

GRADUATION DAY · Message 1 of 4

FIVE-DAY DEVOTIONAL

Freshman Year — Rely

John 8:30–32 · Matthew 4:19

Higher Purpose Church | Pastor Lawrence Williams

Real People. Real Life. Real Love.

DAY 1: He Came Looking for You

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 4:18–19 — "And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then He said to them, 'Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.'"

DEVOTIONAL

In that culture, students went looking for rabbis. You traveled, you applied, you hoped you were sharp enough to be accepted. Nobody had ever seen a rabbi leave the temple courts and go recruiting at the docks. But that is exactly what Jesus did — He walked past the credentialed, past the connected, past everywhere that world stored its value, and He kept walking until He got to two working men with dirt under their fingernails. That is not an accident of the story. That is the method. He still goes past the display case and reaches into the back.

REFLECTION

Where in your life have you been waiting to become qualified before you believed God actually wanted you?

PRAYER

Father, thank You that I did not have to find You — You came looking for me. Help me stop auditioning for a place You already gave me. Let me live today like somebody who has been chosen.

NOTES

DAY 2: Belief That Puts Its Weight Down

SCRIPTURE

John 8:30 — "As He spoke these words, many believed in Him."

DEVOTIONAL

The word John uses for believed does not mean I agree that something is true. It means I put my weight on it. You are sitting in a chair right now, and you did not prove you believed in it by agreeing with me — you proved it when you took your legs out from under you and let the chair have all of it. Believing about Jesus costs you nothing. Believing in Jesus costs you everything you were holding up by yourself. Somewhere in your life there is a weight you are still carrying that you claim to have handed to Him.

REFLECTION

What is one thing you say you have given to God that you are still holding up with your own strength?

PRAYER

Lord, I do not want a faith that only nods. Show me where I am still holding my own weight. Today I take my hands off it and put it all on You.

NOTES

DAY 3: They Had Boats

SCRIPTURE

Mark 1:19–20 — "And immediately He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after Him."

DEVOTIONAL

We picture the disciples as men with nothing to lose. The text says otherwise: boats, nets, hired servants, a family business with a name in the local market. Their yes cost them something real. And here is the principle underneath it — you only walk away from what you have when what is ahead is worth more. Some of us cannot follow because our hands are full, and the hard part is that what we are holding is not even good anymore. It is just familiar. Familiar is not the same as good.

REFLECTION

What are you holding onto — not because it is good for you, but because it is all you know?

PRAYER

God, give me the courage to open my hands. Make Yourself so clearly worth more than what is behind me that letting go stops feeling like loss. I want what is ahead more than what is familiar.

NOTES

DAY 4: I Will Make You

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 4:19 — "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." Ephesians 2:10 — "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works."

DEVOTIONAL

Look carefully at how the labor is divided. Follow Me is your part. I will make you is His. The word for make is poiesō — the same root as poiema, the word Paul uses for workmanship, for masterpiece. The One offering the deal is the One who made the sea they fished out of. So if you have been exhausted trying to manufacture your own transformation — fixing your own temper, disciplining yourself into a character you do not have yet — you took a job that was never yours. Your assignment is to come and to stay. His assignment is to make.

REFLECTION

What have you been trying to build in yourself that you need to hand back to the Maker this week?

PRAYER

Father, I have been working a job that belongs to You. I will come and I will stay — You do the making. Thank You that the same hands that made the sea are at work on me.

NOTES

DAY 5: Come As You Are

SCRIPTURE

John 8:31-32 — "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

DEVOTIONAL

Jesus never once asked anybody to clean up before coming — He went to the dock to get men who smelled like fish. But notice He also does not leave them there. The invitation is come; the promise is abide, and know, and be free. Freshman year is where everybody starts. Heart touched, motives not yet transformed, saying yes to a picture you do not fully understand. It is okay to start there. It is not okay to stay there. Come as you are — but do not plan on staying that way.

REFLECTION

What is one concrete step this week — a growth group, a conversation, a surrender — that moves you from visiting this life to actually living it?

PRAYER

Jesus, I come exactly as I am, with the mess and the questions and no idea what all of this will require. I am not asking You to leave me here. Make me into who You saw when You called my name.

NOTES
