

Doing Life With Jesus
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Isn't it great to be part of a family? Yeah, you can be seated there where you just see Jesus changing lives and go on. God, it doesn't matter. We're never too far from you for you to restore and to renew us. What a great God we have. And thank you, team, for leading us in worship today. Let's say, let's pray and we'll just pray for these ones who are baptized as well, as well as for ourselves.

Jesus, for each one who took that step of going public with their faith. Today, we pray that you will allow the roots to go deep, that you fill them with your Holy Spirit each day. And Lord, that your Word would become the foundation of their lives and that their light would shine brightly for you. Lord, Thank you. Guard them from the attacks of the enemy and may they walk in victory.

We pray. Thank you for your forgiveness when we mess up giving us new opportunities. Lord, there are some maybe listening today going, I'm not really there yet. I thank you that they're here today for watching online. And God, I pray that that you would just continue to show yourself to each one. Thank you. That you're a God who loves to express forgiveness, to allow us to see life from your perspective, how do we deal with suffering and brokenness and Lord, that you give us the big picture?

And I pray that those who are considering your relationship with you, Lord, would take that step and and would find you to be their greatest joy. Lord's We spend time with family and friends. This weekend ahead, we pray that your love would just flow through us, even when it's hard that God you would shine through us. We pray and and that your heart would be sensed by those around us.

And then, Lord, for a world in need. As we look around, we hear about ongoing conflict in war in South Sudan and in Ukraine and in Israel and Gaza and got our hearts ache. Every single person in these places, they're made in your image. They matter to you. So Lord and in the Bible, we see how you would use people who didn't even know you as your instruments.

Government leaders, kings, Lord, do it again. For those who are leading in governments, cabinets, military officers, Lord, we pray that they would be led by you and that you would bring a resolution to these conflicts. Lord Thank you. That you're never overwhelmed, whether within our lives or in the world today. And so we just thank you. We can bring anything to you.

Would you teach us now? We pray, Jesus, we just want to say again, we would trust in you and your name. Amen. I just. I love baptism. Some of your family members of these ones and whether this is new for you or you're like, I couldn't wait for this moment. Really glad to have you here. You know what that does to the heart of God?

When we take steps, like when we put our trust in him and just go, Jesus, I'm leaving my old way behind and following you. Maybe take the step of baptism to declare our faith. There's there's a verse in Luke Jesus is speaking about. He's saying, this is what happens in heaven with your father's heart when you turn to him and here's what he hears, what he says.

He says There is joy in the presence of God's angel when what even just one sinner repents. Right? That's you. That's me. That the day that I put my trust in Jesus, it was like a party in heaven because I put my trust. That's how much he loves me. There's a picture that I really love that I just saw this week.

That's my grandson up in the air and that's my son in law who is thrown on the beach and they're playing ball. I don't know how they did that all the same time. I'll tell you how it ended. He caught them. And the first thing my little teddy goes is do it again. Do it again. Right. And you see the delight I they're laughing, you know, and they're just father loves son, son loves father.

Do you know that's the way your father sees you, like your father in heaven, even whatever kind of relationship you've had with your earthly dad, that your father in heaven. Here's what it says in the book of Zephaniah. I love this. It says The Lord your God when you trust in the Lord says this, the Lord your God is you.

He will take great delight in you. He will rejoice over you with singing. It's almost like he's got you up in the air and you can trust me. I'm going to catch you. And he just loves you that much. Like he loves when you come and to his family. And really that's what being a Christian is all about.

It's having Jesus Christ in your life. He wants us to live every day in relationship with him. It's life with Jesus. That's what the Bible says. At the core of Christianity. It's not merely a set beliefs, it's not a set of just obligations at the core. It's a relationship with the one who died and rose again in your place.

It's with Jesus. What does that mean? Going to look at what the Apostle Paul says. If you turn with me to first Corinthians chapter 16, you can either use a paper Bible or some of you have downloaded the Bible app on your phone is free. It's amazing. I use it every day. And and we're going to see what Paul says.

You were in the final message of the series. We've gone through the book of First Corinthians and the Apostle Paul is writing to a church that's in a culture that is far from God and there's tension within the church and it's how do you navigate life's rapids and stay centered on Christ? And that's really what we want. Whatever you're facing your life, whatever we face in society, how do you navigate that and how do you stay centered on Jesus Christ?

And so we're going to look and see what Paul says here. So a little bit of context. He's concluding this letter that he's written and has a lot of letters. Do it. The clothes. He just sort of deals with the number of comments, last minute comments to make. But his point, I think we could say is this He wants us to do life with Jesus.

