

# 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY CHURCH

## DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

Monday/Tuesday

**PURPOSE OF THE DEVOTION:** To give you every opportunity to let God speak to your heart about the church (that's you) in the most personal way.

**WHAT TO DO:** Read the 1st devotion in the early part of the week (Monday or Tuesday). Listen to the **21stCC Podcast on Wednesday**. Read the 2nd devotion in the later part of the week (Thursday, Friday, or Saturday).

Think about a group of people extremely unified and committed to one another. What groups come to mind? Isn't it sad that most people wouldn't think about the Church? A family would probably be first. Then our minds might go to gangs or even possibly sports teams, fraternities, or clubs before we think of the Church. But Jesus created a new community where the commitment is far greater than anywhere else.

One of the primary markers of a church's health is how well they love one another. Check out 2 Thessalonians 1:3. We are commanded to love one another over fifty times in the New Testament. It is one of the strongest emphases in the entire New Testament.

Loving one another deeply from the heart, encouraging one another, being devoted to one another, and so many others are not optional. We're going to stand before Jesus soon, and He really expects us to be loving one another radically compared with the world. We have to make whatever changes are necessary. Don't do it six months from now. Make the changes now.

**WEEKLY KEY THOUGHT: *WHAT IF WE TOOK GOD'S DESCRIPTION OF THE CHURCH AS A FAMILY SERIOUSLY??***

**Pray: Heavenly Father, show me the changes I need to make in my life to create space for deeper relationships.**

# 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY CHURCH

## DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

Thursday/Friday/Saturday

**PURPOSE OF THE DEVOTION:** To give you every opportunity to let God speak to your heart about the church (that's you) in the most personal way.

**WHAT TO DO:** Read the 1st devotion in the early part of the week (Monday or Tuesday). Listen to the **21stCC Podcast on Wednesday**. Read the 2nd devotion in the later part of the week (Thursday, Friday, or Saturday).

Our culture affects the way we view the Church. Each of us has been influenced by individualism and idolize productivity in ways we don't even realize. Scripture paints a different picture of Christianity, saying everyone in the early church shared everything. Not just some people, but rather, "no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common" (Acts 4:32). They were all on board with this. You need a car? Here's mine. You need somewhere to live? Move on in. You need money? Let me empty out my bank account. Seem crazy? This is Christianity.

How in the world could the Church back then love one another that much? For starters, they weren't just meeting on Sunday for sixty minutes. They were meeting "day by day" (Acts 2:46) and seemed to really love having meals together in homes. It wasn't about formal meetings. They were family. They loved being around one another and did it constantly. We are often so sheltered from one another and isolated. Maybe it's time for a massive overhaul. So many of us are way too busy with our programmed activities, we need to be more intentional. If you're going to watch the game, why not invite people from the church to watch with you? You eat dinner every night. Why not have more people over to eat together, in community? Maybe you have an extra bedroom. Why not offer that room to someone in the church so you can do life together?

Something has to change. We can't keep disobeying God.

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**Pray: Heavenly Father, show me the changes I need to make in my life to create space for deeper relationships.**

**WHAT DO YOU THINK GOD HAS BEEN SAYING TO YOU THIS WEEK ABOUT THE CHURCH?**

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