



St Barnabas Cray

Growing Up in Faith with the Holy Spirit

Weekly Devotional Journey

Monday - Born Again: A New Beginning

Morning Devotion

Today's Verse

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: the old has gone, the new is here! - 2 Corinthians 5:17

Devotional Thought

When we become Christians, we experience something remarkable - we are born again. This isn't simply a religious term; it's a beautiful reality that transforms everything about who we are. Just as a newborn baby enters the world with fresh lungs taking their first breath, when we ask Jesus into our lives, we breathe in new spiritual life. Our past sins are forgiven, and we literally start again. This new reality means we are loved, chosen, and delighted in by our heavenly Father. Like any newborn, we have growing up to do - watching, exploring, learning, and yes, sometimes making mistakes. But what joy there is in knowing that God planned for us to exist and created us with such love.

Reflection Question

How does knowing you are 'born again' change your perspective on your identity and purpose today?

From Sunday's Sermon

"That reality is that we are loved, we are chosen, God planned for us to exist, He created us and delights in us."

Today's Application

Today, remind yourself three times of your new identity in Christ. When facing challenges or mistakes, remember you're not the old you - you're growing in your new life with Jesus.

Morning Prayer

Father, thank You for the gift of new life in Jesus. Help me to embrace my identity as Your beloved child, knowing that You delight in me. As I grow in faith, give me patience with myself and excitement for the journey ahead. Amen.

Evening Devotion

Growing Takes Time

Evening Reflection

Just as a child doesn't become an adult overnight, our spiritual growth is a process. There's beauty in being patient with ourselves as we learn to walk in this new life. God isn't frustrated with our learning curve - He's delighted in our progress, however small it might seem. Tonight, rest in knowing that growth is happening, even when you can't see it.

Evening Reflection

What area of spiritual growth are you most excited about developing?

Evening Prayer

Lord, help me to be patient with my spiritual growth. Thank You that You see my heart and celebrate every step forward. Give me rest tonight, knowing I am loved just as I am whilst I'm becoming who You've called me to be. Amen.

Tuesday - Equal Pressure: Balanced Faith Growth

Morning Devotion

Today's Verse

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching,
rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness - 2 Timothy
3:16

Devotional Thought

The illustration of assembling furniture teaches us something profound about spiritual growth. Just as equal pressure was needed on all parts to create strong furniture, we need equal attention to all aspects of our Christian faith. We naturally gravitate towards the parts we like and understand, whilst avoiding what confuses or challenges us. But authentic spiritual growth requires us to engage with the whole of Scripture and Christian doctrine. This means sometimes wrestling with difficult passages, exploring unfamiliar spiritual disciplines, or addressing areas where we've become complacent. A regular spiritual health check helps us identify neglected areas - whether we're 15 or 80, God continues to challenge and teach us new things.

Reflection Question

Which aspect of your Christian faith have you been neglecting that needs more attention?

From Sunday's Sermon

"We needed to apply equal attention to all parts of what the Bible teaches us it is to be a Christian."

Today's Application

Conduct a personal faith audit today. List areas of Christian living (prayer, Bible study, service, worship, fellowship) and honestly assess which need more attention. Choose one to focus on this week.

Morning Prayer

Heavenly Father, show me the areas of my faith that need more attention. Give me courage to explore the parts of Christianity that challenge me, and help me grow in a balanced way that honours You. Amen.

Evening Devotion

Honest Assessment

Evening Reflection

Tonight, there's freedom in honest self-reflection. God already knows where we're strong and where we need growth - He's simply inviting us into that awareness. There's no condemnation in recognising areas for development; there's only the loving guidance of a Father who wants us to flourish in every aspect of our faith journey.

Evening Reflection

How can you create space in your routine for the area of faith you identified this morning?

Evening Prayer

Lord, thank You for Your patience as I grow. Help me to be honest about my spiritual needs without feeling condemned. Guide me towards balanced growth in all areas of faith. Amen.

Wednesday - Word and Spirit: The Perfect Balance

Morning Devotion

Today's Verse

But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth - John 16:13

Devotional Thought

There's a powerful saying that captures the essence of spiritual maturity: 'All Word and we dry up, all Spirit and we blow up, Word and Spirit together and we grow up.' This wisdom reveals how different generations often find their entry point to faith differently - some through Scripture, others through worship and the Holy Spirit. The beautiful challenge is learning to embrace both. The Word feeds our minds and helps us think biblically, whilst the Spirit feeds our hearts and helps us feel God's presence. Neither alone is sufficient for complete spiritual health. Older believers might need to learn fresh ways of encountering the Holy Spirit, whilst younger believers might need to deepen their biblical understanding. Both are essential for authentic spiritual growth.

Reflection Question

Are you stronger in Word or Spirit, and how can you develop the other aspect?