He's just finished in the previous chapter in first Corinthians 15, talking about the reality that Jesus Christ did not stay dead. There's evidence, he says there's eyewitnesses there's and he says, this is at the core of our faith. If it did not happen, we're idiots for believing it. And if it really did happen, we'd be foolish not to give it attention.

That's what he says, that if Jesus is alive today. We made this statement last week. In fact, I'd love for you to say it aloud with me. You'll see it

here on the screen. Would you stay with me? Let's say together. Ready? If Jesus was raised from the dead, everything is going to be all right. Like if you trust in Jesus and you know that he rose again from the dead, there's nothing too hard for him.

And when you have a relationship with him, you put your trust in him. You say, Jesus, I believe that you are who you claim to be. I believe that what the scriptures teach are what really happened, that you really lived a perfect life. You're God himself. You died, you rose again. You're coming again. And the moment I put my trust in you, Jesus, your Holy Spirit comes and lives in me.

That has a dynamic impact on the way that you live your life. And I think it could summarize what Paul talks about here at the end of this letter. So let's begin verse one. What's the overflow of what it means to have Christ in your life? You might be surprised at what he talks about here. To start off the passage, he says in verse one Now about the collection for God's people.

Do what I told the Galatians churches to do on the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income, saving it up so that when I come no collections will have to be made. When you do life with Jesus, it means that you practice the grace of giving, like you're just marked by generosity.

Paul and Jesus talk a lot about this. Paul, in the next letter to the Corinthians writes this Most of Chapter nine or about this in Chapter nine, he says, Remember this Whoever sews sparingly, like if I'm really tight fisted about giving to others in need, I'll reap sparingly. And if I so or give generously, I'm going to reap generously like you saying.

There's all these promises that he gives about generosity. Here's the question Why do you think Paul and Jesus talk about like generosity as much as they do? Jesus mentioned a lot about this. In fact, he said on one occasion, Matthew chapter six, he says, Where are your treasure? Is there your what your heart will be also. So if my treasure, if I invest everything in my house, my heart's going to be from my house, right?

If I invest in this amazing car, nothing wrong with a car and a house. But if but if I if everything is going and there's no generosity in my life,

then I become all about my possessions. It's about me. It's about my future. But when I'm investing in and things that I go, God, you're working on people's lives.

Like you're changing lives. And Lorain Correctional, love you guys. We're so glad that you're part of our church family. You're investing. And remember, new in helping to protect kids who are at risk for sex trafficking. You're investing whatever you wherever you invest. When you do that, it says we're your treasure is your heart's going to follow. And you're like, God, I get to be a part of what you're doing there.

So you're giving becomes sort of a barometer of the of the level of of your spiritual health. Paul picks up on that and he gives us some practical input here in these first couple of verses. He says two things about your giving. First of all, give consistently says on the first day of every week you might say, Does it have to be on the Sunday?

It might be like every payday or it's once a month or whatever you get paid that he's just saying, Don't make it sporadic, don't make it haphazard. He says, Be be consistent in what you do. Receive an email from a guy at Grace and he gave me permission to share his story anonymously. And here's what he writes. He says, Pastor Jonathan, I've been taking the financial peace class at Grace for the past several years.

I've been struggling to tie like giving 10% of what I earn, he says. I always thought that I needed that money to pay off bills and get out of debt. When I did my first budget, I put aside my 10% and kept thinking, I'll just use that money to pay off my bills. Once they're paid off, then I'll start tithing again.

My money won't make a big difference. Then, through the financial peace class class, we offer here a couple of times a year. If there's something you said one Sunday, I had a wakeup call. It's amazing how clearly God speaks to whether or not we want to listen. After that, I decided I've been doing my finances wrong for so many years and I now plan to leave everything in his hands.

It showed me that even though it may not be a bunch of money in the grand scheme of things, it is still used to do his work and can make a difference. I just want to let you know how much I appreciate Grace as a

whole and what an impact going there has made on my life. There is a guy whose spiritual health is what going up.

He's going, God, I'm going to trust you. I'm going to trust you in this area of my life. How much do we give? Paul says here in verse two, a second principle. He says, Gift proportionally. He says, In keeping with your income, he's saying, if you make a lot of money, you give more. If you make less money, you give less.

And and I want to share a verse. It struck me this past week, and Mary and I give first two to Grace, our church family, because it's where we in our church, our kids have been, you know, spiritually nurtured. And then we give over and above that to other kind of things like, you know, remember near the city mission and stuff like that.

And and there is a verse that Mary shared with me a while ago. And listen to what Paul says about the source of our giving. This is and the Lehman a little one chapter letter that he writes and he says this I am praying that you will put into action the generosity that comes from what? From your faith, from your faith, as you understand and experience all the good things we have in Christ.

