

From Pastor Ed: The 21 Day Wesley Challenge

This is day 5! Way to go!

Remember this Sunday we will be gathering for a brief thirty minute OT (overtime) in Wesley hall where we will have a chance to meet with others and discuss our thoughts/answers to at least one of the questions.

Day FIVE Question FIVE

“Did I disobey God in anything?”

Consider the following...

When we choose to obey God, we honor God’s love for us and live as God desired. When we disobey God by choosing to live our own ways, we live into our freedom, but also make the possibility of sin a reality. How do we move beyond a love for self and toward a whole-hearted love for God?

When we don’t do what God intends we must choose to confess our actions (or lack of actions) and ask for forgiveness. Confession taps into God’s forgiveness, and forgiveness gives us a fresh start. God’s love is always greater than your biggest blunder.

- In what areas of my life am I choosing my own desires over God’s desires? Where can I find help in overcoming my shortcomings? In what ways do you think Jesus models for us the way God intended for humans to live?
- How can I worship God with the freedom God has granted me, rather than going my own way in rebellion against God? Here’s one idea: memorize the verse, “To you, Lord, belong greatness and power, honor, splendor, and majesty, because everything in heaven and on earth belongs to you. Yours, Lord, is the kingship, and you are honored as head of all” (1 Chronicles 29:11). When you sense a struggle within you to obey God’s authority, repeat it to yourself.

Prayer: God, you gladly and graciously forgive all who repent and turn toward you. Thanks for your promise of enduring and redeeming grace! May I strive to be as Christ is, so that I might reveal my love for you to the world around me. Amen.

Day Five devotional Five: (Thanks to Pastor Rick Warren)

“Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.” (Matthew 7:24 NIV)

Receiving, reading, researching, remembering, and reflecting on the Word of God are all useless if we fail to put what we learn into practice. We must become *doers of the Word* (James 1:22).

I understand this is a hard step, because Satan fights it so intensely. He doesn’t mind you going to Bible studies as long as you don’t do anything with what you learn.

We fool ourselves when we assume that just because we have heard or read or studied a truth, we have internalized it.

Actually, you can be so busy going to the next class or seminar or Bible conference that you have no time to implement what you've learned. You forget it on the way to your next study! Without implementation, all our Bible studies are worthless. Jesus said, *"Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock"* (Matthew 7:24 NIV).

Jesus also pointed out that God's blessing comes from obeying the truth, not just knowing it. He said, *"Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them"* (John 13:17).

I cannot overstate the value of being a part of a small Bible study discussion group. We always learn from others truths we would never learn on our own. Other people will help you see insights you would miss and help you apply God's truth in a practical way.

The best way to become a doer of the Word is to always write out an action step as a result of your reading or studying of or reflecting on God's Word. Develop the habit of writing down exactly what you intend to do.

This action step should be personal (involving you), practical (something you can do), and provable (with a deadline). Every application will involve either your relationship to God, your relationship to others, or your personal character.

Talk It Over

- What has God already told you in his Word to do that you haven't started doing yet?
- How has your small group been an encouragement to be a doer of the Word?
- What has been the value to you of being part of a Bible study or conference? How have you applied what you learned?