

VOLUME 1



**10 IN  
10**

**BUILD WELL**

# 10 IN 10

Did you know that you are never too young to really seek the Lord and take your walk with Him seriously? I love what the Bible says about Josiah, who was one of the kings of Judah (you can read about him in 2 Chronicles 34-35). It says that '...while he was yet a boy, he began to seek the Lord...'. He was around 16 years old at this point in his life.

Let me encourage you that you don't need to wait until you're older, you feel 'all grown up', or you feel like you've figured things out - you can intentionally set your heart to seek the Lord and grow in your walk with Him NOW!

The purpose of this short devotional is pretty simple! It's to help you engage with God and establish a healthy pattern of spending time with Him and growing in your relationship with Him.

I've heard many of you say that whilst you'd love to spend time with God and open up His Word, you just don't know where to start, or how to go about it. Well, consider this the kickstart you may need to get going!



# 10 IN 10

Each devotional should take no more than 10 minutes, and there are 10 days worth of devotionals to follow along with. Just 10 minutes per day is such a small chunk of time to set aside to invest in the most important relationship you will ever have!

Think about it - it is just 10 minutes less of scrolling on Instagram or Facebook...one less level completed on that favourite video game...one less Bluey episode before bed...one less snooze cycle before getting up in the morning!

Each devotional will get you into God's Word, activate your prayer life (your communication with God) and will help you grow by providing a few key devotional thoughts. There will also be space for you to respond to the Lord in your own way as well.

Let me encourage you to give it a go and see what happens. See how God might speak to you through His Word or through the devotional content. See how your relationship with God grows over these next 10 days. Get started, go for it and don't give up!



DAY 1



**WHAT ARE YOU  
BUILDING ON?**

# READ

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Matthew 7:24-27

James 1:22-25

Psalms 118:22-23

# REFLECT

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When it comes to building anything - a house, an apartment block, a skyscraper - the most important thing is what sort of foundation it is being built on. If it is a good and solid foundation, the structure will last and stand firm - even when storms arise and things are shaken. If there are issues with the foundation however, there will be serious problems faced down the track.

A question that I want you to think about for a moment is this - 'what are YOU building your life on'? Through the patterns you are establishing, the decisions you are making, the voices you are listening to, through the places you turn when you are struggling - are you building on a firm foundation, or is there some shaky ground that needs to be dealt with before serious issues arise?

In the passages of Scripture you read today, there are two main things to grab hold of that will ensure a firm foundation in your life - 1) hearing and doing God's Word; and 2) ensuring Jesus has His rightful place.

When Jesus talked about the man who built his house upon the rock, He taught that this man both heard His words, and then went about doing them. 'Hearing' the Word of God looks like actually opening it up and reading it and allowing God to speak through it into your heart and life. Just like you don't eat one meal per week, it's important you aren't just opening up God's Word only on a Friday night at youth. One, or maybe a few, meals per week will not nourish and strengthen you physically! In the same way, feeding on God's Word sporadically, or very rarely, will mean limited growth and a less than firm foundation.

More than just hearing what God has to say (as good as that is), there is also a requirement to put it into practice and have it impact your life - the way you live, speak, respond to situations, and treat others. For example, you can read about how you are called to 'love your neighbour as yourself' - to apply it means thinking about what that means for you in our family setting, your school, etc, and then putting that into practice.

As well as God's Word having its rightful place, Jesus must have His rightful place. The verses from Psalms today paint a prophetic picture of Jesus being like a 'Cornerstone'. The thing about a cornerstone (in older style building) is that it was the stone upon which the entire structure rested. The cornerstone needed to be laid first - you couldn't leave a space for it and somehow try and fit it in once the structure had been built! It just didn't work that way!

In your life right now - where does Jesus fit? Is He your priority - taking first place in terms of where and how you spend your time, in terms of how you think about Him and respond to Him, in terms of whether you are willing to surrender to Him as Lord and King? Or is He an afterthought, fitting somewhere in the picture, but more of an added extra, rather than the Cornerstone?

If you make sure the foundation is right and strong, everything else that is built upon that foundation will be too.

