

5 Day Devotional for the week of August 17, 2025

This week's five day devotional will be taking a deeper dive into the sermon from this weekend. We will explore the profound truths shared by Pastor and how they challenge us to redefine what it means to truly win in life through losing ourselves for Christ's sake. Each day will focus on part of the sermon, reflecting on scripture, and asking ourselves crucial questions regarding our spiritual walk.

Day 1

Core Scripture: Matthew 16:24-25

The concept of "winning by losing" seems paradoxical, yet it is central to Jesus's teachings. It involves a willingness to let go of personal ambitions and desires to fully embrace the life Christ offers. We are called to deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Him. This act of surrender allows us to experience true fulfillment and purpose that earthly victories can never provide. Pastor illustrated this through the story of a collegiate wrestler who, having reached the pinnacle of success, felt an emptiness that only Christ could fill.

Reflect on why society applauds self-promotion and personal achievement. Consider the lasting impact of losing ourselves for God's purposes and how it leads to eternal significance. Pastor likens this journey to pruning—painful yet vital for growth. Let today be the moment you reassess what you value as "victory" in your life and embrace the humility of following Christ.

- What does denying yourself look like in your daily life?
- How have you experienced personal pruning, and where has it led you?
- In what ways does embracing the cross redefine your life goals?
- Pray for strength to embrace self-denial and fully follow Jesus.
- Seek God's guidance to identify areas in your life that need surrender.

Day 2

Core Scripture: Luke 9:23 Then he said to them all: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.

In our pursuit of following Christ, we often face conflicting desires—our will versus God's will. Pastor discussed choosing to follow Jesus even when it's uncomfortable or costly. Jesus's call to take up our cross daily is not a one-time event but a continual dedication to His path, regardless

of how daunting it may seem. This persistent obedience is supported by the assurance that His grace is sufficient and His strength is made perfect in our weakness.

Consider the areas in your life where you seek comfort over commitment. Pastor shared his own journey to serve in Africa, where obedience meant facing life-threatening challenges. It is in these acts of faithfulness that we find God not only sustains us but uses our sacrifices to produce eternal fruits. The decision to follow Christ demands an ongoing willingness to prioritize His purpose above our own.

- Where have you felt God calling you, and have you been hesitant to respond?
- What sacrifices have brought you closer to God's plan for your life?
- How can you embrace continual obedience in your walk with Christ?
- Ask for courage to prioritize obedience in the face of personal ambitions.
- Pray for the ability to trust God's provision in all circumstances.

Day 3

Core Scripture: 2 Corinthians 12:9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.

The notion of finding strength in our weakness is contrary to the world's view of power and success. Yet, Pastor emphasized the truth that God's grace empowers us in ways our own abilities cannot. Through surrender, we invite Him to work mightily within us, perfecting His strength where we fall short. This was evident in the challenges Pastor faced during his mission trip, where illness threatened his ability to serve, yet God's promise of provision and healing was ever-present.

What does it mean to truly depend on God's grace? It's acknowledging that in our human frailty, we can do nothing without Him, but through Him, everything is possible. As we grapple with our limitations, we learn to rest in His sufficiency, allowing His strength to shine through our vulnerabilities.

- How have you experienced God's strength in moments of your own weakness?
- Why do you think God chooses to show His power through our weaknesses?
- In what ways can you rely more on God's grace in your daily activities?
- Pray for an understanding heart to trust God's strength over your own.
- Seek comfort in God's promise that His grace is enough for every challenge.

Day 4

Core Scripture: Philippians 3:8 What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ.

Counting all things as loss for the sake of Christ calls for a complete realignment of our values. Pastor highlighted the sacrifices necessary to gain the richness of life with Christ, which far outweighs material possessions and earthly recognition. To gain Christ is to gain everything, embracing His lordship over all aspects of life.

This shift in perspective challenges us to evaluate what truly holds value in our eyes. By considering worldly achievements as temporary and transient, we open our hearts to the eternal treasures that God offers. Pastor encourages us to let go of what is temporary to inherit what is everlasting.

- What current possessions or achievements would you find difficult to view as loss?
- How does pursuing Christ change your outlook on success and achievement?
- What steps can you take to prioritize eternal gains over temporary ones?
- Ask God to help you discern what is truly valuable in your life.
- Pray for the strength to let go of earthly desires that overshadow God's eternal promises.

Day 5

Core Scripture: James 3:16 For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

Envy and selfish ambition bring about confusion and chaos, exactly what worldly pursuits often result in. Pastor's sermon warns believers against allowing these traits to infiltrate our lives and ministries. Instead, we are called to selflessness, prioritizing God's Kingdom over personal glory. By crucifying our ambitions, we find peace in aligning our hearts with God's desires.

Today's reflection asks us to examine our motives, ensuring they align with righteous ambitions rather than self-serving ends. Pastor underscores the importance of humility within the church and in our personal relationships, where our focus must remain on God's plan and not on our agendas.

- In what areas of your life does selfish ambition need to be surrendered?
- How does humility play a role in serving within the church and community?

- Are there ways you can serve others more selflessly this week?
- Pray for a humble spirit that seeks God's approval above human recognition.
- Invite God to help you lay down personal ambitions that interfere with His purpose.