

The Authentic Christian and Life Change — November 4 & 5, 2017
Follow-up Bible Studies

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Day One: Matthew 7:13-27

- Describe Jesus' comparison of the gates (13-14). How is a *full* grasp on salvation – Jesus as your sanctifying Lord – like the narrow road to life? What road do you sense you're on?
- Describe false prophets (15-18). What happens to trees that bear bad fruit (19)? What distinguishes true disciples from false ones (21-23)? Ask the Lord to examine your heart and life to reveal what sort of fruit you bear and whether you do his will. What is he showing to you? What one change does this inspire you to make?
- What analogy does Jesus use to sum up what it means to truly follow him and change for the better (24-27)? Think about where you see yourself and your life's experiences in this description. Take a few minutes to speak to the Lord about this.

Day Two: John 1:29-34

- What two men appear in this story (29)? What did John say as Jesus approached him (29)? Recalling Old Testament stories like the Passover and ritual sacrifice, meditate on what the "Lamb of God" represents. John said Jesus "takes away the sin of the world;" how is this different from his forgiving of sins?
- How did John contrast himself with Jesus (30-31)? He pointed people toward God's life-changing power; Jesus brought it to the full. How is the fullness of the gospel progressively freeing you from the power of sin? Praise God for this metamorphosis.
- What is John's testimony of Jesus' baptism (32-34)? In that moment, what did he realize about Jesus? What role do you think baptism in the Holy Spirit plays in one's sanctification? In this current season, what particular sin struggle do you want Jesus to take away? Open yourself up to this next layer of sanctification.

Day Three: Philippians 1:3-11

- What does Paul do each time he remembers his friends in Philippi (3)? Why does he joyfully pray for them (4-6)? What do you think it means to be a "partner in the gospel"? Verse six describes the sanctification process. How would you describe your own sanctification journey; how has the Holy Spirit transformed you?
- In addition to thankfulness and joy, how else does Paul feel about the Philippians (7-8)? When you witness friends' and loved ones' lives transformed because of Jesus, how do you feel? How do you think God feels about sanctification?
- Summarize Paul's prayer for those in Philippi (9-11). What enriches your love for God and others? How does this same enrichment inspire and empower you to pursue holiness? What moments in this journey do you sense have glorified the Lord? Pray for more knowledge, insight, discernment, purity, fruit and righteousness – all to bring glory to God.

Day Four: 1 Thessalonians 5:12-24

- Who should receive acknowledgement and high regard (12-13)? Who needs a warning (14)? Who needs encouraged (14)? Helped (14)? Patience (14)? Instead of "eye for an eye," how should people respond to wrongs (15)? Which of Paul's points in verses 12-15, if implemented, would bring the most positive change to your life? Make a plan to start walking it out.

- What prayer and spiritual posture does Paul call his readers to adopt (16-22)? How does spirituality of this sort point to a changed life? Where are you in these verses? Where do you wish you saw yourself? Ask the Holy Spirit to transform you as only he can.
- A letter from Paul isn't complete without a written prayer; describe this one (23-24). What is one area of your life where you doubt the Holy Spirit's power to "sanctify you through and through"? Memorize verse 24, bring it to mind, say it out loud, etc. whenever your doubts try to cloud out God's life-changing power.

Day Five: Hebrews 12:1-3

- Departed heroes of the faith testify to amazing things that happen when we trust in the Lord. What should this inspire us to do (1)? Think of "everything that hinders" you in your life. What sin "so easily entangles you"? The writer isn't telling us to tolerate or not stress about our sin; we are called to throw it all off. What are some spiritual practices that will help you to regularly do this?
- How should we run "the race" (1)? What race do you sense God has "marked out" for you? When we run, where should we look (2)? Meditate on the last sentence of verse two and imagine looking Jesus in the eye. Tell him about how he saves you and makes you holy. What response do you sense him speaking?
- What is one purpose of contemplating Jesus' suffering (3)? Right now, what has you feeling weary and weak in heart? Talk to the Lord about it. Ask him to equip you with endurance and fortitude. And pray you'd experience sanctification in the midst of it all.