



St Barnabas Cray

"Walk Through the Gate: Jesus Calls Your Name"

Weekly Devotional Journey

Monday - The Personal Call

Morning Devotion

Today's Verse

I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture. (John 10:9 NIV)

Devotional Thought

There's something deeply personal about Jesus' invitation in John 10. This isn't a generic call to a crowd, but an intimate summons to each individual heart. Jesus doesn't simply whistle for the sheep to come running en masse—He knows each sheep by name and calls them personally. This means He knows your name, your story, your struggles, and your dreams. He sees past the labels others have given you and the roles you play, straight to the core of who you are. The gate Jesus offers isn't just any entrance; it's the doorway to life in all its fullness. But here's what strikes me most profoundly: Jesus doesn't just open the gate and step aside. He is the gate. To enter into abundant life, we must come through Him—not around Him, not past Him, but through Him. This speaks to the exclusivity and the intimacy of relationship with Christ. It's not about religious

performance or moral improvement; it's about personal encounter. When we truly grasp that the Creator of the universe knows us by name and calls us individually, it changes everything. We're not just part of a religious system or spiritual programme—we're invited into a personal relationship with the living God.

Reflection Question

How does it feel to know that Jesus knows you by name and calls you personally, not as part of a crowd?

From Sunday's Sermon

"Jesus knows his sheep by name. He knows you and he calls you. It's not the name of your wife or the name of your mum and dad. He knows your name and he's asking you to walk through."

Today's Application

Today, begin to cultivate an awareness of Jesus' personal call on your life. Start your morning by acknowledging that He knows your name and has called you specifically. In your relationships, practise seeing others as individually known and loved by God rather than as categories or types. When you feel lost in the crowd at work, in family dynamics, or even in church, remember that Jesus sees you as an individual. Write your name on a piece of paper and place it somewhere you'll see it regularly this week as a reminder that you are personally known and called. In conversations today, listen more carefully to people's names and use them—reflecting the way Jesus knows and calls each of us personally. Notice how this changes the quality of your interactions and deepens your sense of being personally valued by God.

Morning Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You that You know me by name. In a world where I often feel anonymous or overlooked, help me to rest in the truth that You see me, know me completely, and call me personally. Give me confidence to respond to Your call today, knowing that I'm not just one of many, but uniquely loved and known by You. Help me to see others through Your eyes—as individuals You know and love by name. Amen.

Evening Devotion

Recognised and Called

Evening Reflection

As this day draws to a close, take a moment to reflect on the times you felt truly seen and recognised today. Perhaps it was in a conversation where someone really listened, or a moment when you felt understood. These glimpses of being known are shadows of the deeper reality that Jesus knows you completely. Unlike human recognition, which is often partial and conditional, Christ's knowledge of you is complete and His love unwavering. Tonight, rest in the security that even when others misunderstand or overlook you, you are fully known and deeply loved by the One who matters most. Your name is written on His heart.

Evening Reflection

When did you feel most seen and known today, and how might that reflect God's intimate knowledge of you?

Evening Prayer

Jesus, as I rest tonight, I thank You that even in the moments when I felt invisible or misunderstood today, You saw me clearly. Help me to sleep in the peace of being fully known and completely loved by You. Amen.

Tuesday - The Arrival Gate Experience

Morning Devotion

Today's Verse

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. (Matthew 11:28 NIV)

Devotional Thought

There's something magical about airport arrival gates—that space of anticipation, reunion, and overwhelming joy. The illustration from today's sermon captures something profound about our relationship with Jesus. He's not just waiting for us with polite interest; He's holding up our name with excitement, longing for our arrival. Picture this: Jesus stands at the gate of eternity, watching for you with the same anticipation of a loved one at Heathrow. When you finally walk through—whether it's your first time or you're returning after wandering—His face lights up with joy. The relief, the tears, the overwhelming sense of being home that we witness at arrival gates is a beautiful picture of what happens when we come to Jesus. We've been holding ourselves together, carrying our burdens, trying to manage life on our own. But when we see Jesus waiting for us, when we recognise that He's been there all along, we can finally let ourselves 'dissolve into the arms of our loved one.' This isn't about earning His approval or proving we're worthy of His welcome. It's about recognising that He's already there, already waiting, already delighted by our arrival.