## RESPOND

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***Lord, I come before You today and ask for Your help. Help me to build my life on a firm foundation - Your foundation! Through the power of Your Holy Spirit would You enable me to be one who both hears Your Word, and puts it into practice. Forgive me for where I've allowed other 'noise' - opinions, voices, influences - to shape my perspective. May Your truth God, be what shapes my life. Establish me in Your love and grace I pray, that I would stand firm. In Jesus' Name, Amen***

- Think of two ways you can be a hearer and doer of God's Word today
- Ask God to show you any areas in your life that may be causing your foundation to be shaky or have issues.

DAY 2



# TWO WAYS

# READ

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Psalm 1

Joshua 24:14-15

Proverbs 3:5-6

# REFLECT

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I have this tendency when driving in the car, that if there are two ways available to take, I will always try and take the 'short-cut' or the quickest route. This does frustrate my wife from time-to-time as the 'quick way' often doesn't pan out as I would hope! Sometimes there just happen to be unforeseen circumstances - like a traffic jam, or THE slowest drivers ever - and that is where I lay the blame, rather than my man sense! Had I known these unforeseen things beforehand, I would have of course chosen the other way to go.

In your life, there are two ways to take - two paths before you. The good news is, you don't have to take a stab in the dark as to which way will be better, and which choice will lead you safely to the destination you are after. The Bible makes it pretty clear, as you would have read in Psalm 1 today. There is the way of wisdom (God's way) and the way of foolishness. One leads to life and blessing, the other leads to judgment and destruction.

Which way are you walking in right now?

Psalm 1 talks about **walking** in the counsel of the wicked, **standing** in the way of sinners and **sitting** in the seat of scoffers. It speaks of a progression from 'walking along' - maybe dabbling in some things that aren't lifegiving or healthy - to then 'stopping to stand around with' - being influenced by sin - and finally, 'sitting down and joining in with' - getting right in there in the way of sin and ungodliness. This progression is a progression of influence that results in someone turning their attention to the wrong things, or even walking along the wrong path.

As well as which way are you walking in, who or what are you allowing to influence you? Who have you been 'walking' with, 'standing' with or 'sitting' with?

As we follow Jesus, we are called to be **transformed** by building our lives on Jesus and walking in the way of wisdom and life, not **conformed** to the likeness of the world (see Romans 12:1-2).

This day, and every day - choose life! Choose the right way, even if it seems less appealing than the 'quick and easy way' that is so often presented to us.

# RESPOND

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***Lord, I acknowledge there are so many different things that can influence my heart and mind, that can pull me away from you, that can lead me down the way of foolishness. Help me to choose life. Help me to choose the way of wisdom - to delight in You and follow Your Word. Thank You that You are with me, and You strengthen me by the power of Your Spirit. Thank You that as I trust in You and commit my way to You, You promise to direct my paths and make them straight. In Jesus' Name, Amen***

- Think about some of the things that are influencing you at the moment - social media, opinions of others, books or TV shows that are ungodly just to give a few examples. Is the influence those things are having leading to the way of life and wisdom, or foolishness and destruction? Ask God to help you with making any changes that may be necessary.

DAY 3



**FOLLOW**

# READ

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Philippians 2:3-12

Ephesians 5:1-2

John 14:16, 26

# REFLECT

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In vs 12 of the passage you read today, you will see the word 'therefore'. At school, I was always taught that when you see the word therefore, you must ask 'what is it there for'? The reason it is there is because the apostle Paul has just been expounding on the example Christ Jesus gave us to follow - His humility, His servanthood, His obedience, and His sacrifice (vs 3-8).

It's like he is saying 'therefore, or in other words, because of all this - because of who Jesus is and all He has done - as a result of that and as a natural progression flowing from that, **show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence** (v12, NLT)'.

In other words, you are called to follow Christ's example and there should be evidence of that in your life! That's all good to say, but what does it mean to truly follow Jesus? To consider His example and make that be a pattern or blueprint for how you live?