You see that he's saying he says generosity flows out of your faith. If you believe that God is big enough, like the letter I just read to keep his promises. When you're generous, then you're going to go, Wow, I'm just going to get back to God like a portion of what he's entrusted to me. It's a sign of growing faith.

The corollary of that is this If I'm really like, I don't trust, I can't do that, that would be way crazy. Then it shows. What about my faith? That my faith is sort of the sort of weak, struggling. So Paul, give consistently, give proportionately and you'll watch your faith grow and you'll see your heart be expanded to new ways.

That's one. Doing life means having just a generous heart. Second thing that Paul talks about here in the next several verses, verses 3 to 12, he talks about his travel itinerary. He mentions wanting to go to Corinth to visit the city in the church. Again, he talks about his friends. Timothy in a polis. And then if you look down to verse 13, he says this This is another outflow of Christ living in you.

He says in verse 13, Be on your guard, Stand firm in the faith, be courageous, be strong. Here's another aspect of life with Jesus. You stand strong knowing that he lives in you. It's like Paul is giving us marching orders. When you get up each morning, it's like I'm going to be on guard because I'm not going to lose sight of reality.

I'm in a battle and you have this sense of strength and awareness that that man I there's a spiritual world here and I have via of Jesus Christ in my life. On what basis can I say that back in Matthew 28, when Jesus is giving a final word to his followers, to us, to his before he ascends to have and he tells his followers this, He's just risen from the dead.

And he says all authority and where in in heaven and on earth, which pretty much covers what like everything, right? He's doing all authority and heaven on earth have been given to me. You go, okay, they belong to Jesus. And then he goes on and he says this. He says, And surely I am with you. What? All the ways to the very end.

So that means this. Listen, if you've put your trust in Jesus, He's with you and you have all of the authority and the confidence and the courage of Jesus. It's not just you. It's him living in you. And the one who spoke in the storms was were calm. The one who spoke and a man began is the same Jesus who lives in you.

That means that you know, I don't know. Where do you wish you had more courage? Maybe someone asked you. You know, you're at a gathering, a reunion this week or something. Good. Hey, what do you believe in, anyhow? And you're like, man, I believe you know, I know you're trying to figure out and you just go, God, give me courage.

You're with me right now. And you say, You know, I've invited Jesus into my life, and I can just tell he's made all the difference. I'm forgiven. I just feel free. I've got purpose in my life and I know where I'm going to go when I die is just he's changed me and he go, That takes courage. That's what he wants to give you when you face temptation and you go, Man, like I just I used this was my old kind of pattern.

And and he wants to give you the authority that he had to say no to sin and say yes to Jesus. It might be that you're standing by your

convictions when you're with someone in there. Want you to sort of be dishonest in the workplace and you just go, you know, I just want you to know you can trust me and all things.

And if I did that, you'd wonder where would I be willing to fudge on something else? So I'm not going to I can't do that because want to honor God. And I would want you to know that you can trust me even when it's hard. You have friends. All of the authority of Jesus Christ with you. You can be courageous.

You know what? How that ought to make us feel like this. Can't Right here. Take a look at this. Right here in that. Great. What is that cat's inner identity? You may think I look like a cat, but on the inside, I'm a what? I'm a lion. I put that I don't even like cats, but I like that picture.

I just offended like half of you. You know, you're. But I look at that and I go, You know what? You may see me and I look like Jonathan, like any old human being. But inside I have the authority and the person and the power of Jesus Christ living within me. Who is Jesus? I love the way that author and artist Shy Lin reminds us who Jesus says.

Listen to what he says. Jesus is the God glorified fire, the universe Creator, the prophecy fulfilled the perfect law. Obey to the Scripture validator. The Father honor the humility. MODERATOR Mottola the the cross carrier, the sin bearer, the death conquer the grave defender, the salvation achiever, the prayer answerer, the proud humbler, the weak strengthen or the triumphant returner, the Satan destroyer and the eternal joy giver.

Amen. Jesus is king, and if you've invited him in, he lives within you. When you do life with Jesus, you can have courage and confidence no matter what you face. One more exhortation from Paul, what it looks like to do life with Jesus. It speaks to our motives. Why do we do what we do? Like whatever we do in life?

It's for simple words and and yet living off these words can dramatically shape the way you live and infuse your life with with meaning. Here's what Paul says in verse 14. These four words that you're going to see in right there. Can we read those together, starting with Do Ready Do

Everything in Love. Life with Jesus means whatever you do, you do it in love.

That word in the Greek, everything. You know what it means? It means everything. That's right. That's exactly what it means. That means when you're watching a football game this afternoon, that's a pretty big game. And you're watching with someone else who's rooting for a different team. Do everything in love. Right? Your relationship with them is more important than your allegiance to it.

