



# DEVOTIONAL GUIDES & SMALL GROUP STUDY

LESSON FIVE- "WE'RE GONNA BE  
AWESOME FOR YOU!"

## DAILY DEVOTIONAL READINGS MAY 10-15

### *The Discipline of Community Participation*

#### **Monday, May 10 Read Psalm 133**

This is a psalm of ascents, essentially a call to gather and worship. It reminds us that coming together and practicing unity under God is the vital starting point for discipleship and for evangelism. The symbolism of oil running down is one of blessing and abundance and the imagery of Mt. Hermon, from whence all the water in the Sea of Galilee and the Jordan river came, reminds us that faithful unity is the source of the Good News. How does our worship gathering empower our call to be witnesses and evangelists? \_\_\_\_\_

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#### **Tuesday May 11 Read Proverbs 27:17 & 28:13**

These two pithy proverbs remind us that we are at our best, and grow the most, when we interact with others. It is in community that we improve, practice (rather than just talk about) mercy and grace and look towards larger goals. What individual sacrifices are necessary, however, in order to maintain such a community? \_\_\_\_\_

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What factors tend to conspire against unified Christian fellowship? \_\_\_\_\_

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#### **Wednesday, May 12 Read John 15:1-14**

Notice several of themes presented in this familiar passage. We are called to be a collection of individuals bound together by the presence, power and purpose of Christ. When we are properly connected our shared function is to bear fruit for God's Kingdom. Some work is required to achieve these goals, namely, pruning, grafting and harvesting. Put together, what is Jesus saying about our call to join together as the church? \_\_\_\_\_

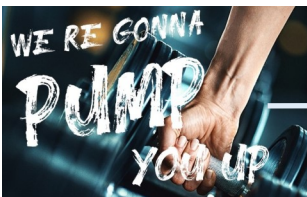
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To what extent are we called to sacrifice our individualism? Give some specific examples. \_\_\_\_\_

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#### **Thursday, May 13 Read Colossians 3:1-17**

It's important to notice that these instructions are given to the church collectively, not just as an individual practice. There is much self-sacrifice, humility, graciousness and "setting the mind on things above." What



## DAILY DEVOTIONALS , continued

### Sermon notes from Sunday, May 9, 2021

#### "We're Gonna Be Awesome For You" Acts 2:41-47

1. Christian discipleship must be expressed in the shared experience of the church.
2. Living as a part of the Body means that we must...
  - A. ...practice putting ourselves second.
  - B. ...generously share our talents and resources.
  - C. ...consciously work towards unity.

does this suggest about the nature and purpose of the church and of being a member of it? \_\_\_\_\_

Look closely at vv.14-16. How can we live more fully into the call of being Christ's church? \_\_\_\_\_

#### Friday, May 14 Read Acts 2:42-47

Extra-Biblical sources from the period regularly comment on what good citizens and neighbors the first Christians were. Here we see a wonderful snapshot of how they lived their lives together. In what ways does this line up with how the church operates today and in what ways is it different? \_\_\_\_\_

How does the way we interact as a community affect our witness to Christ? \_\_\_\_\_

#### Saturday, May 15 Read Romans 12:1-18

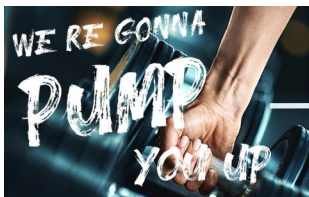
From v.3 onward this passage presents a series of guidelines for right living and Christ-like interactions between

ourselves and others. But v.1 reminds us that living in this way is an act of worship and sacrifice, putting others before ourselves which runs contrary to how the world tells us to get ahead. How can we as church members help other brothers and sisters make this sacrifice? \_\_\_\_\_

Why is it so important that we do so? \_\_\_\_\_

## BUT I CAN WORSHIP ANYWHERE, CAN'T I?

1. Jesus clearly



## SMALL GROUP STUDY FOR MAY 16

### LESSON FIVE: "WE RE GONNA BE AWESOME"

#### Part 1: Initial Reflections

Begin by reading aloud John 15:1-14. Ask: *"Is it important to notice the plurals here (Jesus is talking to the collection of his disciples and uses the term branches)? Why or why not? What difference would it make?"*

Discuss the questions from Monday, May 10 and discuss the questions from that day with your group.

#### Part 2: Finding the Answers

1. Look at these notes and themes from Sunday's sermon and discuss the following questions with your group:

##### **I. Christian discipleship must be expressed in the shared experience of the church.**

- *Many feel that the church, as an organized Body, is not truly necessary for Christian faith (after all, isn't it just a personal connection between you and Jesus?). From your own experience as well as your scriptural knowledge (including readings from this week), do you agree with that stance? Why or why not? What is the function of the church?*

##### **II. Living as a part of the Body means that we must...**

###### **A. ...practice putting ourselves second.**

- *How might putting ourselves second be a practical way to emulate Christ (look up John 13:12-14; John 15:12-13; Luke 9:23 and Philippians 2:1-6 for reference)? How does life in the church help us to do this?*

###### **B. ...generously share our talents and resources.**

- *Read Romans 12:3-8 & 1 Corinthians 12:14-27. Why is sharing our talents and resources a vital part of being the church? If we don't generously share these, why not? What do you think Paul— and Jesus— would say to those who stay on the fringes of church life? Why?*

###### **C. ...consciously work towards unity.**

- *If sin is truly rooted in selfishness (the exact opposite of the 'mind of Christ' in Philippians 2), what does that say about our struggles for unity and working together as the church? How can active participation in the Christian community be seen as a spiritual discipline?*

2. Read Colossians 3:1-17 aloud and discuss the questions from Thursday, May 13 with the group.

#### **Making a Religious Activity Into a Spiritual Discipline**

- *Close today by reading Psalm 133 and answer the question from Monday. As a group reflect on and pray over specific ways you can strengthen our Christian community.*