

THE NEXT GOOD THING

pursuing gospel resilience

daily devotional

Welcome

We're excited to present you with this daily devotional to accompany our fall series, *The Next Good Thing!* Starting September 13, we will pursue gospel resilience together, and this devotional is meant to help you along that journey.

Structures

For the next 6 weeks, we will devote ourselves to these spiritual disciplines:

1. Memorize Scripture:

Over the next 6 weeks, we will memorize 2 Peter 1:3 – 11. We'll chip away at it each week in our personal devotional time.

The focus of this series will be the progression of this passage. God has given us a secure foundation in Christ, and on that foundation we participate in the work of building a faith and a church that will not only endure, but flourish. The materials that we have to build with are the characteristics listed in this passage. We'll focus on self-control and perseverance as the structures that need to be built first for brotherly kindness and love to be expressed and experienced. Self-control and perseverance are the keys to our emotional discipleship and sanctification.

2. Devote ourselves daily to God.

We will tend our spiritual and emotional fire by taking time to read Scripture and pray daily. Each day, we will:

1. Read a Scripture passage.
2. Write our reflections on the passage. While each passage will be accompanied by a reflection question, we encourage you to also write out your own reflections from the passages.
3. Memorize and review the memory passage. Say it out loud, write it down, or do something more creative!
4. Pray:
 - What do I need to confess?
 - What do I need to thank God for?
 - What is Jesus' prayer request for me¹?
 - What is Jesus' prayer request for one of my close friends or family members?
 - What is Jesus' prayer request for my enemy²?

We've built these practices into the devotional, so grab a Bible and a journal to write in, and follow along!

1 If Jesus were sitting right next to you, what would HE pray for you? What do you spiritually, emotionally or physically need for you to become more like Christ and more like who God created you to be?

2 "Enemy" might seem like a strong word. We might balk at that. But we all likely can call to mind someone we don't like, are in conflict with, or even hate, whether or not we personally know them. That's your enemy.

Rhythms

Our emotional resilience and sanctification do not happen in a vacuum. In addition to structures, growth requires the right environment. Spiritual growth is fostered by relationships and rhythms that work with the grain of how God has created us as human beings, rather than against it. Here are some suggested rhythms to implement to foster your spiritual growth:

1. Schedule a time daily that you will wake up, read and pray.
 - a. You may also need to schedule a time to go to bed.
 - b. Plan to read and pray before you look at your phone or consume any other media.³
2. Block off a day in your calendar for rest, during which you can plan activities that rejuvenate you.⁴
3. Each week, aim to have one spiritual conversation with a friend about how you are really doing and what God is teaching you.⁵

3 Earley, Justin Whitmel. "DAILY HABITS." The Common Rule, Justin Whitmel Earley, 2020, www.thecommonrule.org/daily-habits.

4 Earley, Justin Whitmel. "WEEKLY HABITS." The Common Rule, Justin Whitmel Earley, 2020, www.thecommonrule.org/weekly-habits.

5 Ibid

2 PETER 1:3 - 11 (NIV 1984)

His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins. Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

WEEK 1

Emotional resilience and sanctification

2020 has revealed a resilience gap. There are many things we have not been emotionally ready to handle this year, some of which are bubbling over from us not handling them in our “normal” lives. But our emotional resilience is part of our sanctification; it is at the center of our faith because it is the formation of the “heart.” We need resilience so we can stay focused on love and perseverance. If we are not emotionally resilient, then we will tend to default to the flesh and choose to sin, rather than trust God and do the next good thing.

SUNDAY

Reflect

What's the "next good thing" for you from the sermon this week, and why?

Write out 2 Peter 1:3 to memorize this week.



MONDAY

Scripture

Read Jeremiah 17:5 – 10.

Reflect

What do we learn from this passage about how relationship with God affects our hearts, and vice versa?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for me?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for one of my close friends or family members?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for my enemy?



TUESDAY

Scripture

Read Matthew 22:34 – 40.

Reflect

What do you think Jesus means when he says that we must “love the Lord your God with all your heart” as part of the greatest commandment? How is that different from loving God “with all of your soul and all of your mind”?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
- What is Jesus’ prayer request for me?
- What is Jesus’ prayer request for one of my close friends or family members?
- What is Jesus’ prayer request for my enemy?