From Sunday's Sermon

"ALL WORD AND WE DRY UP, ALL SPIRIT AND WE BLOW UP, WORD AND SPIRIT TOGETHER AND WE GROW UP"

Today's Application

If you're strong in Bible study, spend extra time in worship or prayer today. If you're more experiential in faith, dedicate time to reading Scripture with fresh eyes. Seek the balance.

Morning Prayer

Spirit of God, help me to grow in both understanding Your Word and experiencing Your presence.

Don't let me become dry in doctrine or unstable in experience, but mature in both. Guide me into all truth. Amen.

Evening Devotion

Growing Up Together

Evening Reflection

The beauty of balanced spiritual growth is that it's not meant to happen in isolation. Just as the furniture assembly required multiple people working together, our spiritual development flourishes in community. We need others who are strong where we are weak, who can encourage us in areas we're developing, and who can celebrate our growth alongside us.

Evening Reflection

Who in your life helps you maintain balance between Word and Spirit?

Evening Prayer

Father, thank You for the community of faith that surrounds me. Help me to both give and receive encouragement as we all grow up together in Christ. Amen.

Thursday - The Holy Spirit: Our Advocate and Helper

Morning Devotion

Today's Verse

But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things - John 14:26

Devotional Thought

The Holy Spirit isn't a distant force we occasionally invite into our lives - the Spirit is our constant companion, advocate, comforter, and counsellor who dwells within us. When we experience the Spirit's work, it might manifest in various ways: peace when we need rest, joy when our hearts are heavy, tears when we need release, or even a deep communication beyond words. The Spirit communicates through whispers, gentle promptings, and divine encounters. The question isn't whether the Holy Spirit wants to work in our lives, but whether we're creating space for that relationship to flourish. This isn't about a one-time experience but a continuous, growing closeness with our Helper who knows us intimately and guides us lovingly.

Reflection Question

How have you experienced the Holy Spirit as advocate, comforter, or counsellor in your life?

From Sunday's Sermon

"The Holy Spirit is not an 'out there' thing that we invite in. The Holy Spirit is an 'in here' thing. The Holy Spirit lives within us."

Today's Application

Throughout today, pause three times to acknowledge the Holy Spirit's presence within you. Ask for guidance in small decisions and notice how the Spirit might be speaking through whispers or gentle promptings.

Morning Prayer

Holy Spirit, thank You for being my advocate and helper. Help me to recognise Your voice and presence throughout my day. Teach me to rely on Your guidance and comfort in every situation. Amen.

Evening Devotion

Recent Encounters

Evening Reflection

Whilst we might treasure powerful past encounters with the Holy Spirit, God invites us into fresh, daily relationship. The Spirit who comforted us yesterday wants to guide us today and tomorrow. Our Helper is always present, always ready to work in and through us. Tonight, consider not just past experiences, but how the Spirit might be moving in your life right now.

Evening Reflection

What recent, perhaps subtle, ways have you sensed the Holy Spirit's presence or guidance?

Evening Prayer

Lord, open my eyes to see the Holy Spirit's work in my everyday life. Help me not just to treasure past experiences, but to expect and recognise Your Spirit's presence today and every day. Amen.

Friday - Surrendering to the Spirit's Leading

Morning Devotion

Today's Verse

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding - Proverbs 3:5

Devotional Thought

Perhaps the greatest challenge in spiritual growth is moving from the driver's seat to the passenger seat. We become comfortable with a version of faith where we maintain control, but the Spirit asks us to dare to believe what we say we believe and let God drive. This surrender isn't about losing ourselves but about finding who we truly are in God's hands. Fear often holds us back - fear of where greater surrender might lead. But we serve a good Father who loves us deeply and has plans to prosper us. The Holy Spirit isn't trying to harm us but to help us become everything God created us to be. When we give more of ourselves to the Spirit, we're not inviting external force but allowing internal transformation by the One who knows us better than we know ourselves.

Reflection Question

What fears do you have about surrendering more control to the Holy Spirit?

From Sunday's Sermon

"We become comfortable with a version of God where we are in control and we are in the drivers seat. The Spirit says: would you dare to believe the things that you say you will believe and let me drive"

Today's Application

Identify one area of your life where you've been reluctant to let God lead. Take a small step of surrender today, trusting that God's plans for you are good.

Morning Prayer

Father, help me to trust You enough to let go of control. I surrender my fears and my need to direct my own path. Holy Spirit, I give You more freedom to work in and through my life. I trust Your goodness. Amen.

Evening Devotion

Freedom in Surrender

Evening Reflection

Tonight, rest in the beautiful paradox that true freedom comes through surrender to God. The Holy Spirit doesn't want to restrict your life but to unleash the fullness of who God created you to be. In His hands, you are safe, loved, and guided towards your highest purpose. This surrender isn't a one-time decision but a daily choice to trust His goodness.

Evening Reflection

How might your life look different if you fully trusted the Holy Spirit's guidance?

Evening Prayer

Lord, as I end this week of reflection, I choose again to surrender to Your loving leadership. Fill me afresh with Your Spirit and help me to live with greater freedom and faith. Amen.