Reflection Question

What burdens are you carrying that you could finally set down as you run into Jesus' welcoming arms?

From Sunday's Sermon

"Jesus holds up your name and he calls you to walk through the gate... It is a really lovely thing to watch."

Today's Application

Today, practise the spiritual discipline of arrival. Instead of rushing into your day carrying yesterday's worries and tomorrow's anxieties, take five minutes this morning to imagine Jesus waiting for you with joy and anticipation. What would it look like to start each day running into His arms rather than running into your to-do list? Throughout the day, when you feel overwhelmed or burdened, pause and remember that Jesus is holding up your name, excited to welcome you. Create a simple ritual for coming home—whether to your house, your family, or even just to yourself in quiet moments. Let these small arrivals remind you of the greater homecoming that awaits in Christ. Notice the arrival moments in your own life today: coming home from work, greeting family members, meeting friends. Let these experiences deepen your understanding of how Jesus welcomes you.

Morning Prayer

Lord, thank You for waiting for me with such love and anticipation. Help me to stop trying to hold everything together on my own and instead run into Your welcoming arms. Teach me to see each day as an opportunity to experience Your joyful welcome afresh. When I'm weary and burdened, remind me that You're holding up my name, excited for my arrival. Amen.

Evening Devotion

Coming Home

Evening Reflection

Tonight, as you prepare for rest, think about all the small homecomings you experienced today. Perhaps it was the relief of finishing a difficult task, the comfort of a familiar routine, or the joy of reconnecting with someone you love. Each of these moments whispers of the greater homecoming we have in Christ. Just as we feel relief and joy when we arrive safely after a long journey, our souls find their deepest rest when we arrive in the presence of Jesus. He doesn't greet us with criticism about how long we've been away or questions about where we've been. He simply welcomes us home with joy.

Evening Reflection

What felt most like 'coming home' to you today, and how did it reflect the welcome Jesus offers you?

Evening Prayer

Father, thank You for all the ways You welcomed me home today—in moments of peace, in unexpected kindness, in the comfort of Your presence. As I sleep, help me to rest in the security of being truly home in You. Amen.

Wednesday - Encountering Jesus for the First Time**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 NIV)

Devotional Thought

The story of the young girl at the worship event captures something beautiful about encountering Jesus for the first time. She didn't come with expectations or preconceived notions—she simply said, 'Yeah, all right' when offered prayer. But in that moment of openness, something profound happened. Her face changed from puzzled to wonder to joy. She felt 'warm' and 'good'—simple words that described a profound spiritual reality. This is what happens when we genuinely encounter Jesus: we are changed from the inside out. It's not about understanding all the theology or having perfect faith. It's about being open to His presence and allowing Him to meet us where we are. The girl's experience reminds us that Jesus delights in revealing Himself to those who approach Him with simple, childlike openness. She didn't need to clean up her life first or understand complex doctrines. She just needed to be willing to receive what He wanted to give her. And what He gave her was Himself—His love, His hope, His peace. Her immediate

response—'Can I have another prayer?'—shows the natural hunger that awakens when we taste the goodness of God. Once we've experienced His love, we want more.

Reflection Question

When did you first sense God's presence in your life, and what was your response?

From Sunday's Sermon

"She had met with the person, Jesus, who loves her more than anyone else loves her, who created her and promises her life in all its fullness."