Well, consider these things: when was the last time you consistently lived in such a way that put aside selfish ambition - the focus on what YOU want? That's what Jesus did. When was the last time you intentionally put aside preoccupation with self? That is what Jesus did and how He lived. Do you count others more significant than yourself and look for ways you can bless, serve and build up those around you? That's what Jesus did and how He lived. Do you look to the interests and needs of others, not just your own? That is what Jesus did. That is the example He has given us to follow, and the good news is, He has given us His Holy Spirit to help us (see the verses from John 14 above)

If you say you FOLLOW Jesus, is there evidence in the way you live? If Jesus has His rightful place and if we are building on the right foundation - there should be!

# RESPOND

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***Lord God, help my words and what I profess to believe match up with my life and how I live it. I pray that there would be evidence in my life that I am a follower of You, Jesus. Not so that I would be praised, but so that You would have the glory and be seen and known. Thank You for Your example, Jesus. The way You loved, served and sacrificed. Help me to follow that example. In Your Name, Amen.***

DAY 4



**ALLOW**

# READ

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Philippians 2:13-16

Revelation 3:20

Galatians 5:16-26

# REFLECT

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Have you ever seen the Mr Bean episode where he tries to cook a Christmas turkey in the microwave?! Instead of the long process of the turkey cooking tenderly, allowing the juices and flavours to infuse the meat, good old Mr Bean attempts to accomplish instantly, a process that usually takes hours! Like this humorous example, the world we live in wants instant results, and often doesn't value the things that take time.

As you walk with Jesus, there is work that He does in your heart and life that can at times feel like a process that is long and slow, and even painful. However, the work that He does and desires to do is always good, and is always for your good. God is so good and loving that He desires that you walk closely with Him, and that ultimately you would become more like Jesus!

In Phil 2:13 that you read today, it says that 'it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure'. Another translation puts it this way: **'For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases Him'**.

The question is - will you ALLOW Him to do the work that He desires to do, and needs to do, so that your life reflects Him and pleases Him?

God is not a dictator! He does not and will not override your free will - because true love isn't forced or based on fear. God loves you just as you are (and that's good news, because it means you don't have to be perfect or have it altogether). BUT...He loves you too much to leave you as you are. He desires to shape, transform, grow, heal, restore you and smooth off some of those 'rough edges'!

This is a process the Bible calls 'SANCTIFICATION', which is a big, theological word that basically means 'the process or action of making something holy, pure and free from sin'. It is a work that God does, by the power of His Holy Spirit, and it will look like you being transformed and shaped more into the likeness of Jesus. For this process to be truly effective though, the Lord is looking for hearts that are yielded, and hearts that welcome and allow Him to come and do what He needs to do.

Let me encourage you - don't resist His work! Don't think you've got it all together or know what is best. Allow the Lord in - open up the door (Rev 3:20), so He can come and have His way in your life.

# RESPOND

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*Lord, I thank You that You are at work in my life. Would You give me eyes to see what You are doing, and even when I can't see, help me to trust You for I know that You desire what is best for me. Thank You for Your unfailing love and the way You are patient and gracious with me. Would You reveal those areas in my life that You want to come into, to bring Your healing, refining and shaping. Forgive me Lord, for when I've resisted Your work in my life or hardened my heart to You. This day, I surrender and ask that You would come and have Your way. Work in me so that I might reflect You to those around me and please You in all things. In Jesus' Name, Amen.*

DAY 5



**REMEMBER**

# READ

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Philippians 2:13-16

1 John 3:1

Romans 8:1-2; 14-17

# REFLECT

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I was 7 years old when the Lion King first came out, and I remember how big it was even back then in the early '90s. It was a hit at the Box Office and there was Lion King merchandise everywhere! It has certainly been an enduring classic and is still widely acclaimed and quoted even today! There is one poignant scene you may remember, where Simba has been in 'exile', living with Timon and Pumbaa, full of shame and unable to look beyond his past to step into his true identity. King Mufasa appears to him and says (think James Earl Jones' deep, rich voice here!) - 'you have forgotten who you are....remember who you are, you are my son and the one true king!'