I'm sorry. I'm preaching to myself right here. Come on. When you pick up after someone, you can do it and love. When you're hanging out with someone this weekend that you go, I don't particularly like this person, but I can do it in love when that person on the highway messes with you, you know, cut you off, you can just say, Lord, you love that person.

I may not right now, but you do right? When you go to work. You might even be your own boss. But whatever you do, you can say Lord, and whatever you think of the boss maybe you do have, you can say, Lord, ultimately I'm doing this out of love for you. This isn't just to earn a paycheck. This isn't every customer with whom I interact God, I can do it with love.

Every person that I meet and a grocery store wherever I am, he says, Do everything. When you do life with Jesus, you do everything in love. What's the secret to that? You go, John. And that's so hard. You let love flow out of your relationship with Jesus. You know, I love the verse in Romans chapter five, where it says that by the Holy Spirit that God He pours love into our hearts.

He pours love in our hearts. He's not asking us to drum it up ourselves. It's the fruit of the Spirit. The spirit of God living within you. He pours out love into your life and just says, Just love with the love that I've given to you when you do life with him and you let his word instruct you and remind you, you know, I think of Jesus and how Jesus, when he saw people. People are never your enemy, by the way. The devil is your enemy. People might be caught in the trap of the enemy, but people are never your enemy. Paul says. Your enemy is not flesh and blood people. But when Jesus saw people, he didn't see just the crusty

outsider. Whatever it says. He looked down on the crowd and he saw them as harassed and helpless like sheep without what? A shepherd. And he was filled with compassion. And when you see beyond the outer behavior and you just go, God, there's a person for whom you died, you want them to be part of your family. God helped me to do everything in love. What does it look like to do life with Jesus? Few of the things Paul talks about here, you practice the grace of giving.

You take time to serve others. You stand strong knowing that he lives in you and you let everything flow from love. Here's what I wonder. What if those were more true in our lives? What if we dial those up this way? Don't you think there'd be people around us who go, You know, there's something about the way that you interact with people like it?

I don't know. I just look at your life and I know you're a person of faith. And I just want you to know I think you're like the real deal that happened to someone recently in the Grace family. I was talking to a woman this week and she told me about a phone conversation she had with her adult son.

I'll close with this. She's talking to her adult son who doesn't live with them. And and he had her on speakerphone. And what she didn't know was that in this sort of it was a tender, sort of a tough conversation. She's talking to him. His friend is listening in. The phone call wraps up and the friend who's not a follower of Jesus, he comes to the son, adult son and he goes, hey, I I'm sort of sorry, but I couldn't help but overhear the conversation with your mom.

I just want you to know, like the way that your mom showed a lot of kindness, like in a tough conversation. I know your mom's a person of faith that really, like, really moved me. Like, that might be the first Christian I've ever seen who's, like, not judgmental and has kind of, like, that. Sort of a sad commentary, isn't it?

But at the same time, she had no idea that there was someone else listening in, but her behavior in that moment had huge impact. Here's what I wonder. What do others see in me and in you when we don't know that they're looking? What do they hear from me and from you when we don't realize they're listening? Do they see something where

they say, you know, I don't know quite how to describe it, but but you're like a really genuine person.

There's something attractive about your life that you perhaps will have a reason. As Peter says at first. Peter three To give a reason for the hope that you have in Christ and that what you want in your life, I can tell you, is what I want for myself. It's what I want for you. That that our lives would be so wrapped up with Jesus, the living resurrected Jesus, that other people would see something about Him and us, and it would make them want to know more and perhaps come to the one who gave his life for them.

Let's pray and ask and make us so in our lives. Do you pray with me? Jesus. Thank you. That you modeled these in a beautiful way. You're generous like you give. You gave your life. Thank you, Lord, that you're willing to serve others. Thank you for the courage that you showed when you faced people who really hated you and despised you and even put you to death and think that everything you do, Lord, we can say you do everything in love.

So, Lord Jesus, what we believe you're asking of us is to really live your life. But thank you that you come and you live that life within us. We just invite you by your Holy Spirit to make us more like you. Jesus, would you come in and just have your way in our lives? That. That you'll be honored, that there will be great joy in your heart as you see us say yes to you, the Lord, that indeed others would want to know more.

Thank you that you're a faithful God. We just want to say we trust you. Thank you. Don't want to mess up your patience with us. Continue to empower Lord and just keep on helping us to take the next right step. We pray in your name and everyone said, Hey, man, we're going to sing about his just his great faithfulness.

Let's stand together as the team leads us.