

# 7 Day Christianity

## *Living In Christ In The Moment*

Good morning Church!

People everywhere have a routine. You and I both have routines! Some people live a routine I call 1 Day Christianity. Which is where the only time you think about God, talk to God, hear from God, sing to God or read about God is the day you go to church and perhaps the day you're supposed to be at your group that is studying the word.

How's your routine?

You've gotten dressed, you've taken your first cup of coffee and stared blankly at the wall until your sleep-deprived eyes have decided to join you in waking up the rest of the way. Maybe you're up with the sunrise, washing down your organic Kashi cereal with a shot of wheatgrass and apple cider vinegar before taking your first cup of single-origin Uganda in the morning. Or perhaps you're up 30 minutes before church, after being assailed by your 13th alarm screaming to wake you up. You throw whatever is leftover in the fridge into a paper-towel and book it at a *quasi-legal* speed to get to church.

However you got here, there's something about our routines that makes all of us at some point or another forget the fact that our relationship with God is not a weekly occurrence. We move from one task to the next and forget that Jesus moves with us. Now, there's nothing wrong with routine. In fact, there's a lot of

healthy practices you can start today that will make this next week less stressful and an overall happier experience, establishing a routine is one such way. But today is more than just practical tips on how to establish a routine (though you'll find a few) today is more about detecting the undercurrent of The Father's Presence in your daily activities and engaging with Him even in the midst of life. Taking each day with a "What If?" and discovering that Joy Indescribable, Peace Unshakeable and Hope Immoveable lay buried in each ticking hour, waiting for us to unbury it like hidden treasure.

## Sunday

Since we're here now, let's start with today for our first day: Sunday. We've worshiped Jesus, we're sitting here listening to the word and letting as much of it soak in as our distracted minds can stand. We're catching up with friends and our church-family and in some cases we're encouraging each other, reporting on the comings and goings of last week, praying for each other where we can. It's the end of the weekend, but the start of the week and so most people get a case of the "Monday-blues", because we have the lurking knowledge that this weekend is about to die and the harbinger of tomorrow's work and toil lurks just outside our vision. Sort of like when you can hear the buzzing of a wasp somewhere nearby but you can't actually see it.

*But what if?*

What if we could lay our heads down with joy instead of dread in preparation for the start of the week?

What if we could move through Sunday totally and completely aware of God's Presence?

What if we could live our Sunday afternoons colored by the same awe, pleasure and peace that we felt during morning worship?

Paul tells us just that,

Colossians 3:12-16 NKJV

12 Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; 13 bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. 14 But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. 15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

### *Remember Who You Are In Christ*

Paul is laying out what most of us see during church as part of our daily lives! How do you live your Sunday afternoons free from that stress and strife? Paul lays out our relationship with Jesus as the starting point: “**Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved.**” He places our current status as being loved, holy and chosen by God as our point of origin. We don’t do anything *for* these three things, we only do things *from* these three things. Paul is saying, “*Hey guys, because you are God’s special ones, already holy, already chosen, therefore do these things!*” You and I are loved, holy and chosen. In the words of Brother Lawrence:

“The King, full of mercy and goodness, very far from chastising me, embraces me with love, makes me eat at His table, serves me with His own hands, gives me the key of His treasures; He converses and delights Himself with me incessantly, in a thousand and a thousand ways, and treats me in all respects as His favorite. It is thus I consider myself from time to time in His holy presence.”

### *Resolve to Forgive*

When you start from the place of *already* being God’s special one, you can then clear out the other clutter and disjointedness in your life! This is where Paul moves our attention from our identity to the practical outworking of this identity. He has us focus on those who have wronged us and try our patience. **“Bearing with one and one another and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.”** So long as you choose to dwell in the house of justice and drink the bitter gall of unforgiveness you will have no appetite left to drink the intoxicating wine of forgiveness and eat the exhilarating fruit of the Spirit. This is why Jesus says, **“Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.”** If your belly is full of judgment, there is no room left for forgiveness.