Like Simba, our shame, our past, our failures can hold us back and keep us from remembering and realising who we are. Phil 2:15 is a reminder of identity - '**children of God**'. Think about that for a moment. If you have said yes to Jesus, and have welcomed Him to be the Lord of your life, you are welcomed as a child of God. You are loved, valued and significant in God's eyes. Even more than a good earthly father - your Heavenly Father wants the best for you.

That is good news as it means that no matter what your earthly family situation is or has been - a broken home, a single parent family, or a family with both parents around and siblings - in Christ, you are a beloved son or daughter of the Living God!

As a father, my children bear my name. Their identity, and how others know them, is as a Ritchard. They bear my image - various physical and character qualities and traits. They are loved, valued and significant in my eyes. My love for them is not determined by their good behaviour or their performance - I love them because they are my children. As much as I do my best as a Dad, I know full well that I am an imperfect and flawed father, but think how much more God, our perfect Heavenly Father, loves, values and sees you as significant.

Your identity comes not from what you feel. Your identity does not come from how good you've been or if you have it all together. Your identity does not come from past failures or mistakes you have made. Your identity is not defined by what the world may tell you, or from the lies of the enemy (the devil). Your identity, your worth, your value come from the Lord - it's in Him!

Don't let shame, disappointment, regret, your past or failures keep you from your true identity! James Earl-Jones again...Remember who you are! You are a child of God!

# RESPOND

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***Father, thank You that through Jesus, my identity, my true identity, is as Your child. Thank You that I am loved, valued, chosen and significant in Your eyes. Help me not to go looking for my worth, value or identity anywhere else. Would You speak Your truth where there are lies I've believed about myself. Help me to stay close to You and remember who I am - Your child. I'm so thankful, God. In Jesus' Name, Amen.***

- Take a moment and listen to the songs 'No Longer Slaves' by Bethel Music and/or 'Good Good Father' by Housefires.. You can google them or check them out on Spotify / Apple Music.

DAY 6



**SHINE BRIGHTLY**

# READ

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Philippians 2:13-16

Matthew 5:14-16

# REFLECT

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I've found it frustrating when, on more than one occasion, I've purchased a lamp only to unpack it and realise that the light bulb is sold separately, meaning I have a lamp without light! A lamp without light is not much good though is it? The purpose of a lamp is not to simply be an ornament. Similarly, the purpose of a lamp is not to be hidden away - you wouldn't hide a nice lamp in the cupboard and expect to light up the room! The purpose of a lamp is to shine!

As someone who follows Jesus, your purpose is to shine brightly for His glory - pointing others to Jesus in the way you live, speak and do life. Just as a lamp needs to be plugged into the power source to produce light, so you also need to be plugged into the true power source - Jesus! Only then are you truly able to reflect His light and shine.

In Phil 2:15, the Apostle Paul writes that followers of Jesus are those who 'shine as lights in the world, in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation'. The darkness around you may seem great, but His light is greater and the light of Jesus shining in you is able to pierce through the darkness!

Unfortunately, instead of shining brightly, often it is too easy to want to 'fit in' or 'blend in' with the crowd. Did you know that nowhere in the Bible are God's people called to 'fit in' or 'go along with the crowd'? Instead, God's people are called to be shining brightly, to be the fragrance of Christ to the world around us (2 Cor 2:15), to be set apart, to be sign posts pointing straight to Jesus.

In other words, your faith is meant to be seen. It's meant to be on display! If people look at your life they should see and notice something different - not in a 'I'm better than you' kind of way, but in a 'my life has been touched and changed by the love and grace of God and I'm just seeking to live that out' kind of way!

When you live your life following Christ's example, welcoming and allowing God's work, and remembering your identity as a child of God, you will shine brightly in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation.

