

STUDENT DEVOTIONAL AFTER DNOW

This devotional follows session 1 from Phili4 DNow

Day 1: Unity as a Gospel Imperative

In the early church, unity was not merely a suggestion but a vital necessity for the advancement of the Gospel. Paul's appeal to Euodia and Syntyche in Philippians 4:2–3 highlights the importance of resolving disagreements to maintain the church's mission. Disunity can hinder the Gospel's progress, and believers are called to recognize their potential to disrupt unity. By actively seeking reconciliation and focusing on their shared purpose in Christ, the church can effectively fulfill its mission. Unity is a powerful testimony to the world, reflecting the love and harmony found in Christ.

Ephesians 4:3–6: "Eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all."

Reflection and Prayer: Is there someone in your youth group or circle of influence with whom you need to reconcile? How can you take a step towards unity today?

Day 2: Choosing Joy in All Circumstances

Joy is a deliberate choice rooted in our relationship with God, not dependent on our circumstances. By rejoicing in the Lord always, believers align their hearts with His eternal promises, finding strength and hope even in trials. This joy is a testament to faith and a powerful witness to the world. It reflects a deep trust in God's sovereignty and goodness, allowing believers to rise above their circumstances and live with a sense of peace and contentment.

Habakkuk 3:17–18: “Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.”

Reflection and Prayer: What is one challenging situation you are facing today? How can you choose to rejoice in the Lord despite it?

Day 3: The Transformative Power of Prayer

Prayer is a proactive response to anxiety, inviting God’s peace into our hearts. By presenting requests with thanksgiving, believers acknowledge their dependence on God and open themselves to His transformative peace. This peace guards hearts and minds, enabling believers to navigate life’s challenges with confidence. Prayer is not just about asking for help but also about cultivating a relationship with God, trusting in His provision and timing.

Colossians 4:2: “Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.”

Reflection and Prayer: What is one area of your life where you feel anxious? How can you bring this concern to God in prayer today, with a heart of thanksgiving?

Day 4: Cultivating a Heart of Gratitude

An attitude of gratitude shifts focus from worries to God’s faithfulness. By regularly reflecting on His goodness, believers cultivate a heart of thankfulness that fuels joy and strengthens faith. Gratitude is a powerful antidote to anxiety, reminding believers

of God's constant presence and provision. It encourages a perspective that sees beyond immediate challenges to the broader picture of God's work in their lives.

1 Thessalonians 5:16–18: "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

Reflection and Prayer: What are three things you are grateful for today? How can you express your gratitude to God and others?

Day 5: Reflecting Christ Through Our Witness

The attitudes and actions of believers have a profound impact on their witness to the world. By choosing unity, joy, and peace, they reflect the character of Christ and draw others to Him. In a divided and anxious world, the church's unity and joy serve as a beacon of hope, pointing others to the transformative power of the Gospel. Believers are called to live in a way that reflects Christ's love and grace, making their lives a testimony to His work.

Matthew 5:14–16: "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

Reflection and Prayer: How can your actions today reflect the unity, joy, and peace of Christ to those around you? What specific step can you take to be a light in your community?

STUDENT DEVOTIONAL AFTER DNOW

This devotional follows session 2 from Phili4 DNow

Day 1: The Sanctuary of the Mind

Our minds are sacred spaces where we can cultivate thoughts that align with God's truth or allow harmful influences to take root. The transformation of our lives begins with the renewal of our minds, as Paul teaches in Romans 12:2. By consciously choosing to dwell on what is true, honorable, and pure, we align ourselves with God's will and open ourselves to His peace. This requires intentionality and discipline, as our thought life directly impacts our spiritual well-being. When we focus on godly thoughts, we invite God's presence and peace into our lives, allowing His truth to guide our actions and decisions.

In a world filled with distractions and negativity, it is crucial to guard our minds and choose thoughts that reflect God's character. By doing so, we create an environment where the Holy Spirit can work, transforming us from the inside out. This process of renewal is ongoing and requires us to be vigilant in what we allow into our minds. As we align our thoughts with God's truth, we experience a deeper sense of peace and purpose, knowing that our lives are being shaped by His will.

"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things." (Philippians 4:8, ESV)

Reflection and Prayer: What thoughts have you been entertaining that do not align with God's truth? How can you replace them with thoughts that reflect His character today?

Day 2: Reorienting Our Worldview

To think Christianly is to break away from the decaying mindset of society and reorient our thoughts towards God. This involves adopting a biblical worldview that influences how we see the world and interact with others. By seeing people as image-bearers of God, our perspectives and priorities are reshaped, allowing us to find hope even in desperate situations. This shift in perspective requires us to be intentional about the influences we allow into our lives and to seek God's wisdom in all things.

As we immerse ourselves in Scripture and prayer, our minds are renewed, and we begin to see the world through God's eyes. This transformation allows us to respond to challenges with grace and compassion, knowing that our ultimate hope is in Christ. By aligning our thoughts with God's truth, we become agents of change in a world that desperately needs His love and light.

