*Jasper First Baptist Church*

*First Baptist Chruch YMT 2022*

Devotion Guide

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**Saturday July 9**

*Be there?*

*Proverbs 19:21*

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| **Here I Am to Worship** |  | **Jesus Will Still be there** |

John Lennon once said, “life happens when you’re busy making plans.” What he is saying is too often it is easy to get caught up in the making plans for the future and miss what is happening right now. John Lennon is not saying you do not need to dream for the future, but that you need to take time to be present in today.

Proverbs 19:21 says “many are the plans in a person’s heart, but it is the Lord’s purpose that prevails”.

This week while you’re on the mission trip make sure you can be here mind, body, and soul so you don’t miss the Lord in action.

**Sunday July 10**

*Still…?*

*John 20:24*

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| **Give Me Jesus** |  | **Jesus Will Still be there** |

The last couple of years have turned life as we know it upside down. The US saw students sent home for online learning, visitation changes in medical buildings, mask mandates, modified mission trips, etc… What I noticed the most was the isolation that gave way to a feeling that the world will never be normal again. What evidence could we see 2 years ago that it ever would? Students would go back to school only to be sent back home for quarantine. A surge of hospital admissions would ebb only for a new variant to hit and create a new surge of patients being sick. Doubt made it hard for me to see the incremental steps that were happening that things were getting back to a sense of being normal. Churches were opening up, mask mandates were ending, and words like lockdown were fading away. I was Thomas.

John 20:24 says, “…Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.”

The other disciples told Thomas they had seen Jesus. Mary had told the disciples the tomb was empty. Until Thomas saw Jesus, he could not see what the world could become.

**Monday July 11**

*Will Jesus?*

*John 14:6*

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| **Concert Night** |

Human beings are odd things full of thoughts that don’t make sense much of the time. Western philosophy teaches us logical thinking is the best way to think and teaches us that we are supposed to be unbiased in thoughts. However, cognitive science tells us that our ability to think and reason are largely driven by our emotions. The more emotions a person feels the longer the memory of an event will last. Unfortunately, our brains do not record the world as a constant stream. Your brain uses snap shots like individual pictures then ties those pictures together the best it can. That means emotions create longer memories but only commits the parts it sees in the snapshots to long term memory using assumptions to fill in the blanks. Assumptions are more often correct than not but can be incorrect at times. Think in baseball. The batter is making an assumption where the ball will be because the last half of the distance to home plate the eyes cannot actually see the ball’s depth. Baseball is batting with assumption. If our memories can trick us, then how can we know anything is true or just assumption? That’s where Jesus helps.

In John 14:6 Jesus declared, “I am the way, the truth and the life; no man comes to the Father but by Me.”

The Truth in this meaning is faith in the Lord, Jesus his son, and his teachings. That is not to say we are not allowed to question our understanding of the Truth in this world, but that questioning does not have to give way to doubt because He is the truth and our faith in Him can give us peace.

Will Jesus? The answer is yes, he has given us a way to move beyond doubt through faith that He is the Truth.

**Tuesday July 12**

*Still There?*

*Matthew 6: 5-8, 9-13*

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| **Concert Night** |

Motivation is rarely inspired. The act of doing creates motivation rather than motivation creating the act. If you only have the strength to take 1 step, then take 1 step and be proud you did more than you would have if you had waited on motivation. Procrastination however, we will have to address later (Dad Joke).

Motivation is often thought of as the secret ingredient to accomplishment. You may know a certain person is motivated because they study a lot, works hard, or does well at sports. These examples do not explain how a person gets started, they only point out what motivation looks like after you start. Where do you start to get motivation? Talking to Jesus is very much the same. Its easy to fall out of practice. Maybe it has been a while since you spoke with Jesus or the Lord, where do you start?

Simply put, you start with action then motivation follows. Prayer is the easiest, fastest and most direct way to speak to Jesus. If you aren’t sure Jesus gave us a way to pray. Matthew 6: 9-13 is the Prayer Jesus taught when he was asked how people should pray. You can pray for thanks, pray for forgiveness, pray for strength, pray for whatever. All that matters is you are talking to Jesus. Best part, you just have to act first and let motivation follow.

**Wednesday July 13**

*Jesus Will Still Be There.*

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| **In Christ Alone** |  | **Jesus Will Still be there** |

This week we have journeyed through each day to reach this point. We started Saturday by committing to be fully present on this trip so we can be open to what the Lord has to say. Sunday, we discussed how doubts can keep us from seeing the big picture. Monday, we identified Truth while this world tries to confuse us. Tuesday, we discussed how to find an anchor of safety by talking with Jesus. But no matter the topic I hope you are seeing; Jesus will Still Be There. Our theme song captures this all these topics better than I can write them now:

*Things Change, Plans Fail…Storms rise, Hope Fades…Jesus will still be there, his love will never change sure as the steady rain. Jesus will still be there, when no one else is true, he’ll still be loving you. When it looks like you haven’t got a prayer, Jesus will still be there.*

If you remember nothing else from this trip it’s that no matter what is happening in your life, Jesus will still be there.

**Thursday July 14**

*Be Still.*

*Matthew 26:26-27*

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| **Be Still** |  | **Jesus Will Still be there** |

“Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards.”
― Søren Kierkegaard

Kierkegaard is saying is its easier to understand what happens in life when you get to look back and see all the details, but you have to keep moving forward and not get stuck in the past. Its often easier to understand life when you get to look back after your know the outcome. Creating a complete story of your life is necessary (remember your mind is filling in the blanks with snap shot assumptions) its important to reflect to make sure you can see all pieces that added up to today.

You may be thinking that statement is counter to what we said on night one. The first night we discussed taking time to plan for the future but to be present mind, body, and soul so you are ready to hear what the Jesus has to say. Just like you cannot live for the future only and must make time for the present, reflection is the same. The Church helps us to schedule time to reflect on Sunday mornings, mission trips, and special ceremonies. A great example is communion. Taking communion is the act of showing your commitment to Jesus while remembering what he sacrificed for you.

Jesus prepared the last meal he would have with his disciples call the Last Supper. He took the bread and said, “Take and eat; this is my body.” Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many of the forgiveness of sins”. We take Communion as a time to reflect on what Jesus did for us.

**Friday July 15**

*Be Jesus There.*

*John 13:34*

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| **The Commission** |  | **Jesus Will Still be there** |

There’s an old story about a song bird and a crow who made a bet. One evening a song bird and a crow were sitting on a tree branch across from an open kitchen window. The family inside were preparing supper. The crow bet the song bird he could get the family to give him some food. The song bird took the bet. The crow flew to the open window and started cawing as crows do. After a time, the woman came and shewed the crow away. The song bird took her turn next. She flew to the open window and started singing. After a time, the woman in the house gave the bird some food. The song bird flew back to the crow. The crow asked, “what did you do I didn’t?”. The song bird explained, “your caw was harsh and unpleasant to hear. My song was pretty and sweet”. Moral of the story here, when you speak to people are you saying harsh and unpleasant words or are you saying sweet and pretty words? You building people up or putting them down? Are your words spreading love and caring?

The biggest lesson Jesus taught in John 13:34 “A new commandment I give you, that you must love one another, as I have loved you, so you must love one another”.

The hope for this week is that you have gained motivation to serve others by having served. That your motivation will spill over to keep serving others to spread Jesus love once you return home. Consider this your commission under the new covenant. Go out and spread God’s love. Be Jesus There.