

Cultivating Daily Reflection

Elevate Your Strength June 27 & 28, 2020

If you missed this weekend's messages, watch at cultivate.sc/discussion

The reality is all good things require work. What we really need when life gets challenging is a new way to look at ourselves, our relationships and the world around us. Whether you choose to share your thoughts in community or use this as a personal exercise, we encourage you to daily reflect, respond and pray so that Jesus can elevate your life.

Day 1 – Cultivate Wholeness: Jesus can give us strength we don't have – but what we do have in our lives, can reduce our strength by creating clutter rather than clarity. A whole life is free life – one where we lay down our burdens, rid ourselves of excess baggage and pursue contentment in the place Christ has us.

“Let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up.
And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us.” Hebrews 12:1 NLT

“But those who trust in the Lord will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles.
They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.” Isaiah 40:31 NLT

Reflect on the verses above and be REAL with self. Is there anything in your life that is slowing or weighing you down by creating clutter, chaos or confusion? Consider material possessions that might represent a larger burden than you can bear, but also relationships [people], attitudes [anger, bitterness, resentment] and choices [work, family, financial] that feel heavy, unhealthy or are leading to sin. Where might “less” bring clarity, wholeness and freedom?

Ask God to show you what/who is essential in your life. Commit to being still and listening over the days and weeks ahead. God may ask you to run – quickly making necessary changes or He may ask you to walk – slowly and intentionally pursuing change. Either way, you can trust Him for the strength you need. Pray continually, asking for patience, courage, contentment, clarity and wisdom as you seek to do more with less.

Day 2: To elevate our strength we need the help of others who encourage, advise and challenge us. These people lift us up when we're down, speak truth into our life and help correct us when we need to go a different way. Who are these people in your life OR who has the potential to be? Are you willing to be REAL with them, asking for help and giving them opportunity to strengthen you? If not, why is that?

Reflect on any obstacles that keep you from being REAL with others. Remember, the enemy uses fear, shame, pride and doubt to keep us isolated and alone. 1) Pray, asking God to show you any areas of weakness where others could strengthen you, then 2) seek out support and 3) ask others to come alongside you. If you're looking for community, visit sandalschurch.com/next to get connected with a group today!

Day 3: Jesus gives us strength for today, so we don't have to worry about tomorrow. What does your heart most need today – stillness, rest, worship, gratitude? Hope, wisdom, grace, courage? God's strength is greater than your weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9). Cry out to Him for what you need and trust that He will give you more than enough.

Day 4: Pastor Matt cautioned us that there are consequences if we fail to invite wisdom into our lives, particularly if we are putting ourselves in the seat of God and assuming righteousness.

“Don't pick on people, jump on their failures, criticize their faults—unless, of course, you want the same treatment. That critical spirit has a way of boomeranging. It's easy to see a smudge on your neighbor's face and be oblivious to the ugly sneer on your own. Do you have the nerve to say, 'Let me wash your face for you,' when your own face is distorted by contempt? It's...playing a holier-than-thou part instead of just living your part. Wipe that ugly sneer off your own face, and you might be fit to offer a washcloth to your neighbor.” Matthew 7:1-5 MSG

Reflect on the verse above and invite God to search your heart. Do you struggle with having a critical spirit? Do you point out the faults of others [or criticize, blame, gossip, slander] but fail to admit your faults and work on yourself? Pray, confess and ask God to clean things up – heart, mind, mouth – SO THAT you can become the best version of yourself and your life reflects God's righteousness at work in you.

Day 5: Read Luke 8:43-48. What do you think the woman was feeling watching Jesus walk through the crowd? What do you think drove her to reach out her hand for His robe? Where in your life are you reaching out for Jesus' power – physically, emotionally, spiritually or relationally? The woman's faith was deliberate – active, intentional and purposeful. She was relying on Jesus for healing, but she did her part, reaching out and believing He was able. How can you be more deliberate in your pursuit of Jesus? What is a first step toward Him you can take this week? Ask God to elevate and strengthen your faith so it creates REAL action, purpose and change in your life.

Share your opinion! As we strive to create meaningful content, we'd love to learn a bit about you and your group. Take our [Cultivate Groups & Content Survey here](#) or follow the link at cultivate.sc/discussion to share your insight.

Sandals Church is OPEN! We're thrilled to share that Sandals Church re-opened with limited capacity weekend services on June 27/28. It's our main priority to ensure we keep you safe and healthy as you return to your home campus. Be sure to visit sandalschurch.com/reopen for service times as some of these have changed. You'll also be able to learn more about what you can do to ensure your safety as well as that of your family, our staff and volunteers. Not ready to join us in person? No problem! Go to live.sandalschurch.tv to join our online community for the dynamic worship and incredible weekend services you love.