

# GROWTHguide

FOR THE WEEK OF JULY 3, 2016  
"Cold Feet at the Altar"



## THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURES

Isaiah 42:1-9, Romans 12:2, Ezekiel 33:6, Matthew 7:24-27, Matthew 6:25-27, Matthew 11:28-30

## REFLECTION AND STUDY

### DAY 1

**Read Isaiah 42:1-9.** Making a difference in your life starts with making a commitment to God. Commitment is the thing that anchors us to God and one another. What is commitment? Commitment is defined as a pledge or a promise. It's an action, but also a conviction of the heart. Think about some commitments you've made in your life. Have you always honored them?

- When you think about the word commitment, what comes to mind?
- What commitment have you made to God? Have you always honored it?

**Thank God for choosing you and giving you purpose. Ask God to give you the desire to commit your life fully to Him and all that He has planned for you.**

### DAY 2

One of the most important ways that we can make honoring our commitment to God a priority is through obedience to His will. **Read Romans 12:2.** Paul makes it clear that when your mind and heart are obedient to God's will, you will begin to understand God's plan for your life, and life transformation will follow. When we are obedient, we see great changes in our lives, but obedience is rarely easy. Many things can distract or tempt us. To be obedient to God, we must remove the distractions that cause us to look away from what God would have us do.

- What is the relationship between obedience and commitment?
- What distractions in your life are hindering your obedience?

**Pray and ask God to bring to light any distractions hindering your commitment to His plan for your life.**

### DAY 3

Another aspect of commitment is accountability. **Read Ezekiel 33:6.** God wants us to take responsibility for our own actions and their consequences, good or bad. It can be a natural instinct to try to pass the buck or divert blame to someone else when we make the wrong decisions, but this is not what God wants for us. He knows we are all sinners, and we all make mistakes. If we face up to our actions and repent, His forgiveness is always waiting for us. It is a sign of our commitment, if we are willing to take responsibility for our own actions.

- Have you ever tried to avoid blame for something you did wrong or a mistake you made?
- How does it feel to be held accountable?

**Pray and thank God for his forgiveness. If there is anything that you need to take responsibility for, pray that God would give you the courage to be accountable.**

## DAY 4

**Read Matthew 7:24-27.** Sometimes we fall into habits or focus on following a list of rules that make us feel like we are "good Christians," but when it comes to truly surrendering our lives to Christ, we hold back. To truly surrender, we must give up control, yield to God's design for our lives and allow Him to transform us into His likeness. Surrendering means trusting with firm faith and expectation that God cares for us and will act on our behalf.

- In what ways does the world try to keep you from surrendering?
- What do you need to let go of to completely surrender your life?

**Thank God for caring for you and wanting the best for you. Ask him to help you surrender to His will and allow Him to make you the person He wants you to be.**

## DAY 5

When our hearts are not surrendered we get frustrated, disappointed and exhausted. We are struggling against God, against ourselves and against others. The more we struggle, the more we may want to hold on to control, but despite what the world has told us, letting go of control and giving it to God brings our lives into balance. E. Stanley Jones said, *"If you don't surrender to Christ, you surrender to chaos."* **Read Matthew 11:28-30.** If your commitment to Christ is the ruling force in your life you will not be swayed by the changeable and broken world we live in.

- Do you struggle with giving up control?
- Do you trust that God has a plan for your life?

**Pray and ask God to show you what areas of your heart you haven't surrendered to Him. Thank God for loving you and for setting your feet on solid ground.**

## DAY 6

**Read Matthew 6:25-27.** Can you trust in God to provide for you and lead you where you need to go? Is your commitment to God the very center of your essence as a person? Surrender means giving your life to a higher authority. It can feel like letting go of control is giving up something, but we are giving it to the one who is perfect and who will never lead us wrong. Does that sound like a sacrifice? If you are hesitating over truly committing your life to Him, remember that God's plan for you is greater than anything you are capable of doing on your own.

- Imagine yourself completely surrendered. What does that look like in your life?
- How are you honoring your commitment to God?

**Pray and thank God for being in control. Ask God to help you surrender to His control.**

## DAY 7

Today is your "Sabbath" and a time for reflection. How has God been speaking to you over the week? Use what the Lord has said to you to remold and reshape your life. If you are having trouble hearing God's voice, slow down or even stop what you are doing so that the busyness of life's demands do not squelch the whispers of God's language of love upon your heart.