Today's Application

Today, cultivate the same openness and wonder that the young girl displayed. Whether you're new to faith or have been following Jesus for years, approach Him with fresh curiosity and simple trust. If you're in a season of spiritual dryness, ask God to renew your sense of wonder at His love. Practice saying 'yeah, all right' to opportunities for spiritual growth that come your way—whether it's a conversation about faith, a moment of prayer, or a chance to serve others. Look for chances to share your own story of encountering Jesus, especially with those who might be curious but uncertain. Remember that people don't need perfect theology; they need authentic testimony about how Jesus has changed your life. Pay attention to your face today—is it reflecting the joy and peace of someone who has met with Jesus? Let your countenance be a testimony to His goodness.

Morning Prayer

Jesus, thank You for meeting me just as I am, without pretense or perfect understanding. Renew in me the wonder and joy of encountering You. Help me to approach You today with the same openness as that young girl, ready to receive whatever You want to give me. Use my life to help others discover the warmth and goodness of Your presence. Amen.

Evening Devotion

Changed from Within

Evening Reflection

As you reflect on this day, consider the subtle ways Jesus may have changed you from within. Perhaps it was a moment of unexpected patience, a surge of hope in a difficult situation, or a sense of peace that came from nowhere. These are the gentle signs of His transforming presence. Like the young girl whose face changed as she was prayed for, we too are being transformed by encounters with Jesus—sometimes dramatically, often gradually, but always genuinely. The change may be so natural that we hardly notice it, but others might see the difference in our countenance, our responses, our very presence in the world.

Evening Reflection

How might Jesus have been quietly transforming you from within today?

Evening Prayer

Lord, thank You for the ways You've been changing me today, even when I haven't noticed.
Continue Your gentle work of transformation in my heart as I sleep, making me more like You.
Amen.

Thursday - Planning vs. Walking Through

Morning Devotion

Today's Verse

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. (Proverbs 3:5-6 NIV)

Devotional Thought

The sermon's illustration of planning for a family trip reveals something important about our spiritual journey. We can spend enormous amounts of energy planning what life with Jesus might look like—wondering about the practical changes, the expected experiences, the relationships we'll have. Like the family preparing for America, we each approach the prospect of walking with Jesus differently. Some of us are meticulous planners, wanting to know exactly what to expect. Others focus on the adventure and excitement. Some prepare by getting spiritually 'fit,' trying to be worthy of the journey. Others wonder about the community they'll find. And some of us are simply worn out and hope that Jesus will accept us as we are. Here's the beautiful truth: while planning isn't wrong, we won't really know what life with Jesus is like until we walk through the gate. The meal plans might get thrown out the window, the expected adventures might not materialise as anticipated, but the core promise remains: we will be loved, we will be together with Him, and we will be stronger because of that relationship. Our planning often reveals our desire for control, but Jesus invites us into a relationship of trust.

Reflection Question

Are you still in the planning stage with Jesus, or have you walked through the gate?
What's holding you back from taking that step?

From Sunday's Sermon

"The thing is, you can plan all that you want and planning is good and you can think about it, but you won't really know what it's like until you walk through that gate."

Today's Application

Today, identify whether you're still in the planning stage with Jesus or if you've already walked through the gate but have been trying to control the journey too much. If you're still planning, choose one small step of faith you can take today—perhaps praying honestly about your fears, talking to a Christian friend about your questions, or simply telling Jesus you're willing to trust Him even without all the answers. If you've already committed to following Jesus, examine areas where you might be trying to control outcomes rather than trusting His guidance. Practice letting go of one specific worry or plan today, placing it intentionally in God's hands. Remember that the goal isn't perfect planning but faithful walking. Take time to encourage someone else who might be in the planning stage, sharing honestly about how your own journey with Jesus has been different from what you expected—but better because of His presence.

Morning Prayer

Lord, forgive me for the times I've tried to plan out my relationship with You instead of simply trusting You. Help me to take the step of faith You're calling me to today, whether it's walking through the gate for the first time or walking more closely with You. I choose to trust You with the unknown parts of my journey. Amen.