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect." (Romans 12:2, ESV)

Reflection and Prayer: How does your current worldview align with God's perspective? What changes can you make to see the world more through His eyes?

Day 3: Drinking from the Right Well

True Christian living stems from drinking from the right well—Jesus Christ. Many attempt to live godly lives through sincerity, good intentions, or effort, but without Christ as the source, these efforts fall short. When Christ is our life, attitude, and goal, He becomes the wellspring of all we are and do. This means that our relationship with Him is the foundation of our spiritual growth and the source of our strength.

By prioritizing our relationship with Christ, we ensure that our lives are rooted in His love and truth. This requires us to spend time in His presence, seeking His guidance

and allowing His Spirit to work in us. As we draw from the well of Christ, we are empowered to live lives that reflect His character and bring glory to God.

"Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" (John 7:38, ESV)

Reflection and Prayer: Are you drawing from the well of Christ in your daily life? What steps can you take to deepen your relationship with Him today?

Day 4: Making Godly Living a Habit

Just as a doctor maintains a practice, Christians are called to make godly living their habitual practice. This requires continuous action and reliance on the Holy Spirit, not our own strength. By focusing our minds on what is true and setting our wills to follow Paul's teachings, we experience the presence of the God of peace. This involves being intentional about our daily habits and ensuring that they align with God's will.

As we practice godly living, we become more attuned to the Holy Spirit's leading and are better equipped to respond to life's challenges with grace and wisdom. This process of growth is ongoing and requires us to be diligent in our pursuit of holiness. By making godly living a habit, we create a lifestyle that reflects God's character and brings glory to His name.

"Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress."
(1 Timothy 4:15, ESV)

Reflection and Prayer: What habits in your life need to change to align more closely with godly living? How can you begin to make these changes today?

Day 5: Guarding the Gates of Our Minds

To maintain a pure thought life, we must block out influences that defile us and immerse ourselves in God's Word. This involves removing anything that promotes ungodliness and saturating our minds with Scripture. By memorizing verses related to our struggles, we equip ourselves to resist temptation and grow in holiness. This requires us to be vigilant about the media we consume, the conversations we engage in, and the thoughts we entertain.

As we guard the gates of our minds, we create an environment where the Holy Spirit can work, transforming us from the inside out. This process of renewal is ongoing and requires us to be intentional about what we allow into our minds. By immersing ourselves in God's Word, we are equipped to resist temptation and grow in holiness, becoming more like Christ in our thoughts and actions.

"Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life." (Proverbs 4:23, ESV)

Reflection and Prayer: What influences in your life are hindering your spiritual growth? How can you guard your mind against these influences and immerse yourself in God's Word today?

STUDENT DEVOTIONAL AFTER DNOW

This devotional follows session 3 from Phili4 DNow

Day 1: Strength Through Christ's Empowerment

In Philippians 4:13, the strength Paul speaks of is not about personal triumphs or achieving our own dreams. Instead, it is about the empowerment that comes from Christ to endure and remain steadfast in all of life's circumstances. This strength is a divine enablement that allows believers to face challenges with a spirit of contentment and faith, regardless of the situation. It is a reminder that our true power comes not from our own abilities but from our relationship with Christ, who equips us to handle whatever life throws our way. By relying on His strength, we can navigate both the highs and lows of life with grace and resilience.

"For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being." (Ephesians 3:14-16, ESV)

Reflection and Prayer: In what current situation do you need to rely more on Christ's strength rather than your own abilities? How can you actively seek His empowerment today? Who can you ask to help encourage you and keep you accountable?

Day 2: Contentment Rooted in Christ

Contentment is a state of heart and mind that is not dependent on external circumstances. Paul learned to be content whether he was in abundance or in need, and this secret was found in focusing on Jesus. When we fix our eyes on Christ, we discover a peace that transcends our situations. This contentment allows us to be adaptable and ready to serve wherever God calls us, knowing that our satisfaction is

not tied to worldly achievements or possessions. By cultivating a deep relationship with Christ, we can experience true contentment that is unshaken by life's ups and downs.

"Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need." (Philippians 4:11-12, ESV)

Reflection and Prayer: What is one area of your life where you struggle with discontentment? How can you shift your focus to Christ in that area today?

Day 3: Christ Alone is Sufficient

The pursuit of "Jesus plus something else" often leads to dissatisfaction and restlessness. True contentment comes from realizing that Christ alone is sufficient for our needs. When we find our satisfaction in Him, we are not swayed by the changing tides of life. This realization challenges us to examine our hearts and identify any areas where we are seeking fulfillment outside of Christ. By embracing the sufficiency of Christ, we can experience a deeper sense of peace and joy that is not dependent on external circumstances.

