



SUNDAY 07.10.11 John 17:13-21

The night before he was crucified, John says, Jesus prayed as much or more for his followers as for himself. He asked God to “sanctify” them through the word of truth, the Bible.

- The word “sanctify” carried the root sense of “setting apart for a holy purpose.” In that sense, Jesus was praying that each of us, his followers, would be set apart for a higher purpose. How does this knowledge shape the things that you do and say?
- How might this knowledge shape your reactions to the roadblocks that appear in your life?



MONDAY 07.11.11 Hebrews 12:1-2, 12-13

The writer of Hebrews urges us to “strip off every weight that slows us down” in our faith journey, encouraging us to “run with endurance the race that God has set before us.”

- What “weight” is slowing you down in your faith journey? Are you running the race with endurance or are you struggling?
- It is clear from this passage of scripture that God knows that we will get tired and that our endurance may fail. What then must we do to renew our strength so that we might be good examples for those who are watching us?



GROW. PRAY. STUDY.

Top Ten: The Stories Behind the Songs - Weekly Guide 7/5/11

Title: “Stronger”

Singer/Songwriter: Mandisa Hundley

Album: What If We Were Real

Song #9

Proverbs 3:5-6

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your path straight.”

1 Corinthians 13:11-12

“When I was a child, I spoke and thought and reasoned as a child. But when I grew up, I put away childish things. Now we see things imperfectly as in a cloudy mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity. All that I know now is partial and incomplete, but then I will know everything completely, just as God now knows me completely.”

Hebrews 12:1-2, 12-13

“Since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily hinders our progress. And let us run with endurance the race that God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from start to finish. So take a new grip with your tired hands and stand firm on your shaky legs. Mark out a straight path for your feet. Then those who follow you, though they are weak and lame, will not stumble and fall but will become strong.”



WEDNESDAY 07.06.11 Romans 12:1-8

How do you, as a Christ-follower, live in accordance with God’s will for you? One aspect of that, Paul wrote to the Roman Christians, is to offer yourself as a living sacrifice. That does not involve elaborate rituals. Instead, Paul described a process of honestly assessing who you are and what gifts and talents you have to use in God’s service.

- Instead of animal sacrifices to God, Paul encourages us to “offer our bodies as a LIVING sacrifice.” In what ways are you willing to put your life, your self, “on the altar” to live daily for God?
- What gifts or abilities do you currently use in service to God or others? Which might you start using in new ways?



THURSDAY 07.07.11 Acts 16:1-10

This story shows us how the apostle Paul went about doing God’s will. He didn’t sit passively waiting for God to guide him supernaturally, but moved from town to town as he had planned. He always “stayed tuned” to God’s leading, though. And God guided him in a special way to new territory for the Christian mission.

- When Paul woke up each day, how do you think he decided what to do or where to go? Do you think he struggled with indecision?
- In this passage, we see how God changed Paul’s plans by sending a dream of a man calling Paul to preach in Macedonia. Have you ever felt that God wanted you to move in a certain direction in your life? Do you still wonder whether you are living the life that God intends?



FRIDAY 07.08.11 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

The apostle Paul, a deeply loyal servant of God, openly told the Christians in Corinth of a time when he prayed that God would remove a physical ailment, a “thorn in the flesh.” God did not take the ailment away from him. But the experience made his faith stronger, rather than weakening it.

- Did Paul’s constant physical struggle mean God didn’t care about him? Why or why not? How could this have made his faith stronger?
- What is your “thorn in the flesh” (physical, emotional, relational)? What does “my grace is sufficient for you” mean, in everyday terms? In what ways, if any, is it true for you that “when I am weak, then I am strong”?



SATURDAY 07.09.11 Philippians 2:12-18

This passage promises that “God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases Him.” These verses suggest that we can be confident that we are indeed living according to God’s will.

- Is having this kind of confidence easy for any of us? Who or what do you think keep YOU from being confident? What can you do to become more certain of God’s will for your life?
- Could the spiritual disciplines of prayer, Bible reading and fellowship help you?
