

November 18/19, 2023
"Word and Deed"
Pastor Jeff Manion



SPEND DAILY TIME WITH GOD AS YOU READ, THINK, PRAY + ACT.

2023 SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

Intentional activities to deepen our relationship with God and mold us to be more like Jesus.

NOVEMBER PRACTICE Bible Meditation

Day 1 Luke 9:1-6 | Tandem

When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. Luke 9:1-2

Jesus calls his twelve disciples together and gives them a mission. He sends them into surrounding towns to "proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal" (Luke 9:2). He commissions them with his power and authority to do what he does—proclaim and heal. People don't question what kingdom Jesus means. They have been waiting for generations for the promised king to come through King David's line and restore their relationship with God. Jesus announces the kingdom is here. He's the king bringing a kingdom of restoration. Then he proves it by healing. The words of announcement and deeds that follow always go together.

We see two separate things that always go together—the gospel and the results of the gospel. The gospel is the announcement, or good news, that God has brought our salvation through Jesus. Our relationship with God is restored when we place our faith in Jesus. The results of the gospel should then be our good works. Faith and works go together, like a tandem bike that cannot be separated. Our good works flow from the gospel and point back to it. They are two parts of one thing.

Throughout this series, we will see how faith and works go together. We are prone to separate them or lean more toward one. We can also put them in reverse order, thinking we need to work to earn the gospel. When we let the power of the Holy Spirit work in us, we can live with these in harmony.

IN YOUR CHAIR TIME TODAY Pray and ask God to reveal throughout this sermon series how you can balance faith and works. Ask him to show where you are out of balance or have gotten them in reverse order. Pray for growing wisdom and God's help to balance faith and works. One step to balance these might be learning to share your faith with others. Join us for SHARING YOUR FAITH on December 7 at the Kentwood Campus to learn simple tools to share. Learn more and sign up [HERE](#).

Day 2 Ephesians 2:8-10 | What is the Gospel?

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. Ephesians 2:8-9

Gospel is a word meaning "good news." The good news is that God loves and pursues people despite their sins! God creates the world and declares all he has made "very good" ([Genesis 1:31](#)). He has a close relationship with the first people, Adam and Eve. Yet this relationship breaks when they choose not to trust God and do the one thing he asked them not to do. Their disobedience (called sin) passes to all and leaves the world broken. But God has a plan. He sends his son Jesus to earth. Jesus lives in perfect obedience to God and then dies on a Roman cross. His death pays the penalty for sin. His resurrection shows he has power over death. Because of Jesus, people can have a relationship with God in this life and the next. Good news, indeed!

This good news deserves a response. Jesus provides salvation as a free gift of grace and mercy to any who accept it. It's not about what we do but what Jesus has done for us. We have two options—reject his gift or accept it. Accepting his gift of rescue means repenting of our wrongs, turning humbly toward Jesus and following him as the leader of our life.

Accepting this gift is a one-time decision, and it is also a daily choice. A Christian is someone who has accepted this gift and given their life to him. Christians also recognize they continually fail and need to turn to Jesus again and again. Fortunately, we are not alone. God has given us the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit does many things, but one major role is to draw us continually toward God and repentance.

IN YOUR CHAIR TIME TODAY Memorize [Ephesians 2:8-9](#). Thank God for salvation through his grace that we do not have to work to earn. If you haven't accepted this gift, you can do that right now. You don't have to perform spectacular deeds, but simply tell Jesus you believe he died for you and invite him to be your leader. Contact us at btw@adabible.org for a conversation about the next step.

Day 3 Luke 6:46 | King and Kingdom

"Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?" Luke 6:46

Jesus calls people to faith in him and to follow him by obeying his words. Jesus questions why some people call him "Lord" but don't actually do what he says. They want the benefits of having him as King (salvation) but not what the reality of a kingdom requires (obedience). Kingdom living means bending the knee to the King. It includes proclaiming him as Lord and then living like Jesus is in charge.

We, too, can proclaim Jesus while not fully submitting to him. We can say Jesus is our King and express faith in him, but not allow him to lead and shape our lives. We might act as we please in our relationships, how we spend our money, how we talk to and about others or how we spend our time. Sometimes, we want the results of the kingdom without the King. We work for the alleviation of poverty, eradication of diseases and work toward reconciliation, yet we don't proclaim or accept Jesus as Savior. We want the reality of a reconciled kingdom, a world with the values of Jesus, without being reconciled with the King.

It all comes down to our view of Jesus. Both sides have an inadequate view of Jesus. One side just wants him for what he can do for them personally. Another wants to reject Jesus yet hopes for joy and peace for the world. Neither works. We need both King AND Kingdom.

IN YOUR CHAIR TIME TODAY Journal and assess where you are in relation to King AND Kingdom. Do you tend to prefer one over the other? Reflect on why you lean toward one. Ask God to grow in you a desire for him as your King and the coming of his Kingdom.

Day 4 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 | Thanksgiving

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Gratitude doesn't always come easily for Jesus's followers. Life is challenging for new believers in the ancient city of Thessalonica. They suffer persecution for their faith in Jesus. Divisions arise within the church. They grieve over the death of beloved friends and family. The Apostle Paul writes a letter into these situations to help them grow and stand firm together in their faith. Paul reminds them of the incredible hope they have in Jesus Christ. In light of this hope, Paul teaches them to give thanks in every circumstance, including their difficulties. Joy, prayer and gratitude are to mark the lives of Jesus's followers.

Gratitude may or may not come easily as we celebrate Thanksgiving today. We might face difficulties and grief. Our world can feel complicated, overwhelming, lonely and uncertain. Yet the hope of our salvation in Jesus is certain. No matter what circumstances we face, we can give thanks for what Jesus Christ has done for us through his life, death and resurrection. As we focus on God's unchanging character of goodness, enduring love and faithfulness, the Holy Spirit opens our eyes to his presence and power in our situations. We can turn to him and thank him for who he is, what he has done and will do in the future. As we turn to him with trust, we can experience God's joy and find the strength to give thanks in everything.

IN YOUR CHAIR TIME TODAY Read [Psalm 100](#) out loud today. If you are gathering with family or friends for a meal, consider reading this Psalm at the table to declare God's goodness, steadfast and enduring love, and faithfulness to all generations ([Psalm 100:5](#)). Take time to share with each other one thing you are thankful to God for in this season.

Day 5 Luke 9:10-11 | Preview

But the crowds learned about it and followed him. He welcomed them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who needed healing. Luke 9:11

The apostles return from the mission Jesus sent them on. They report they have done all Jesus commanded them. They declare the kingdom of God has arrived and call people to turn away from their sins and toward God in repentance. The apostles heal the sick and drive out demons with Jesus's power and authority. Though Jesus came to restore and sent his disciples to do the same, suffering remains. Jesus didn't heal all the sick nor drive out all the darkness. His healing ministry previews what life will be like when God's kingdom comes in its fullness.

Even when life is pleasant, we can wonder if this is all there is. We sense something is missing. And on the most challenging days, we hope something better will come. The good news is that through Jesus, there is so much more to come. One day, he will make all things new ([Revelation 21:5](#)). As we follow him, we begin to experience a preview of the complete restoration yet to come. Through our good works, we partner with Jesus to provide a preview of the kingdom to those around us.

IN YOUR CHAIR TIME TODAY Listen to the Ada Bible Worship Team sing "[Stronger](#)." Join in praising Jesus that, "You are stronger. Sin is broken. You have saved me." Praise him as your hope and defense who has risen and is Lord of all. Thank him for the preview of all that is yet to come in his kingdom.