WEDNESDAY

Scripture

Read John 14:15 – 27.

Reflect

What does this passage say about what we love, what we do, how we feel, and how those three components interact?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for me?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for one of my close friends or family members?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for my enemy?



THURSDAY

Scripture

Read Galatians 5:16 – 26.

Reflect

Take note of the acts of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit. To what extent do each of these involve our emotions?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for me?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for one of my close friends or family members?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for my enemy?

FRIDAY

Scripture

Read 1 Peter 1.

Reflect

What does this passage say about what makes us secure? What is to be the impact of this security on how we live and how we feel?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for me?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for one of my close friends or family members?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for my enemy?



SATURDAY


Use this day to catch up on your Scripture reading for the week, review the memory passage, and/or pray.

Reflect

What is your key takeaway from your Scripture reading this week? Write it down.

Look Ahead

Write down at least one spiritual rhythm you will practice next week. It's okay if it's what you've always done or is the same as this week, but plan something to keep you consistent or accountable.



WEEK 2

Standing on a Rock

Emotional resilience is fostered by grounding ourselves in the gospel. The gospel restores us to a real and deep foundational identity, security and purpose embedded in a story that is as old as creation and will continue into eternity. These foundations are not only the doctrinal foundations of our faith; the main focus in Scripture is that they are the supporting foundations to our heart and soul. They are the metaphorical rock that our spiritual, moral and emotional selves are standing on, giving us the support our inner lives need in order to thrive. Therefore, they are the foundation of our emotional sanctification, and the bedrock of spiritual resiliency.

SUNDAY

Reflect

What's the "next good thing" for you from the sermon this week, and why?

Write out 2 Peter 1:3 – 4 to memorize this week.



MONDAY

Scripture

Read 2 Peter 1:3 – 7.

Reflect

Note the progression in this passage. What is the foundation of our “every effort”? What does each supplementing characteristic add to our faith, and why are they in that order?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3 – 4.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
- What is Jesus’ prayer request for me?
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- What is Jesus’ prayer request for my enemy?



TUESDAY

Scripture

Read John 15:1 – 17.

Reflect

Note how often the word “remain” (NIV) or “abide” (ESV) is used in this passage. What does that tell us about what we need and how we receive it?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3 – 4.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
- What is Jesus’ prayer request for me?
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- What is Jesus’ prayer request for my enemy?

WEDNESDAY

Scripture

Read Psalm 62.

Reflect

In what ways does your heart need to find rest in God? Use this passage to pray to God in light of those things.

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3 – 4.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for me?
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- What is Jesus' prayer request for my enemy?



THURSDAY

Scripture

Read 1 John 3:16 – 24.

Reflect

What does this passage teach us about our hearts and about love?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3 – 4.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for me?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for one of my close friends or family members?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for my enemy?

FRIDAY

Scripture

Read 2 Corinthians 5.

Reflect

What can we glean from this passage about the relationship between our identity, security and purpose?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3 – 4.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
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Reflect

What is your key takeaway from your Scripture reading this week? Write it down.

Look Ahead

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WEEK 3

Warmed While Tending the Fire

We take personal responsibility for our own spiritual life when we actively love God through worship and devotion. Though spiritual devotion and emotional desire feed on something outside of us, we are responsible for our relationship with the thing that produces the spontaneous effect inside of us. God is sublime and beautiful enough to fuel an eternity of devotion, but we have to admire him, take in his beauty, feed our soul upon his goodness, and fill our hearts with thankfulness for what he's done. Part of emotional health is understanding how emotional passion and spiritual devotion sustain themselves. The dynamic of feeling and fostering emotions is somewhat like tending a fire; you have to feed the fire and build it properly with intention and ritual, but then as it burns, it produces heat and light that is abundant and that runs on its own.

SUNDAY

Reflect

What's the "next good thing" for you from the sermon this week, and why?

Write out 2 Peter 1:3 – 6 to memorize this week.



MONDAY

Scripture

Read Isaiah 55.

Reflect

What does this invitation require of us? What is the promise when we respond?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3 – 6.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for me?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for one of my close friends or family members?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for my enemy?



TUESDAY

Scripture

Read Psalm 42.

Reflect

What can we learn from this Psalm about how we can relate to God in the midst of negative emotions?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3 – 6.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for me?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for one of my close friends or family members?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for my enemy?

