

Use this daily Transformation Journal to learn how to study the Bible for yourself. Pray before you begin and ask God to bless you with insight and discernment as you ponder and respond to the questions, which are tools for your spiritual growth.

### Luke 14:1-14

On one occasion when Jesus was going to the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the Sabbath, they were watching him closely. Just then, in front of him, there was a man who had dropsy. And Jesus asked the lawyers and Pharisees, 'Is it lawful to cure people on the Sabbath, or not?' But they were silent. So Jesus took him and healed him, and sent him away. Then he said to them, 'If one of you has a child or an ox that has fallen into a well, will you not immediately pull it out on a Sabbath day?' And they could not reply to this.

When he noticed how the guests chose the places of honor, he told them a parable. 'When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honor, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited by your host; and the host who invited both of you may come and say to you, "Give this person your place", and

then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, "Friend, move up higher"; then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.'

He said also to the one who had invited him, 'When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.'

### Sermon Notes

### Monday, August 16

As a follower of Jesus you are being transformed into Jesus' image through obedience. During this process Jesus' life increasingly becomes your life and Jesus' priorities increasingly become your priorities. In today's Scriptures, God clearly identifies the priorities God's followers are to have: you are to love God first and foremost; act humbly, justly, and mercifully toward others; and abandon yourself to God, letting God's power and provision flow through your life.

#### Micah 6:6-8 and Matthew 6:25-34

- From these passages, what is to be most important to followers of God? What is to diminish in importance?
- On a scale of one (cool as a cucumber) to ten (stressed to the max), how would you rate yourself on seeking God and letting go of daily concerns ?

### Tuesday, August 17

Justice is high on God's priority list because people matter to God. Justice goes beyond observing certain worship forms and going through religious rituals. You demonstrate justice by internalizing God's value of doing right by all people and acting on that value. God wants you, as God's follower, to treat others fairly and righteously (as God would treat them).

#### Mark 12:28-34 and Amos 5:11-15, 21-24

- According to Amos, why did God "despise" Israel's religious feasts?
- Toward whom do you need to think or act more justly?

**Wednesday, August 18**

Operating according to God's priorities takes you beyond the typical behavior of society. Although the norm is to take care of yourself and to base your responses to others on the way they have treated you, God's instruction is to initiate acts of love toward others, whether they "deserve" it or not. God's love and mercy are undeserved and freely offered. As Jesus said, "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful."

**Luke 10:25-37 and 6:27-36**

- From these verses, who is deserving of a demonstration of God's love? Why?
- Who in your circle of influence is in need of God's mercy and love? What action will you take?

**Thursday, August 19**

God calls for humility in your relationship with God and in your approach to life. To fully live as God intends, you have to come to the realization that life is not about you; it's about prioritizing your relationship with God and fulfilling God's purpose in your life. The challenge is to completely surrender as your life is reoriented to God's value system and worldview.

**Luke 19:9-14 and James 4:1-10**

- According to today's Scriptures, what are some outcomes of pride (lack of humility)? What solution did James offer in 4:7-10?
- Taking an honest evaluation of your spiritual life, in what areas do you need to humble yourself and surrender to God?

**Friday, August 20**

Going beyond listening and studying to apply and acting on what God says will bring changes in every part of your life. Living out God's word authenticates and deepens your relationship with God and others, and changes your perspective on life and faith. Obedience is the key to the transformation process God is working in your life and will result in God's priorities being demonstrated through you.

**James 1:19-27**

- According to James, what are the results of doing God's word?
- What from this week's Scriptures so far could you purposefully act on today?

**Saturday, August 21**

Rather than a passive, easy existence, following Jesus and living out God's priorities requires stepping out of your comfort zone. Risk, trials, pain, and suffering are components of every life; followers of Jesus are no exception. To successfully navigate all of life requires deep and complete trust that God will lovingly work in every situation to help you grow in your spiritual maturity. The same Peter who stepped out of the boat to follow Jesus later wrote today's passage about enduring suffering in Jesus' name.

**Matthew 14:22-32 and 1 Peter 4:12-19**

- Who is to be the object of your trust, no matter the situation? (Matthew 14:27 and 1 Peter 4:19)?
- In what situation do you need to more deeply trust God to work and to grow your spiritual maturity?