (praying) for you.

Think about that. JESUS IS PRAYING FOR YOU RIGHT NOW. He's fighting for you. He's with you. With His power, His strength, His will, you can overcome everything preventing you from having a thriving relationship with Him.

There's not a thing in your life that God can't redeem. How do we know that? Because "He who did not spare his own Son but gave Him up for us all, *how will He not also with Him graciously give us **all things?***"

God *wants* to pour out blessing on you and help you overcome your sin and your patterns of walking away from Him. Our responsibility is to work hard to come to Him daily. He'll do the rest.

He's made us a new creation. He's given us a strategy (to abide). He's committed to making us holy. He's given us His Spirit. He's made abundant life available to us. He's given us His life. And He's made us a conqueror. You are not who you once were. You are brand new. You can live that way by His grace and power.

How is this reality – that you're more than a conqueror – different than how you usually think about yourself?

I don't know about you, but I usually think pretty negatively about myself. These last few verses in Romans are usually in direct opposition of how I think about myself. But how I think about myself is not true. This is what's true. No matter how convincing my thoughts about me are, they aren't true. The truth is what God says about me.

**Write out how you usually think about yourself.
Then write down how this passage goes against that.**

The last sentence in this passage is what we need to end on.

“For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

You're going to fall short again. You're going to miss a day reading the Bible. You're going to sin. You're going to have regrets. You're going to feel shame again. You're going to want to walk away from God again because you feel like an embarrassment.

But what does this passage say?

"...nothing...in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

There's not a thing you can do that will make God not love you. So, no matter where you find yourself over the course of your life. Come to Him. He loves you and is radically committed to you.

We'll do one final reflection question to cover the full 7 days and then we'll be finished. **How have these 7 days changed your relationship with Christ? And what will you implement moving forward?**

Appendix A: A 30 Day Reading Plan¹

Day 1: John 1:1-28

Day 2: John 1:29-51

Day 3: John 2:1-25

Day 4: John 3:1-21

Day 5: John 3:22-36

Day 6: John 4:1-26

Day 7: John 4:27-54

Day 8: John 5:1-30

Day 9: John 5:31-6:14

Day 10: John 6:15-50

Day 11: John 6:60-7:9

Day 12: John 7:10-44

Day 13: John 7:45-8:20

Day 14: John 21-47

Day 15: John 8:48-9:12

Day 16: John 9:13-41

Day 17: John 10:1-21

Day 18: John 10:22-11:16

Day 19: John 11:17-44

Day 20: John 11:45-12:19

Day 21: John 12:20-50

Day 22: John 13:1-30

Day 23: John 13:31-14:18

Day 24: John 14:19-15:17

Day 25: John 15:18-16:24

Day 26: John 16:25-17:19

Day 27: John 17:20-18:11

Day 28: John 18:12-40

Day 29: John 19:1-20:18

Day 30: John 20:19-21:25

¹This reading plan was found online and provided by Pennington Park Church in Fishers, Indiana

Appendix B: A Guide to a Fruitful Quiet Time

Before You Read

- Ask God to give you focus
- Ask God to teach you something new
 - Ask God to remind you of something you've learned already
- Ask God to convict you of sin
- Ask God to show you His goodness

While Reading

- Write down any thoughts you have in a journal
 - Write down questions you might have when reading
- Write down the distracting thoughts (like your upcoming tasks or things you need to accomplish). This will help you stay focused longer.
 - Pause and reflect. Don't just read quickly. Read slow, pause when something stands out. Ask God, why did this stand out?

After Reading

- Write out a prayer to God.
 - o Confess whatever sin was exposed
 - o Ask Him to help you believe the truth in the passage
 - o Ask Him to help you be obedient to whatever the scripture says.
 - Find someone to talk to that day about what you read.
This will help you remember and meditate on scripture.
 - o And! It will encourage that person as well.

