

Day 1
November 12



Pray | Thank God for providing for all your needs.

JEHOVAH JIREH, MY PROVIDER. This name for God originates all the way back in Genesis when God asked Abraham to sacrifice his only son but stopped him at the last moment and provided a suitable sacrifice for them. Abraham named that place “The Lord Will Provide.” This provision continues thousands of years later as Jesus shows himself to his disciples for a third time after his resurrection in this week’s New Testament story.

The story is a neat one with Jesus cooking breakfast for his disciples. The God of the Universe, who came down as a baby born in a stable, grows into a man who washes his disciples’ feet and is now cooking breakfast. God performs powerful miracles like rising from the dead, but he is also interested in providing for us in our day-to-day lives. James says, “Every good and perfect gift is from above” (James 1:17). Every trip to the store for basic necessities, our children, a good education, fun opportunities, and great medical care are all because God provides for us. He cares about the small details like a hot breakfast after a long night of fishing.



Read | John 21:1-14; Genesis 22:9-14



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

How cool is it to serve a God who cooks us breakfast? How has God provided for you? What are some of the basic day-to-day essentials that you have because of God?

What events have happened in your life that you could only attribute to God? Maybe it is something as simple as being awestruck by a beautiful landscape or something monumental such as witnessing a miraculous healing. Where have you seen God reach into this physical world?

When you are afraid, what has God done to remind you that he is there and will always provide for you?

Day 2

November 13



Pray | That God would always have his way in your life.

GOD'S PLANS FOR YOU ARE GREATER THAN YOUR FAILURES.
Today's story is another surprising one in which Peter gets some closure and a second chance. How many of us wish for a second chance in life? Peter had claimed to love Jesus more than anything, but then three times he denied he even knew Jesus the night of the crucifixion. He never got the opportunity to make amends with Jesus before he died that night. Now here he is, receiving full forgiveness as well as a second chance. Peter had failed his Savior in a sense, but that didn't stop him from readily accepting the new challenge.

God has a plan for us, and he wants us to partner with him, but sometimes we feel unworthy of that partnership, are unwilling, or are afraid to pay the price. However, if we submit to God, he can take even our past (or current) failures and weave them into his story of love and success.



Read | John 18:15-18, 25-27; John 21:15-19



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

Jesus recommissions Peter, and instead of feeling guilty for his past misgivings, Peter accepts the new mission. Sometimes we avoid following God because we too feel guilty or unworthy. What in your past makes you feel unworthy of God's calling on your life?

In John 18, the cost of following Jesus was too great for Peter, so three times he denied knowing him when Jesus needed him most: the night Jesus was accused that ultimately led to his crucifixion. When does the cost of following Jesus feel as though it is too high for you?

Spend some time confessing to God that you sometimes just don't want to pay the price to follow him. Think about why you don't want to pay that cost, and simply lay that at his feet. He will take it and make something beautiful out of it if you let him.

Day 3

November 14



Pray | *That how much you value God would continue to grow.*

WHAT MATTERS MOST?

If someone offered to tell you how you were going to die, would you want to know? Jesus forgave Peter and gave him a second chance to spread the gospel. He also told Peter to follow directly in his footsteps, even to the point of death. Jesus told Peter that if he followed him, he would die a gruesome death. Peter decided the price was worth it and followed Jesus until that very death. He was willing to give his life for the sake of following Jesus.

In prison, the apostle Paul wrote about similar thoughts in his letter to the Philippian church, weighing whether he would prefer to stay on earth, spreading the Gospel at great cost, or go to be with Jesus. Both options were actually equal to him. It was just as valuable to him to be in chains for the Gospel as it was to die so he could be with Jesus!



Read | *John 15:18-19; Philippians 1:15-24*



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

Paul and Peter were faced with imprisonment and death for their faithfulness to Jesus' call on their lives. What does faithfulness to Jesus' call on your life look like for you? If you're not sure, spend some time asking God to show you.

We value keeping our lives as the ultimate goal. Staying alive is our number one priority. But what if it wasn't? What if spreading God's Word was your number one priority? This is probably really tricky to wrap your brain around, so start small. What *would* you be willing to give up to spread God's Word?

Jesus gave up his throne for us. He gave up his status, he gave up comfort, he gave up his lifeblood: constant communion with God. He died for you and me long before we were even born because it was worth the price to him. If you haven't yet thanked him and accepted his sacrifice as a free gift, take a few minutes to talk to him about that.

Day 4
November 15



Pray | Thank God for paying a high price for you.

WHAT WILL YOU FIGHT FOR?

Jesus has called Peter to feed and take care of his sheep no matter what the cost. Yesterday we considered the idea that following Jesus and spreading God's good news is more valuable than even keeping our own lives. Sometimes we become indignant about this choice and demand to know why that has to even be a choice! "Why should I have to give up my life for this?"

Augustine wrote that God is entrusting us with the "sheep" he bought with his blood.¹ He can only entrust them to us if he knows we are willing to pay a similar cost. In comparison, why do we require that someone who is watching our children be willing to sacrifice for them instead of someone who doesn't care for them? Because we would sacrifice everything for them.



Read | John 21:15-18; Exodus 14:14

¹ Augustine, Sermon 296.4, quoted in John 11–21, ed. Joel C. Elowsky, vol. IVb in Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: New Testament, 390.



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

When have you been offended at the idea of sacrificing your own wealth, status, comfort, or relationships for God? How do Augustine's words put this in a different light for you?

When the cost of following Jesus grows higher and more painful, how can you focus on following him? Maybe start with the verse in Exodus for inspiration.

Thank God that he fights for you and paid a high cost for your eternity.

Jesus gave Peter specific instructions to feed and take care of his sheep, and this applies to us as well. How do you apply this commission to your own life?

Day 5
November 16



Pray | That you would keep your eyes on Jesus.

COMPETITION, they say, drives prices down. It's good for business. Competition is the answer to complacency. But when is competition detrimental? When does competition become a distraction? Peter's Savior has died and risen. Peter is sitting at a breakfast Jesus prepared for him, having a one-on-one conversation in which Jesus forgives his indiscretions, recommissions him, and then tells him about the death he will suffer. No doubt Peter experiences a myriad of emotions! He's grateful for this chance, he's excited to see his Savior, and he gets to talk with his friend. Peter has a specific calling on his life!

And he has a less-than-desirable death in his future. Since Peter is human, he takes his eyes off Jesus, looks around and sees John and, in essence, points and says, "Well what about him? Why doesn't *he* have to die like this?!"



Read | John 21:17-22; Matthew 14:25-31; Philippians 4:6-7



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

In Peter's conversation with Jesus in the book of John, he takes his eyes off Jesus and is distracted by someone else's fate. He has a similar distraction in Matthew when he is walking on the water towards Jesus during a storm. Right in the middle of a miracle, he lets the distraction of the high waves pull his eyes off Jesus and onto fear and uncertainty. Think about what distracts you the most and causes you to take your eyes off Jesus; bring that to him, and ask him to help you keep your eyes on him.

Consider a time of pain in your life. Have you ever looked at someone else's life and wondered why you can't have the perfect things they have? Why have you held this perspective? How can you give this to God?

Our world is full of anxiety and fear, and these things take our eyes off Jesus on a daily basis. Spend some time meditating on Philippians 4:6-7 and its application in your life.

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