Amazingly, once you forgive your spouse and your kids and your neighbors at church for their various levels of chaos and misunderstanding and hurtful words then you begin to feel the first refreshing breeze of that freedom you feel in worship! Then comes forgiving yourself of the things you said this morning while

you were hungry and sleepy and not punishing yourself. Hear me out: *you are not allowed to pass a sentence on yourself when God has ruled you "Not Guilty"*.

What God (who is both your Judge and Savior) has forgiven do not punish!

Now that you have begun with forgiveness, you'll find you have this internal space free of resentment, guilt and shame in your heart!

But now what?

### *Living and Loving*

Now comes "putting on love", which as strange as it may sound actually affects you just as much, if not more than the people that you love! Paul lets us know what exactly we're "putting on" in his first letter to the church of Corinth:

1 Corinthians 13:4-8 NKJV

4 Love suffers long and is kind; Love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; 5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; 6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never fails

As you are at church, and when you are home afterwards you put on love. You take off the scratchy, uncomfortable sweater of criticism and resentment (as familiar as it is) and instead slip into something more comfortable. Interestingly, the word Paul uses here for, "put on" is the exact same Greek word (ENDUO) used in Romans 13:14 when he says to, "Put on Christ." It means "to sink into a

**garment.”** It’s not an active verb, rather it’s extremely passive verb that describes you leaning back into a garment!

So how do you earn love?

You don’t!

John is abundantly clear, **“We love because He first loved us.”** (1 John 4:19)

You don’t labor and strive and toil and strain to earn love, rather it’s something the Holy Ghost *Endows* you with! (See what he did there?)

And what does the Holy Ghost endow you with?

- Love that is incredibly patient in the face of unkindness.
- Love that is gentle and consistently kind even to our offenders.
- Love that refuses jealousy and embraces joy when blessing comes to someone else.
- Love that does not brag about your achievements or inflate your importance.
- Love that does not traffic in shame or disrespect.
- Love that does not selfishly seek its own honor.
- Love that is not easily irritated.
- Love that is not quick to become offended.
- Love that celebrates honesty and despises what is wrong.
- Love that is a shelter of safety.
- Love that never stops believing the best for others.
- Love that never takes failure as defeat and never gives up.

## *Giving In To Peace*

When you are living with the twin engines of forgiveness and love driving your faith, something begins to happen to you. You begin to experience peace! Paul actually says, “**Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body**” Suddenly every anxious thought becomes a vagrant insurgent you viciously hold responsible to the King who rules your heart. Anything that violates that peace is illegitimate and must bow to the Prince of Peace. Anxiety, depression and seething anger have no choice but to bow to Him when your heart reflects Heaven. This peace does something funny, Paul says in Philippians 4:7 NKJV,

**“And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”**

Suddenly you have this anti-virus running in your head and in your heart at all times because God’s peace is what rules your thoughts! It’s the undercurrent and the overtone of each moment you live and every syllable you speak, but this transformation of your day doesn’t stop here, no the renovation of the day moves on to something all of these produce:

## *Recognizing Blessings, Great and Small*

Thankfulness! It is in being grateful for even the smallest blessings that you find yourself unable to be angry or depressed. Seriously, try it!



David sings his Spirit-led contribution to us from Psalm 100:4 NKJV

**Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, enter into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name.**

The moment you start taking stock of your blessings, you will find yourself drenched in the satisfaction of His Presence. Even if it's hard to find blessings to be thankful for at first, you'll find it's the best possible slippery slope. As soon as you start telling God, "Thank you for— \_\_\_\_\_" You suddenly come up with so many more items to be grateful for, and this produces two things:

Joy and Satisfaction.

You experience joy because it is in witnessing God's goodness that you are filled with happiness and deep-seated enjoyment of Him and His goodness towards you.

You experience Satisfaction because all these things are present in your day, you are immune to lack, perceived or real.