# RESPOND

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*Lord, You have called me to shine - to shine bright with Your love, Your light, Your hope, Your goodness - and so reveal who You are to those around me. By the power of Your Spirit, help me to shine brightly! Forgive me for the times I have kept my light hidden so I wouldn't be teased or made fun of, and for when I've dimmed the light by seeking to go along with the crowd. I ask for courage and boldness. Would You be seen in my life, Jesus. In Your Name I pray, Amen.*

DAY 7



**HOLD FAST**

# READ

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Philippians 2:13-16

2 Timothy 3:10-17

Hebrews 4:12

# REFLECT

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Have you ever been rock climbing? At the school I went to in Sydney, it used to be one of the options for Monday afternoon sport. When scaling a wall I found there were elements of excitement, risk, adrenalin rushes and terror all mixed in together, because as I climbed higher up, there were moments of perhaps thinking about things more than I'd like - as in, 'I hope these ropes are secured properly!' OR 'I hope this belay holds fast!' When scaling a wall whilst rock climbing it is so important to be anchored and secured properly - for your ropes to hold fast - otherwise there will be trouble!

It is similar to your life of faith - you need to be anchored securely, holding fast to that which will keep you safe. The exhortation Paul gives in the passage for today (Phil 2:16) is to 'hold fast to the Word of life'. To hold fast means to hold onto, to cling to, to be secured to, to be anchored to, to be joined with. If we are to hold that tight to something, it paints a picture of it being of great prominence and importance - foundational to everything else.

Do you notice how it says the Word of **LIFE**? It's not the word of self-improvement, not the word of good ideas that you can pick and choose from depending on what is popular. It is the Word of **LIFE**. If you hold fast to it - keep it close, anchor your heart to the truth it proclaims, feed your soul on it, hear and do it - it will lead to life. Not just a mediocre kind of life, just scraping by, but the abundant kind of life that Jesus came to bring.

Are you holding fast to the Word of life, or are you holding it loosely, keeping it at a distance?

# RESPOND

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***Father in Heaven, thank You for the precious gift of Your Word. Thank You that it is living and active, and for the way it teaches and guides me in Your ways. Help me to know Your ways, God, and to walk in them. Please help me to hold fast to Your Word for I know it will lead me to life - true life. There are so many other views, opinions and distractions - Lord, I choose to hold fast to Your truth. In Jesus' Name, Amen***

DAY 8



# **A GREAT BANQUET**

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Luke 14:16-24

Psalm 16:11

Psalm 34:8

# REFLECT

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Growing up, I used to love going to a restaurant called 'Sizzler'. I'm pretty sure the chain doesn't exist anymore, but it was a highlight from my childhood. On special occasions my family would go there and it was basically an all you can eat buffet, with a never ending supply of any kind of food you could want! As a kid, I thought it was about as good as it got - a real banquet!

In the passage today, you will have read about a banquet. The man in the story represents God, who has prepared and put on a great banquet. The picture and significance of a banquet is somewhat lost in our culture - where there are so many fast food options - we tend to love a quick and easy meal fix. However, Biblically speaking, a banquet was a great feast and carried with it a sense of celebration, joy, life, love and honour.

Many people think of the banquet God has prepared as being something that only awaits us when we get to heaven. And yes, the Bible certainly reveals that that will be the case. However, I believe that there is a banquet prepared for us - here and now.

What I mean by that is this - follow Jesus, hold onto Him and walk with Him because there is a banquet of life, joy and freedom that comes from following Him. It can be easy to think that walking with Jesus is boring, no fun and that life has to be serious. However, nothing could be further from the truth! As you read in Psalm 16 today, the Bible says that in His presence there is **fullness** of joy and life evermore!

Let me encourage you to choose the banquet that is on offer. The one that will actually satisfy, nourish your heart and soul and fulfil your longings. Because there is also a table of junk food and scraps on offer too. The world will offer you what might seem appealing at first, but is only junk food that, like greasy fast food, will ultimately leave you hungry, empty and unsatisfied.