WEDNESDAY

Scripture

Read James 4:1 – 10.

Reflect

What are the emotional symptoms of “friendship with the world”? What is the cure?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3 – 6.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
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- What is Jesus’ prayer request for my enemy?



THURSDAY

Scripture

Read Philippians 4:4 – 9.

Reflect

This passage talks about the “peace of God” (verse 7) and the “God of peace” (verse 9). What leads us to experience each of them?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3 – 6.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
- What is Jesus’ prayer request for me?
- What is Jesus’ prayer request for one of my close friends or family members?
- What is Jesus’ prayer request for my enemy?

FRIDAY

Scripture

Read Romans 12:1 – 2, 11.

Reflect

What does this passage teach us about worship? How is this different from how you worship God? How is it true of you?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3 – 6.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
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- What is Jesus' prayer request for one of my close friends or family members?
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Reflect

What is your key takeaway from your Scripture reading this week? Write it down.

Look Ahead

Write down at least one spiritual rhythm you will practice next week. It's okay if it's what you've always done or is the same as this week, but plan something to keep you consistent or accountable.



WEEK 4

The Next Good Thing

When we feel scared, uncertain or insecure, it can be one of the hardest times for us to be disciplined. However, the loss of our external structures reveals in us the need for an internal strength. Structured and honorable obedience leads to resilience and perseverance. Obeying the revealed will of God always lays before us a “next good thing” to do in any situation as his stewards. None of our pursuits in this world are necessary to please God, other than the institutions of the family and the church that he supports and that form a moral obligation for us. Beyond these God-given responsibilities, we are free to do what good we think God might have us do according to conscience and our best understanding of the good. Our job is just to do the next good thing with integrity in works of love and service. This helps us with the indecision that can come from either situational change or insecurity in our hearts. It will make us ready for anything. And it will lead to flourishing in the world around us.

SUNDAY

Reflect

What's the "next good thing" for you from the sermon this week, and why?

Write out 2 Peter 1:3 – 7 to memorize this week.



MONDAY

Scripture

Read Ephesians 2:1 – 10.

Reflect

In this passage, what is the relationship between being saved by grace in Christ and our works?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3 – 7.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for me?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for one of my close friends or family members?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for my enemy?



TUESDAY

Scripture

Read James 4:13 – 17.

Reflect

What does this passage teach us about what we try to control and what we actually can control in faith and love?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3 – 7.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for me?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for one of my close friends or family members?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for my enemy?

WEDNESDAY

Scripture

Read Galatians 6:1 – 10.

Reflect

According to this passage, what are our responsibilities, and how do we bear them well?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3 – 7.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for me?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for one of my close friends or family members?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for my enemy?



THURSDAY

Scripture

Read 1 Peter 4:1 – 11.

Reflect

How does this passage indicate we must live when our situation is insecure?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3 – 7.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for me?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for one of my close friends or family members?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for my enemy?

FRIDAY

Scripture

Read Psalm 37:1 – 11.

Reflect

What does this passage imply about the tendency of our hearts in the midst of insecurity? What are we called to instead?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3 – 7.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
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- What is Jesus' prayer request for one of my close friends or family members?
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Reflect

What is your key takeaway from your Scripture reading this week? Write it down.

Look Ahead

Write down at least one spiritual rhythm you will practice next week. It's okay if it's what you've always done or is the same as this week, but plan something to keep you consistent or accountable.



WEEK 5

The Balm of Gilead

The Bible is a story of horror, harm, and healing. Sin wreaks harm and havoc in the world and makes victims and perpetrators out of all of us. Unhealed wounds undermine our emotional resilience and obstruct the pathway forward for healing. Throughout the Bible, God tells people that his invitation back into his care includes both forgiveness and healing. He wants to pardon us and also heal us. He wants to restore what was done to us, and what we have done to ourselves. In making us holy, he also makes us whole. We must receive the healing hands of the King, and we must do the next good thing that he lays before us to restore us to health and strength. God does not intend for us to remain victims; we are victors in Christ.

SUNDAY

Reflect

What's the "next good thing" for you from the sermon this week, and why?

Write out 2 Peter 1:3 – 9 to memorize this week.



MONDAY

Scripture

Read Isaiah 61, Luke 4:16 – 21.

