



5 MINUTES / 5 DAYS

MONDAY Go to Church*Hebrews 10:25; 5:12-14*

In the Bible, Hebrews is so revered for its doctrine and theology, especially related to the preeminence of Christ, that the practical side of this book can be slighted. This week we will pull some instruction for Bible-Centered Living from these wonderful chapters.

For example, we learn the simple instruction: Go to Church. It is both expressly directed (10:25) as well as implied for how it can help us (5:12-14). There are all kinds of reasons why church is important. It is a place to worship, learn, fellowship, serve, give, pray, share... Further, it is a place of spiritual protection. In Hebrews, it is mentioned as a way to avoid falling away from God. But perhaps, most importantly, church is a place of obedience. Attending puts us on the right side of God's desire. He wants us to be in church; so attending puts us closer to Him.

Mentally list three things you like about church now.

TUESDAY Read Your Bible*Hebrews 2:3, 4:12*

Let me ask you what might be a slightly embarrassing question. Are you only reading the text of the Take Five, or have you looked up the scripture references as well? We have such wonderful and easy devotional thoughts available to us, I use them myself and surely recommend some sort of daily, or regular, devotional reading. You get can books with a reading for each day, you can use the quarterly booklets freely available called *Our Daily Bread*, and many are now having a devotional emailed to them everyday. (I love that!) And, of course, every week there is a Take5 available to you.

But all of these helps have one thing in common: Good as they are, they are not inspired and may not always even be helpful. But the other common characteristic is that they always are connected to a scripture reading. That's where the power is; that's where God truly speaks. For sure, **read your Bible**.

Read a passage of scripture every day this week.

Glorifying God by producing more maturing followers of Jesus.

WEDNESDAY Give It Up*Hebrews 10:32-35*

Abandon things. Not literally, but disallow things (money included) to rob you of the blessing of living without materialistic compulsions. Sometimes when the Hebrews turned to Christ, not only would they be socially rejected and physically harmed, their possessions may be confiscated as well. The writer here commends them for joyfully (wow, really?) accepting this "plunder," because they embraced a heavenly perspective.

Surely, one of the applications of understanding that life is short and heaven is not (after all, eternity is a long time), is that possessions are really not very important. It's the wise investor who uses his resources for never-ending gains. You will never outlive your "retirement" if you have laid out treasure in heaven (Luke 12:16-21).

Ask yourself, "Are things getting in the way of my relationship with God?"

THURSDAY Serve a Bunch*Hebrews 13:15-16*

It's one thing to talk and another to walk. God wants both our words and our actions to honor him. The Hebrews writer goes so far as to call it a sacrifice—a sacrifice of praise and a sacrifice of good works. Verse 16 is so simple and so direct: *...do not forget to do good and to share.*

Well, okay then. Part of Bible-Centered Living is looking for ways to praise and serve. We praise the Lord with words when we sing hymns and gospel songs. We can also praise Him to others and certainly to God Himself in our prayers. We can serve Him in easy and obvious ways as well. Show a kindness to someone. Volunteer for the nursery. Pull some weeds at church. Visit an elderly person. Give to the benevolence fund. Watch for and seek out opportunities to serve. Walk the Walk; Talk the Talk!

Actively look for ways to serve this week.

FRIDAY Extend Your Faith*Hebrews 11:30-40*

The entire 11th chapter of Hebrews stands as a rousing call to faith. Faith in God to **do**, to accomplish. Is there such a thing as faith that is too "safe?" May God help us. I believe He wants us to demonstrate extreme faith... well, if not extreme, at least extended.

The point is, it takes little faith to believe that God will help us do the things we are already pretty sure we could do on our own (thank you very much). But can we believe God for the things about which we must say, "I have no idea how God could do this, but I believe He will. And I'm available to Him to make it so." Recklessness is not called for; irresponsibility is not called for; silliness is not called for. But God may call on us to exercise faith well beyond what we have ever experienced. May we extend our faith and see what God will do.

Ask God to use you beyond the obvious ways.