

How to Use This Devotional

“Come to Me, all of you who are tired and are carrying heavy loads. I will give you rest. Become My servants and learn from Me. I am gentle and free of pride. You will find rest for your souls.”
(Matthew 11:28-29, NIV)



Knowing Jesus and restoring your first love are simpler than you think. I’m not saying it is easy. I’m just saying it’s not complicated. Knowing Him and making Him the center of your life can really happen.

So whether you’re just coming to know Christ (Appendix A), coming back to faith after many years, or just need to refresh your first love, **this devotional invites you to place Jesus back at the center of your life by placing Him as the first focus of your day.** As we go through this five week devotional together, we will begin each day by focusing on Jesus as first and center of our lives in different practical ways.

You’ll need:

- 1) Your first 20 minutes of every day (Monday-Saturday).
- 2) A pen: write all over this book! Write out prayers and thoughts. Look back at your written reflections each week.
- 3) Your best focus and an open heart.
- 4) A prayer partner (see page 7).
- 5) A commitment to act on what you read each day (page 9).
- 6) God’s Holy Spirit to do the work inside of you.
- 7) Fifteen minutes on Sunday evening to prepare for the next week

Each week will have one simple “first love” focus that leads to building a Jesus-centered life. On Sunday evening, you’ll take some time to read and reflect on the upcoming week’s introduction. Monday through Saturday, you’ll take the first twenty minutes of each day to focus and practice living it out. Each day I’ll remind you of the main “first love” focus for that week and give you a simple question you can ask yourself at any time to refocus.

The key to this devotional is action. Jesus didn’t tell the Christians at Ephesus to only think about the things that first love does, he told them to do them! Jesus will become first and center in your heart as you give Jesus the first 20 minutes of your day and take action in each day’s “*Making Jesus the Center of Today*” reflection. I encourage you to not only read, but apply every day’s focus through prayer and the people around you. Make sure you especially take action in finding a prayer partner to go through this devotional with you (see the next page on “*Choosing a Prayer Partner*”).

I can’t tell you what your life should look like on the outside during these five weeks. I don’t know your circumstances or the specific purpose and personality God has given you, but I can tell you who is

supposed to be at the center of who you are and what you do—Jesus! ***The most practical way to make Jesus the center of your life is to make Him the first thing in each of your days.***

My prayer is that through these days you will quit knowing Jesus as part of weekly religion and come to know Him and His love as part of everyday reality. If you will come to Him each morning and place Him at the center of that day, you will find Jesus' promises of paradise-like joy (Revelation 2:7) and a freedom from stress and heavy burdens, which Jesus promises in Matthew 11:38, to be deep in your soul and overflowing in your words.

I can't wait for you to get started ... but, as the next page directs, don't start alone.

SAMPLE