

*Day 1**March 23**Pray | For the hearts of everyone to delight in Jesus Christ*

ONLY YOU and God know the condition of your heart and the strength of your relationship with Jesus.

Words or outward actions can be an indication of your heart for God; but what is most revealing to God is your inner most thoughts, your true intentions, and the ways you give God room to work in your heart.

*Read | Matthew 7:21-23, 1 Corinthians 4:1-5**Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:*

Reflect on the ways your relationship with Jesus Christ is demonstrated to others. Does the demonstration of your relationship focus on your appearance to others or does it focus on your heart for Jesus?

Jesus and Paul repeatedly reminded their audiences throughout their ministries of the dangers of a legalistic approach and an outward appearance of being religious. How do you see today's church abiding by their reminders? What are some ways in which you have seen today's church forgetting their reminders?

A major roadblock preventing some people from seeking a relationship with Jesus Christ might be a misconception that they have to appear sinless, holier than others, or perfect. If this roadblock applies to you, seek out the counsel of a trusted Christian in your life and ask how to open your heart to Jesus today.

*Day 2**March 24*

Pray | For your heart to be completely surrendered to Jesus

THE HOPE, grace, and love of Jesus Christ is available to anyone!

The foundation of God's eternal kingdom is based on the most stable rock in existence, love. The foundation of one's faith in Jesus Christ is based on his love and grace. A strong foundation of faith is not based on superficial appearances but is based on the condition of the heart.



Read | Matthew 7:24-25, Mark 12:41-44, 1 John 4:8



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

What might one be able to ascertain about Jesus' will for our relationship with him based on his words about the widow in Mark 12:41-44? Did her actions appear outward focused, or more focused on what was in her heart?

How would you gauge the strength of your foundation of faith in Jesus? Do you find yourself spending time with God joyfully or out of legalism and obligation? Spend time in prayer and ask God for ways in which you can overcome feelings of legalism and obligation.

Reflect on the times in your life when you have felt the most joyfully connected to God. Share your experiences with someone whom you feel might be far from God, in a prayer group, or in a small group setting. Share these experiences with the intention of encouraging others in their faith journey.

*Day 3**March 25**Pray | Joyfully respond to your salvation*

THE WAY in which we live our lives should be tremendously affected by the salvation that has been given to us through Jesus Christ.

Jesus calls us to respond to his graceful salvation. Works, deeds, and words in and of themselves cannot bring salvation to anyone. However, works, deeds, and words can be a way in which a response to salvation can be manifested.

*Read | Matthew 7:25-27, 1 Peter 1:13-16**Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:*

Five Oaks Church teaches that one way to respond to your salvation is through being baptized. Spend time in prayerful consideration about being baptized in the name of Jesus Christ here at Five Oaks Church.

How do today's scripture verses impact or change the way in which you disciple others?

Being holy is a loaded standard that can have variable meanings between individuals, cultures, and organized religions. What does it mean to you? Does it mean to be perfect, legalistic, and religious? Or does it mean for you to be merciful, loving, and humble?

Day 4
March 26



Pray | Tell God you have complete trust in him

GOD'S WARNINGS to his people about the feebleness of shallow ritualism and sacrificial systems is not unique to the New Testament. God has been warning his people against works-based salvation from the beginning of time.

Several hundred years before Jesus walked on the Earth, God spoke through his prophet, Hosea. Even during a time when God's people thought they were doing good and right works and the Mosaic law was being used, God reminded his people that their hearts may have not been in the right place.



Read | Hosea 8:11-14, Galatians 2:15-21



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

The Apostle Paul was begging the Galatian people to shed their old ways of sinning and their old ways of following the law and accept Jesus Christ's death and resurrection as something good enough. Why do you think it was difficult for God's people during this time period to grasp the concept of grace?

If you are a recently born-again follower of Christ, what are some the old ways of your life, traditions, or rituals that are difficult to let go of? Are there any current ways of your life that seem to be replacing your old ways as a response to God's grace?

*Day 5**March 27**Pray | Thank God for your spiritual gifts*

THE SERMON on the Mount contains many valuable teachings. Its totality is not revealed in robotically obeying rules just to seem religious. God's desire is for his people to have our hearts thoroughly transformed into loving him joyfully.

It is pleasing to God for you to share the spiritual gifts he has given you with others. The so-called "right way" of living has nothing to do with regulations, but everything to do with being loving, merciful, and humble.

*Read | Micah 6:6-8, Romans 12:3-8**Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:*

Micah 6:6-8 indicates that the Israelites, God's chosen people, turned their hearts away from him during this point in history. How do these verses, even though under an old covenant, still apply in your life today? Where are mercy and humility most evident in your actions toward others?

In Romans 12:3-8, Paul is telling Christ's followers to share their gifts with others in order to make disciples. What are your spiritual gifts and how have you used them to disciple others?

If you have a spiritual gift but are unsure how to use or apply it, seek out a pastor or staff member at Five Oaks Church and discuss how you can serve and share your gifts for the benefit of others.

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