Reflect

What does this passage show us about how God restores his people? What is the result in us of that work of restoration?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3 – 9.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for me?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for one of my close friends or family members?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for my enemy?



TUESDAY

Scripture

Read Isaiah 58.

Reflect

What is the relationship between injustice and healing?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3 – 9.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for me?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for one of my close friends or family members?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for my enemy?

WEDNESDAY

Scripture

Read Psalm 10.

Reflect

What is God's posture toward you as a victim of injustice?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3 – 9.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for me?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for one of my close friends or family members?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for my enemy?



THURSDAY

Scripture

Read Hebrews 12:1 – 17.

Reflect

How does this passage talk about what hinders us? Endurance? Discipline? Healing? Holiness? How do each of those pieces relate to each other?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3 – 9.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for me?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for one of my close friends or family members?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for my enemy?

FRIDAY

Scripture

Read Luke 7:36 – 50.

Reflect

What do you need to be forgiven of? Who do you need to forgive, so that you can “love much”?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3 – 9.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
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- What is Jesus’ prayer request for one of my close friends or family members?
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Use this day to catch up on your Scripture reading for the week, review the memory passage, and/or pray.

Reflect

What is your key takeaway from your Scripture reading this week? Write it down.

Look Ahead

Write down at least one spiritual rhythm you will practice next week. It's okay if it's what you've always done or is the same as this week, but plan something to keep you consistent or accountable.



WEEK 6

Taking Shade Under the Pillar of Truth

In order to become emotionally resilient and sanctified people, we need more than personal responsibility for growth and healing from God. We need the right environment for those elements to grow: the formational community of the local church. God changes us through the church. Many modern American Christians approach relationships and the church as something to consume for themselves. However, the biblical descriptions of the interrelations of Christians are words of extreme union and self-sacrificial love. The church is described in Scripture as a family, a body, a marriage. Learning can happen through reading and listening, but emotional healing usually involves intimate, trust-bearing relationships in which people experience grace, mercy, kindness, forgiveness and love.

SUNDAY

Reflect

What's the "next good thing" for you from the sermon this week, and why?

Write out 2 Peter 1:3 – 11 to memorize this week.



MONDAY

Scripture

Read Hebrews 10:19 – 39.

Reflect

How do you see relationships with other Christians playing a part in the perseverance spoken of in this passage?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3 – 11.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for me?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for one of my close friends or family members?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for my enemy?



TUESDAY

Scripture

Read Romans 12:3 – 13.

Reflect

This passage talks about how we are one body. What does this mean for our relationships with one another?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3 – 11.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for me?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for one of my close friends or family members?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for my enemy?

WEDNESDAY

Scripture

Read Colossians 3:12 – 17.

Reflect

Note the commands in this passage. What implications does this have on our relationships in the church? What implications does this have on our emotions?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3 – 11.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for me?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for one of my close friends or family members?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for my enemy?



THURSDAY

Scripture

Read Psalm 68.

Reflect

What does this passage show us about how God works among his people?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3 – 11.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for me?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for one of my close friends or family members?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for my enemy?

FRIDAY

Scripture

Read James 5:13 – 20.

Reflect

What does this passage demonstrate about our influence on one another in the church? What is the impact of these relationships on our emotional resilience and sanctification?

Review

Review 2 Peter 1:3 – 11.

Pray

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to thank God for?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for me?
- What is Jesus' prayer request for one of my close friends or family members?
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Look Ahead

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Here are some suggested resources to guide you as you grow in your emotional resilience and in your pathway to healing.

[Getting the Message: A Plan for Interpreting and Applying the Bible](#) by Daniel M. Doriani

[Unwanted: How Sexual Brokenness Reveals Our Way to Healing](#) by Jay Stringer

[Journey Well: Explore Your Deepest Needs and How to Meet Them](#) by Laurie Krieg

[Changes that Heal: Four Practical Steps to a Happier, Healthier You](#) by Dr. Henry Cloud

[How People Grow: What the Bible Reveals about Personal Growth](#) by Dr. Henry Cloud

[How People Change](#) by Timothy S. Lane and Paul David Tripp

[Good and Angry: Redeeming Anger, Irritation, Complaining and Bitterness](#) by David Powlison

[The Common Rule: Habits of Purpose in an Age of Distraction](#) by Justin Whitmel Earley

