

Wednesday:

Philippians 3:20: “But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.”

When we remember that our citizenship is in heaven, it gives our current life purpose and meaning. Why do you think this is true?

Write out Matthew 6:19-21:

If we focus on earthly things, where moth and rust destroy and thieves break in and steal, our focus/treasures are temporary. When we leave this life, we can't take the things of this world with us. If our focus/treasures are in heaven, our pursuit of Christ becomes central. Our focus shifts from the things of this world to actually seeing people and loving them, because we realize that only people are eternal.

Who/what are you living for? Why?

When we leave this life on Earth, we will spend eternity alongside everyone who accepted Christ as their Lord and Savior. Reflect on Jesus' words in **John 14:6**. God wants to work through us as individuals and as a church, to share the Good News, the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Even though the world believes there are other ways to heaven, the truth is, only a relationship with Jesus gives us eternal life with God. If we pursue Christ, we follow Him. As He leads, we share the Gospel with the people around us.

Sharing the good news of Christ comes through relationship. First, your relationship with Christ grows. As your relationship with Him grows, your love for people grows by the power of His Holy Spirit. As you pursue a deeper relationship with Him, His love in you pours out to the people around you. They see Christ in how you live, in how you serve. As you pursue Jesus, He gives you a life of purpose and meaning because He works through you to reach others for the Gospel.

In last week's devotions, we asked these questions:

- Who in your family does not have a relationship with Christ?
- Who in your neighborhood does not have a relationship with Christ?
- Who do you work with who does not have a relationship with Christ?
- Who are your acquaintances who do not have a relationship with Christ?

Pray about where your treasures lie. Ask God to show you a life of purpose and meaning in Him, rather than merely living for the things of this world. Ask God to give you an eternal perspective, showing you those people with whom He wants you to share your story of experiencing the Good News.

Tuesday:

Philippians 3:20: “But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.”

In our day and time, we continue to hear predictions of when Jesus will return.

Read Matthew 24:36 and Mark 13:32. What does God's Word say in these verses about when Jesus will return?

Many people spend hours going over charts, graphs, etc. trying to determine the time Jesus will return to Earth. If we are focused on Jesus' return instead of on Jesus Himself, what happens? **Read Acts 1:9-11.**

Jesus teaches us that while we wait on Him to return, we are to focus on Him, our relationship with Him, and how that is to motivate a life of love and service to others in His name. Instead of pouring over charts and graphs, or simply staring upward, engrossed only by the thought of Jesus' return, His love should instead be pouring out of us toward the people all around us.

Read 1 John 4:11-13

In relationship, we take steps to know and become like Jesus. As we know and become like Him, He changes us from the inside out. His Spirit works in us to love and care for the people He places in our lives each day.

Read Matthew 25:31-46

What delights you about this passage? Why?

What disturbs you about this passage? Why?

Take time to reflect on your life. Where is your focus? What are your priorities?

Sit with God. Talk to Him about what you see. Ask Him to focus your life on His will rather than your own. Ask Him to open your eyes to His priorities.

Friday:

****Today's devotion will work well for you as an individual, or for you to complete as an exercise with your small group.***

Hopefully you have received an official invitation giving you FREE access to Right Now Media. As a part of Jacob's Well, you have access to this extensive video library for you, your whole family, or your small group to enjoy. From the latest authors and speakers to fun Bible-based children's shows, Right Now Media is the "Netflix of Video Bible Studies" and it's totally FREE to use!

If you have not yet logged on to Right Now Media you may do so at this link:

<https://www.rightnow.org/Account/Invite/jacobswell>

This 22-minute video shares the testimony of a woman who went from a life focused on earthly pursuits to a life focused on sharing the love of Christ.

<https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Content/Series/255902#1>

What inspires you about this woman's story?

This woman shares that earthly pursuits create discontent. Over time, we realize our earthly pursuits only increase the longing in our soul. How have you found this to be true in your life?

Earthly pursuits, on their own, create a deeper emptiness in our souls. They distance us from God because they distance us from the things that truly matter. The pursuit of Christ fills the emptiness, because we know the work He does in us and through us brings eternal rewards.

As you end your time today, **Read 2 Peter chapter 3**. God does not want anyone to perish. As we wait for Him and our eternal home, we focus on Him and the work He has for us in the world now. We live dependent upon Him and His Spirit, as He creates us to be more and more like His Son. The Apostle Paul focused on the future rewards of his heavenly home. **Philippians 3:20**: "But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ". It allowed his life here to be filled with meaning and purpose for the plans God had. As we end this series, "Progress Not Perfect," ask God to grow you in His grace. Ask Him to work through you to share His love with people in your life. Ask Him to keep your heart centered on the life you will have in eternity with Him, even as you follow Him here on Earth.

Look up the song "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus." Spend time in worship singing the words of this song.



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****Note for leaders: Friday's devotion, which includes a video link from Right Now Media, will also work well as an exercise for your group to participate in together***

Monday:

In our series, "Progress Not Perfect," we have learned that the Apostle Paul pressed on to a deeper relationship with Christ instead of striving for perfection. Like the Apostle Paul, we too want to forget what is behind, taking steps forward into a deeper relationship with Jesus as we journey through this life with Him as our Lord.

We have been studying **Philippians 3:8-19**. We have challenged ourselves with these questions:

1.) How would I describe my pursuit of knowing and becoming like Christ Jesus?
(examples: antagonistic, indifferent, stale, inconsistent, intentional, passionate)

2.) What am I taking hold of? In other words, what am I pursuing?

What big-picture insights have you discovered about your journey with Christ through this series? What has God revealed to you?

In verse 19, Paul explains that if our minds are set on earthly things, our passions in life will develop from a deep self-centeredness. We will be focused on ourselves rather than on Christ and serving others. **Read Colossians 3:1-2**. What do you think it means to set our minds on things above rather than things that are on earth?

Another way to think about setting our minds on things above rather than things on earth is to live in the present with a future perspective. Write out the next verse in our series, **Philippians 3:20**.

As followers of Christ, where is our true citizenship?

If we believe this present life is our true home, we will chase after the things of this world. List some examples of earthly pursuits that have impacted your life:

If you regularly remembered that this life is temporary, what would change in you? In your life? In your family? As you end your quiet time today, talk with God about our true citizenship as His people. Ask Him to help you see how this life is not our final destination. Ask Him to help you see that we are traveling through this life, and that we are made to make things better in the world around us, and then our true journey's end is with Him for eternity.

Thursday:

Read Revelation 21:1-7.

Our future is to have our home with God. Scripture tells us that He will wipe every tear from our eyes. There will be no more death, mourning, crying or pain. God will make everything new.

Read Revelation 21:10-27. Visualize what you read.

Write down some of the things Scripture tells us about the Holy City.

Read Revelation 21:23 and Revelation 22:5. What do these Scriptures tell us?

Imagine not needing the light of a lamp or the light of the sun because God's light will be all we need. It is hard for us to comprehend, but we will live in His light forever and ever.

What do you look forward to as you dream about eternity with God?

What if you set your heart on your eternal home rather than your earthly home? What would an eternal perspective change in your life? Why?

Heavenly Father,

I want to live with an eternal perspective. I want to live with my heart set on eternity with You, rather than merely living for the things of this world. I know as I journey with You, You will show me what living with an eternal perspective looks like. Give me Your eyes to see what I am to do now and to see my future with You. Let this vision of my future with You change my life now.

In Jesus' Name I pray, Amen.