Evening Devotion

Beyond Our Plans

Evening Reflection

Tonight, reflect on how God has worked in your life beyond your careful plans. Like the family whose meal plans were abandoned but who still had an amazing time together, God's goodness often exceeds our expectations in unexpected ways. The healing that came before the trip, the adventures that differed from what was planned, the relationships that developed in surprising ways—these remind us that God's plans are higher than ours. Even when our plans don't work out as expected, His love remains constant. What matters most is not whether our plans succeed, but whether we're walking in relationship with Him.

Evening Reflection

How has God surprised you by working beyond or differently from your plans?

Evening Prayer

Father, thank You that Your plans for me are good, even when they're different from my own. Help me to trust You more and plan less, knowing that Your love is the constant in all circumstances. Amen.

Friday - Life in All Its Fullness**Morning Devotion****Today's Verse**

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. (John 10:10 NIV)

Devotional Thought

Jesus' promise of 'life in all its fullness' is perhaps one of the most compelling invitations in all of Scripture. This isn't just about eternal life after death—though it includes that. It's about abundant life here and now, life that is rich with meaning, purpose, love, and hope. When we walk through the gate that Jesus provides, we discover that being loved changes everything. Our whole outlook shifts when we realise we are deeply, unconditionally loved by the Creator of the universe. We no longer have to face life alone or in our own strength. We have a companion, a guide, a friend who promises never to leave us. This doesn't mean life becomes easy or problem-free. The family still worried about possible things going wrong on their trip. But it does mean that whatever comes, we face it together with Jesus. We discover we can handle far more with Him than we ever could alone. The fullness of life Jesus offers includes the fullness of His presence in every circumstance—joy and sorrow, success and failure, certainty and confusion. It's not about having a

perfect life, but about having His perfect love accompanying us through all of life. This abundant life is available to anyone who chooses to walk through the gate of relationship with Jesus.

Reflection Question

What would 'life in all its fullness' look like for you, and how might Jesus be inviting you into that reality?

From Sunday's Sermon

"Jesus promises us life in all its fullness... being loved changes everything. Everything. Your whole outlook."

Today's Application

Today, take inventory of areas in your life where you're settling for less than the fullness Jesus offers. Are there relationships where you're holding back love? Dreams you've abandoned because they seem impossible? Fears that are keeping you from stepping into God's purposes for you? Choose one area where you sense Jesus inviting you into greater fullness and take a concrete step toward that reality. This might mean having a difficult conversation, pursuing a neglected calling, or simply opening your heart more fully to receive God's love. Practice gratitude for the ways you're already experiencing abundant life in Christ, recognising that fullness isn't about having everything you want, but about experiencing God's presence in everything you have. Look for opportunities to help others discover the fullness of life that Jesus offers, whether through acts of service, words of encouragement, or simply by living as someone who has been transformed by His love. Remember that abundant life is meant to be shared, not hoarded.

Morning Prayer

Jesus, thank You for offering me life in all its fullness. Help me to stop settling for less than what You have for me. Open my eyes to see the abundant life You're already providing, and give me courage to step into the greater fullness You're calling me toward. Use me to help others discover the rich, meaningful life that comes from walking with You. Amen.

Evening Devotion

Grasping Hope with Both Hands

Evening Reflection

As this week of reflection comes to a close, consider how you want to respond to Jesus' invitation to abundant life. The young people in the sermon 'grasped onto hope with both hands'—they didn't hold back or approach tentatively. They embraced with enthusiasm the new life Jesus offered them. Tonight, think about what it would mean for you to grasp God's promises with both hands. What hopes have you been holding loosely, afraid to fully embrace? What aspects of following Jesus have you approached halfheartedly? The fullness of life Jesus offers requires our wholehearted response—not because He demands it, but because that's the only way to fully receive what He's giving.

Evening Reflection

What hope or promise from God do you need to grasp with both hands?

Evening Prayer

Lord, I don't want to hold back any longer. Help me to grasp Your promises and Your presence with both hands, embracing fully the abundant life You offer. Thank You for this week of reflection and for the ways You've spoken to my heart. Continue to draw me deeper into life with You. Amen.