

Daily Devotions

Day 1: The Command to Trust

Reading: John 14:1-4

Jesus spoke His words of comfort knowing the storm ahead. "Don't let your hearts be troubled" wasn't a suggestion—it was a command backed by divine power. When life becomes messy, we often feel powerless against anxiety and fear. Yet Jesus offers more than sympathy; He offers supernatural ability through the Holy Spirit. God never commands what He doesn't empower us to obey. Today, recognize that your troubled thoughts can be managed, not through willpower alone, but through active trust in God. The same Jesus who calmed literal storms speaks peace into your chaos. Surrender control and receive His strength to stand firm when everything feels uncertain.

Day 2: Taking Thoughts Captive

Reading: 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

Paul reminds us that spiritual battles require spiritual weapons. Our minds become battlegrounds where fear, doubt, and anxiety wage war against truth. But we possess divine power to demolish strongholds—those recurring thought patterns that hold us captive. Taking thoughts captive means actively intercepting anxious thinking and submitting it to Christ's authority. This isn't denial or positive thinking; it's aggressive faith. When "what if" questions flood your mind, capture them. Ask: Is this thought true? Does it align with God's character? Replace lies with Scripture. This mental discipline, empowered by the Spirit, transforms how you process life's messiness. You're not helpless against your thoughts—you're equipped to manage them.

Day 3: Transformation Through Renewal

Reading: Romans 12:1-2

Transformation happens when we stop conforming to the world's anxiety-driven patterns and allow God to renew our minds. The world teaches us to worry, control, and fear tomorrow. But God invites us into a radically different way of thinking. Renewal isn't instantaneous; it's a daily choice to align your thoughts with God's truth rather than circumstances. When you feel overwhelmed, pause and ask what God's Word says about your situation. His will is good, pleasing, and perfect—even in the mess. This requires intentionality: reading Scripture, meditating on promises, and practicing gratitude. As your mind is renewed, your perspective shifts from crisis to confidence in God's sovereign care.

Day 4: Casting Your Cares

Reading: 1 Peter 5:6-9; Matthew 6:25-34

God doesn't minimize your struggles; He invites you to transfer them to His capable hands. "Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you" is both permission and instruction. You weren't designed to carry the weight of tomorrow's uncertainties. Jesus illustrated this beautifully: if God feeds birds and clothes flowers, how much more will He provide for you? Anxiety often stems from feeling responsible for outcomes only God can control. Humility means acknowledging your limitations and trusting God's unlimited power. Today, physically write down your worries, then pray over each one, releasing them to God. Stand firm in faith, knowing the same God who sustained you yesterday will meet you in tomorrow's unknowns.

Day 5: Power in Weakness

Reading: 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

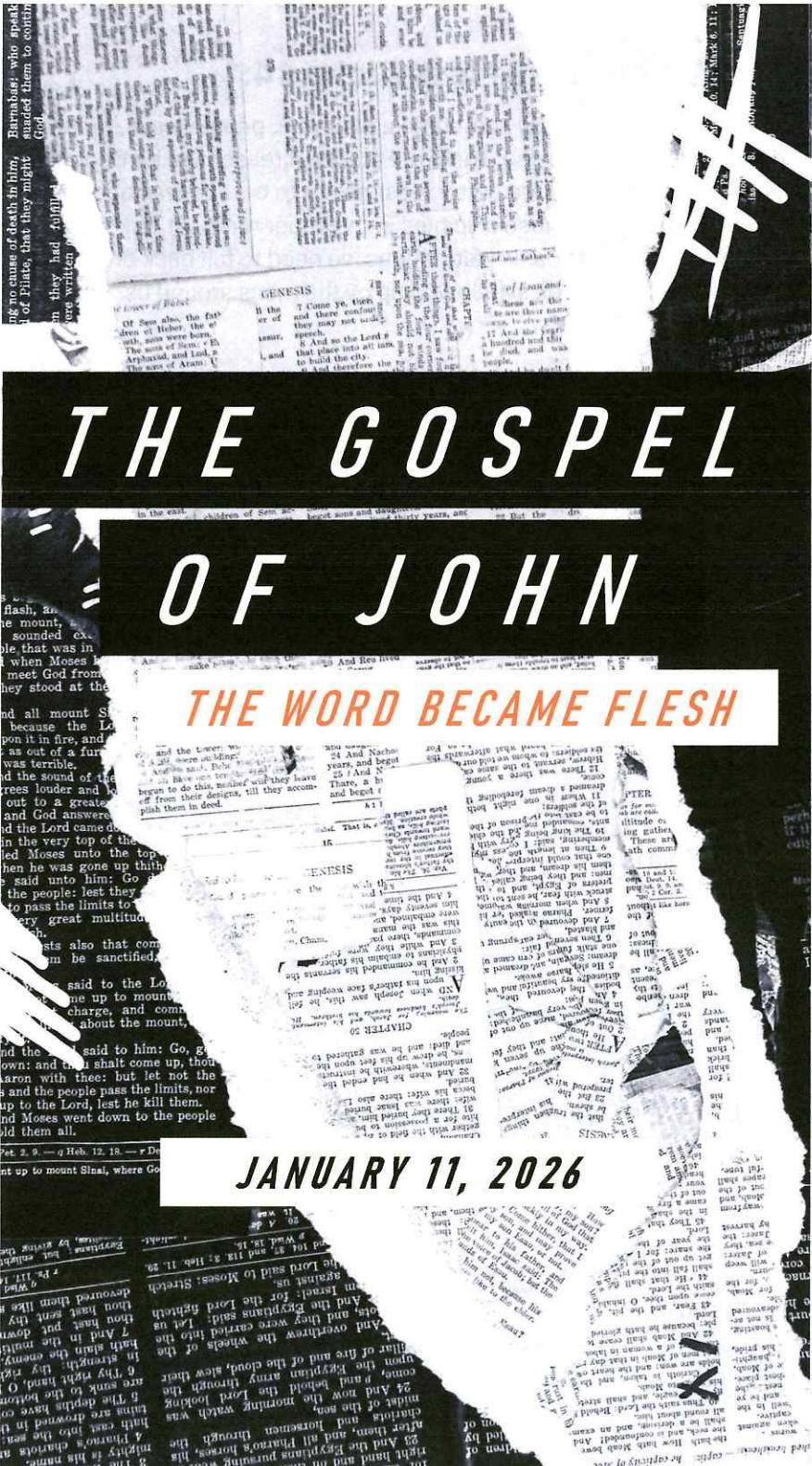
Paul's thorn in the flesh reveals a profound truth: God doesn't always remove our struggles because He uses them to reveal His power. Your brokenness isn't something to hide—it's the very place where Christ's strength shines brightest. When Paul pleaded for relief, God responded with grace, not removal. This teaches us that spiritual maturity isn't about having it all together; it's about depending completely on Jesus in our weakness. Your anxiety, chronic pain, or persistent struggle may be the instrument God uses to draw you closer to Him. Stop fighting your brokenness and start surrendering it. In your weakness, you discover a power not your own—the sufficient grace of Jesus that transforms mess into ministry.