"But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content." (1 Timothy 6:6-8, ESV)

Reflection and Prayer: Is there something you feel you need in addition to Jesus to be content? Why? What does that thing "promise" that Jesus hasn't? How can you practice finding your sufficiency in Christ alone today?

Day 4: Drawing Strength from Our Relationship with Christ

Just as a tree draws sustenance from its roots, believers must draw strength from their relationship with Christ. This hidden strength enables us to withstand life's pressures and remain steadfast in our faith. It is not about relying on our own resources or abilities but about tapping into the deep resources of God by faith. By nurturing our relationship with Christ through prayer, scripture, and community, we can access the strength needed to face life's challenges with confidence and hope.

"Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit." (Jeremiah 17:7-8, ESV)

Reflection and Prayer: How can you deepen your relationship with Christ to draw more strength from Him? What specific steps can you take this week to nurture this relationship?

Day 5: Living with an Eternal Perspective

Content Christians understand that this world is not their home. They have found contentment in Christ, which makes them open to wherever God wants to send them. This eternal perspective helps us to see beyond temporary hardships and to trust in God's provision and faithfulness in every situation. By focusing on the eternal, we can navigate life's challenges with a sense of purpose and hope, knowing that our ultimate home is with Christ.

"So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but

to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.” (2 Corinthians 4:16–18, ESV)

Reflection and Prayer: How does your current perspective on life reflect an eternal mindset? Is there urgency in your mind and daily routines that reflect “gospel urgency” and awareness of eternity? What changes can you make to align more closely with an eternal perspective today?

STUDENT DEVOTIONAL AFTER DNOW

This devotional follows the Sunday sermon from Phili4 DNow

Day 1: Advancing the Gospel Through Challenges

In the journey of faith, believers are often met with opposition as they strive to advance the Gospel. This is a reality that Paul himself experienced, yet he remained steadfast in his mission. The call to advance the Gospel amidst opposition is a call to trust in God's faithfulness and to see challenges as opportunities for growth and outreach. It requires a heart that is willing to endure hardships for the sake of spreading the message of Christ. By focusing on the mission and relying on God's strength, believers can turn obstacles into stepping stones for the Gospel to reach new places and people.

"Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain." (1 Corinthians 15:58, ESV)

Reflection and Prayer: Think of a current challenge you are facing. How can you view this challenge as an opportunity to advance the Gospel in your life or community today? Remember, it's all about perspective. Do you allow your circumstances to affect your view of God, His goodness or His love towards you? Why or why not?

Day 2: Unity in Gospel Fellowship

The concept of koinonia, or fellowship, is central to the Christian life. It is more than just social interaction; it is a deep, gospel-centered relationship that is both personal and missional. True partnership in the Gospel means sharing in both the joys and struggles of the mission, fostering unity and strength among believers. This unity is a

powerful testimony to the world of the transformative power of the Gospel. By valuing and nurturing these relationships, believers can create a strong community that supports and encourages one another in their shared mission.

“So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.” (Philippians 2:1–2, ESV)

Reflection and Prayer: Identify a fellow believer with whom you can strengthen your partnership in the Gospel. How can you intentionally support and encourage them this week?

Day 3: Living a Life Worthy of the Gospel

To live a life worthy of the Gospel is to reflect its transformative power in our daily actions and decisions. This is not about earning salvation but about aligning our lives with the high standard of the Gospel. It involves valuing Christ above all else and letting our lives be a testament to His grace and truth. By living in a way that honors the Gospel, believers can be a light to those around them, demonstrating the love and truth of Christ in every aspect of their lives.

“Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel.” (Philippians 1:27, ESV)

Reflection and Prayer: Reflect on your daily actions and decisions. What you watch, listen to, read and do with friends. What is one specific area where you can better align your life with the Gospel today?

Day 4: Following Christ's Example

Jesus is our ultimate leader, and we are called to follow His example. The Holy Spirit empowers us to live out God's commands and to renew our minds continually. This process of transformation requires daily discipline and a commitment to letting God work in and through us. By following Christ's example, believers can grow in their faith and become more like Him, reflecting His love and truth to the world.

"Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ." (1 Corinthians 11:1, ESV)

Reflection and Prayer: Consider one aspect of Christ's character that you admire. Why that one? How can you intentionally incorporate this trait more into your life this week?

Day 5: Trusting God to Gain Ground

Even in the face of powerful opposition, like that of Rome, the Gospel cannot be stopped. Believers are ambassadors of God's Kingdom, and their lives should reflect His glory and grace. By living with hope and love, we can be instruments of change, bringing light to the darkest places and witnessing the life-changing power of Jesus. Trusting in God's power to gain ground means believing that He can work through us to bring about His purposes, even in the most challenging circumstances.

"For the kingdom of God does not consist in talk but in power." (1 Corinthians 4:20, ESV)

Reflection and Prayer: Think of a situation where you feel powerless. How can you trust God to work through you to bring about change in this situation today?