### *Receive The Word*

Paul follows all of this up with an interestingly placed command:

**"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom,"**

Notice that he didn't use the title John used in describing Jesus as "The Word" as the express "logos", the ununciation, the self-expression of God. Rather Paul is highlighting the reading, memorization and deployment of Scripture! The very

words of Christ Himself lingering on our lips and in our hearts frequently. The longer you read the word of God, the more often you read the word of God, the more slowly and intentional you read the word of God the more richly it lives within you and provides supernatural wisdom. There's something interesting that happens when you read and listen to Scripture:

Romans 10:17 NKJV

**So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.**

It is in hearing and reading it as often as you can stand that you become obsessed with His words and eventually an expert in knowing His thoughts towards you and others, (which, as a matter of consequence, are entirely good). There deserves to be a mention of meditating on Scripture, and I mentioned briefly reading scripture more slowly and intentionally. Christian meditation is the antithesis of all meditation in the world. You see, the world's idea of meditation is emptying your mind and becoming nothing. They believe they will find true peace by reducing themselves to nothing, and somehow they'll make all their problems go away by committing spiritual and mental suicide. But this is not what God informs us.

We hear the psalmist tell us plainly,

Psalm 119:15 NKJV

**I will meditate on Your precepts, and contemplate Your ways.**

Or as the psalmist says earlier,

Psalm 119:11 NKJV

**Your word I have hidden in my heart that I might not sin against you.**

**Isaiah 26:3 NKJV**

**You will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in you.**

See that peace popping up again? As you focus your thoughts onto Jesus, onto the words He has already spoken to you in Scripture you begin to fill up your internal storeroom with the contents of Scripture, which then informs your prayer life! Reading Scripture helps you better talk to God! But talk is just one aspect of all of this, it is also what informs our worship, which is the purest form of prayer.

### *Remain in a Posture of Worship*

While you're reading the words of God and meditating on those same words, slowly reading over them, waiting for the Holy Spirit to make it resonate with your spirit, letting a worship song escape your lips, whether or not you sound like Chris Tomlin should be done as soon as possible!

There have been times where I was playing worship music while I was in a bad mood, or depressed and as soon as I allowed myself to start singing the song whatever that negative emotion I was experiencing was began to melt away.

Why is that? David sings to us:

**Psalm 147:1 NKJV**

**Praise the Lord! For it is good to sing praises to our God; for it is pleasant, and praise is beautiful.**

Worship music, which really is a lifestyle of adoration set to a soundtrack, lifts our vision off of our troubles, off the offenses of other people, off the broken and crumbling aspects of our fallen world and realigns our eyes onto Jesus, who then takes up all our vision. By that, I mean who He has revealed Himself to be takes up more thought-space in our minds and more fondness in our hearts than other things or people. Singing to God, and singing while around each other lifts our own mind and the minds of our brothers and sisters back to the One who loved us and gave Himself for us. It refocuses us on the one thing that matters. The “Good Portion” that Jesus said Mary had chosen.

**“There is not in the world a kind of life more sweet and delightful, than that of a continual conversation with God; those only can comprehend it who practice and experience it.”**

**Brother Lawrence**

*Repeat as Needed*

This may sound like a bait-and-switch. Perhaps you thought that Sunday would be different than the other six days! On one hand, it is because it's today.

Tomorrow is not something you can take or spend, it has not yet become Today. But the reality is that what we just went through for a Sunday afternoon applies when you get up for work tomorrow, You take 5 minutes to read the word, to sing a song, and to actively seek out a conversation with God.

I love what Brother Lawrence said once,

**“Think often on God, by day, by night, in your business and even in your diversions. He is always near you and with you; leave him not alone.”**

Leave Him not alone.

Talk to Him while sipping your coffee.

Talk to Him while writing that report.

Talk to Him while changing that diaper.

Sing to Him while you're baking the chicken.

Sing to Him while you're weeping from heartache.

Sing to Him while you're laughing at that joke.

Listen to Him while you're on the commute.

Listen to Him while you're laying in bed.

Listen to Him while you're waiting for an answer.

If you do these things, you will be actively living 7 Day Christianity.

And that literally just translates to glorifying God everyday by enjoying God every day.