Deacons on Call

David Barks and Royce Blair

Weekly Events

- **WORSHIP:** Sundays at 9:45 AM
- **SMALL GROUPS:** Sundays at 11 AM
- **Deep Dive:** Wednesdays at Noon and 6:45 PM
- **First Kids:** Wednesdays at 5:30
- **First Youth:** Wednesdays—JH 5:30; HS 6:45 PM



In the Mess / John 14:1

Life can be pretty messy sometimes: plans fail, people leave, money diminishes, and taxes rise. There are plenty of reasons to be troubled these days, but there are better reasons not to be! Life was about to get real messy for those disciples in the upper room. At times like that, there are some basic instructions we need to fall back on so our hearts won't be swallowed up by the mess around us.

Charles Colson: "Life is not a book. Life isn't logical or sensible or orderly. Life is a mess most of the time and theology must be lived in the midst of that mess."

1. Your mess can be _____.

a. This is a _____.

b. When God gives a command, He gives the _____ to obey it.

Jesus wouldn't tell us to "don't" unless we could "don't"!

2. Your mess has a _____.

3. Always start in the _____ and work your way to the _____.

4. God _____ your brokenness.

Discussion Questions

1. Share about a time when life felt particularly "messy". What helped you get through that season?
2. Read **John 14:1**. Is there anything from the sermon you would like to discuss?
3. Charles Colson said, "Life is a mess most of the time and theology must be lived in the midst of that mess." How does this quote resonate with your current life situation?
4. Look at John 14:1 again. Why do you think Jesus gave this as a command rather than a suggestion? What does that tell us about our ability to manage our thought life?
5. Patrick presented two extremes in the church regarding anxiety: "just take meds" vs. "it's only spiritual." Why are both extremes problematic? How can we approach anxiety more holistically?
6. Read **2 Corinthians 10:3-5**, **Romans 12:2**, and **1 Peter 1:13**. According to these passages, what role do we play in managing our messy minds? What is God's part?
7. Read **2 Corinthians 12:7-10**. Have you experienced God not removing something you desperately wanted removed? How did that affect your relationship with Him?
8. "God understands your brokenness." For many of us, we're ashamed and try to hide our brokenness. Why do you think we struggle to accept what God accepts? What would change if we truly believed this?
9. Jesus told the disciples to trust in God and trust in Him. Why is WHO we trust more important than WHAT we're facing?

Practical Applications

- Each time a "what if" worry enters your mind, write it down, then write "Trust in God and trust in Jesus" next to it. Pray specifically about that worry.
- Like Paul with his thorn, identify one area of brokenness or weakness in your life. Instead of hiding it, share it with one trusted person this week and ask them to pray with you about experiencing Christ's power through it.
- Memorize one of these passages: **Romans 12:2**; **Philippians 4:6-7**; **1 Peter 5:7**; **Matthew 6:25-26**

Scripture References (In order of use): John 14:26; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5; Romans 12:2; Psalm 6:2-3; 1 Timothy 5:23; Matthew 6:25-26; 1 Peter 5:6-9; 2 Corinthians 12:7-10
Referenced Works: Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott (The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge); Addresses on the Gospel of John (H. A. Ironside); The Beloved Disciple's Memoirs and Letters (Bob Utley); John: That You May Believe (R. Kent Hughes); The Gospel of John (Jack Wilson Stallings)