# RESPOND

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***Lord, all that awaits me in Heaven is in many ways too great for me to fully comprehend! I thank You for the banquet and celebration that awaits me there. But I thank You for the banquet You have prepared for me now, and the life, joy and freedom I can know as I follow You Jesus. Thank You that in Your presence there is fullness of joy. Help me to know Your presence today. In Jesus' Name, Amen.***

DAY 9



# INVITATION

# READ

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Luke 14:16-24

Matthew 11:28-30

James 4:8

# REFLECT

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It's always nice to receive an invitation - whether it's for a party, a wedding, or some other celebration - they bring a sense of expectancy, joy and anticipation. I have a rather unfortunate story about an invitation though. Many years ago when we were dating, Steph and I received an invite to the wedding of someone we went to high school with. We were excited about getting dressed up and spending nice time together, but as we got to the church - there was not a single car or person in sight! We checked the details of the invitation and we were at the right church, at the right time, however, we arrived on the wrong day! The wedding was a Friday and we'd rocked up on the Saturday. We had inadvertently missed the invitation and the opportunity to partake of the celebration!

Did you know that God is the God of the invitation. His heart and nature is loving, generous and welcoming. You have read today about a few different invitations that God has issued. In Luke 14:23 it says **COMPEL** the people to come - that my house may be filled. In issuing His invitations, there is an urgency as the Lord does not want anyone to miss out!

There are two things about an invitation important to remember - first, an invitation requires a response; and second, responding to an invitation might cost us something (time, money, effort).

Did you know that each and every day you have an invitation from the Lord? His invitation to you is to come closer; it's to allow Him to come and work in your heart and life; His invitation at times might look like a call to lay aside sin and harmful habits and choices (the junk food) - so you can be free and can enjoy the banquet that He offers. Don't let His invitations sit there without a response, and don't refuse or inadvertently miss His invitation.

Responding to His invitation starts with a simple 'YES' on your part - an acknowledgement that you need God and His presence in your life. There may be a cost involved, but responding to His invitation will be worth it!

# RESPOND

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*Lord, here I am - I surrender. I thank You that You are the God of the invitation - that each and every day You issue an invitation to me to draw near to You, to welcome Your presence and power, to allow You to deal with things in my heart and life. Help me to not harden my heart or miss your invitations. I say yes to You today, Lord - I am in great need of You! In Jesus' Name, Amen.*

DAY 10



# EXCUSES

# READ

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Luke 14:16-24

Luke 18:1-8

# REFLECT

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'The dog ate my homework. Really!' 'My alarm didn't go off which is why I'm late'. 'A water main had burst creating a mote around my house, and that is why I couldn't submit the assignment on time. Oh yeah, and I don't have a boat either!' Excuses. You've probably heard many, and no doubt given many in your life - some probably more far-fetched than others. Perhaps the greatest hindrance to progress in any area are excuses. Rather than own our mistakes and admit to our failures, it's all too easy at times to shift the blame or excuse ourselves from responsibility.

Of course, not all excuses are bad - some are genuine. But the focus of this devotional today are the excuses that will hold you back and hinder you from coming into all God has for you.

In the passage for today, the banquet has been prepared, the invitations have been issued and everything is ready - but instead of partaking of the banquet, everyone begins to make excuses! These excuses ultimately reveal a deep heart issue, but also represent earthly treasures and possessions having greater priority than God (v18), the 'latest and greatest' stuff having greater priority than God (v19), and even good and important things crowding out the place of God (v20). Ultimately, all these things represent what is second best!

In your life, is Jesus crowded out by other things? Are excuses - like your love for gaming, social media-ing, TV, fill in the blank - hindering Jesus from having His rightful place in your life?

There are many things in life that ultimately, won't matter in the end. There is one thing that will though - our relationship with Jesus. Don't put Him off any longer!

# RESPOND

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***Lord, help me to be done with excuses! Forgive me where I've continually put You off, or kept You to the side because I've been more concerned with what I have wanted to do. Thank You for Your grace and patience with me - but would this day be like a line in the sand, where from this point forward You are my first priority. Give me the strength and the enabling power to do this I pray, and the resilience and persistence to keep going, even when I stumble and fall short. May my walk with You go from strength to strength, for Your glory. In Jesus' Name, Amen.***

- Take a moment to stop and think about what is stopping or hindering you from growing in your walk with God? Is it material things? Issues regarding motivation? Bring them to the Lord in prayer and ask for His help.