

Starting Blocks

Spending Time With Jesus In His Word Every Day - Week 23

Day 1:

PREP: How much deliberate, intentional energy is supposed to be put into reconciling broken relationships between believers?

READ: Matthew 18:15-20

SO WHAT: How is Jesus' plan of reconciliation different from the gossip, backbiting and drama that people use in their relationships these days? Even if people won't reconcile, we're supposed to treat them like unbelievers - how did Jesus treat those folks?

PRAY: Ask the Lord to bring to mind a relationship in your life that needs this kind of attention and care and to work in the hearts involved to put it back together.

Day 2:

PREP: How is Jesus' view on forgiveness different from our natural tendencies?

READ: Matthew 18:21-35

SO WHAT: Why do you think Jesus told such a comically ridiculous story to illustrate His point about forgiveness? When you have to forgive someone, what should you always be thinking about? How can you practice and get better at remembering how much mercy you've received?

PRAY: Think about someone you can't forgive and ask Jesus to give you peace about them.

Day 3:

PREP: How does Jesus' view of marriage differ from what must have been the popular view?

READ: Matthew 19:1-12

SO WHAT: Whether or not you're married, have you thought much (or at all) about the idea that Jesus has an opinion about your relationships and your sexual life? When it comes to your relationships and sex life, do you ask Jesus what He thinks or what He wants for you? What if you let Him call the shots in those areas of your life?

PRAY: Ask Jesus to give you fulfillment, pleasure and joy in sweet, healthy relationships.

Day 4:

PREP: What happened when the disciples assumed they knew how Jesus felt about this thing?

READ: Matthew 19:3-15

SO WHAT: Why do you think the disciples assumed Jesus didn't have time for little kids? Why do you think they were so wrong about that? What does it mean that the kingdom of Heaven belongs to them? What do little kids have that the rest of us need to learn?

PRAY: Ask Jesus to make your heart like a little kid's heart - needing help and not afraid to ask someone bigger.

Day 5:

PREP: What does God want to do through the church? What is His eternal purpose?

READ: Ephesians 3:7-13

SO WHAT: Paul says there are beings in the Heavenly Realms - authorities and powers we can't see who are watching life in our visible world to see if God's ways work. How does it feel to know that God is showing them His wisdom through our changed lives and our relationship with Him? How is Jesus like boundless riches to you?

PRAY: Tell the Lord why you love Him today. He is showing unseen audiences what His love can do in the life of a person.

Day 6:

PREP: What is Paul praying for? What does he really want you to be able to do?

READ: Ephesians 3:14-21

SO WHAT: Most of Paul's prayers are about the emotional life. He doesn't specifically mention lots of prayers about circumstances, healing, etc. What emotion is he aiming for in this prayer?

PRAY: Take verses 16-19, change all the pronouns and pray this prayer about you for yourself.

Day 7:

PREP: As you read this, what does God do for us? What is He like?

READ: Psalm 65

SO WHAT: This is a very thankful song. Gratitude runs through every line. David is seeing God at work all over his life. If you were to look at your life right now through the lens of thankfulness, what would your song be like? Why not grab some paper and write your version of it?

PRAY: Ask Jesus to give you a grateful heart. Tell Him to help you see what He's doing for you.