

# LIVE FOR MORE | 4 WEEK DEVOTIONAL

## WEEK ONE

What does it mean to Live for **More**? And for that matter, what *is the more* in Live or More? If you joined us yesterday or happened to watch the sermon online, you got a great intro to what that means and how it can radically impact your life. If you've not watched it, you can view it here or jump in with the devotional for today.

And not to bombard you with *more* questions (see what I did there), but another massively important question to ask at week one is this: Do you **believe** God has more for your life? **Belief** is a very important thing—even those who say they don't 100% believe in God understand the importance of belief.

Let me give you an example. Every single night you get ready for bed. And once you are in bed, as you are starting to drift off, you probably don't think, "Well! This is probably it for me. I'm just not sure if I'll wake up tomorrow." No, as you fall asleep, you *believe* that you will wake up eight hours later (but let's be honest, more like six to seven, right?!).

So, to live for more, you have to agree to the following two components: that you *believe* God has more for your life and that you are willing to let go of the less (more on that shortly).

Let's look at the key passage from yesterday (John 5)...

“...Jesus went up to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish festivals. Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool (...called Bethesda)...Here a great number of disabled people used to lie—the

blind, the lame, the paralyzed. One who was there had been an invalid for **thirty-eight years**. When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, He asked him, **“Do you want to get well?”**

It's fitting to pause at this point in John 5. Let's keep in mind who is asking the man the question. It's Jesus (fully God and fully Man). Jesus isn't asking the question to the man because He doesn't know the answer (because He knows all), but instead, He wants the man to respond. He wants to hear the reason *why* the man has been laying at the side of the pool for thirty-eight years.

*Do you want to get well* is the question from John 5, but today, the similar question is this: *Do you believe God has **more** for your life?* Your sickness, your insecurity, your failures, your fears, your confusion—those things do not define you. God has so much more for your life. This is what I meant earlier by being willing to let go of all the **less**. In fact, personalize it. How would you respond to Jesus showing up at your symbolic pool and asking you the question, “Do you want to get well?”

It's a very important question to consider. You may even find it difficult to face, but keep this in mind. Just like the man at the pool was not alone that day (Jesus was right in front of him), today, Jesus is right by your side and is ready to help you live beyond the less—to help you let it go. What is on the other side of that decision, when you leave the less behind and commit to live for more, can radically change your life.

Today, ask God to help you get on board with His plan for your life. Ask Him to increase your level of faith and believe that He has more for your life. Ask Him to help you see what the less is in your life, and how you can move beyond it—how He wants you to let it go.

So, to live for more, you have to agree to the following two components: that you *believe* God has more for your life and you are *willing* to let go of the less. And though you may not be there just yet (don't worry though, we've got three more weeks to work it out), know that God's ultimate plan for you in living in the more is to *pick up your bed and walk* and to live a life of real significance.

**Pray this today:** God, I know that You have **more** for my life, but I simply need to believe it. I need to understand that You love me, and You do not see me for the less—in the ways I make mistakes or how I feel when I miss the mark—no, You love me perfectly. And Your plan for me is amazing. As I start off on this journey, I ask even now that You would increase my level of faith. I know You love me, and I am excited about what's going to happen today and over the next three weeks.

## WEEK TWO

As you continue to believe (or hopefully have started believing) that God has **more** for your life, and you've started to let go of all the *less* (anxiety, fear, and doubt), what's next? How do you continue to press forward and keep the momentum going? Have you already identified some of the areas of **less** in your life—the aspects that God is asking you to let go of?

You see, there isn't anything that's more important than faith in your life. It's true! You do a thoughtful read of Hebrews 11 and you see it clearly play out with some of the heroes of the faith! It may even help you to take the time to read through Hebrews 11 this week.

And one of the most important ways to have **more faith**, simply put, is to focus on God! So often, we make faith complicated. We've learned how to make the less more. **I challenge you this week to think about this question:** What particular areas do you make less more? The challenge is to prayerfully consider which areas of your life you given more value and significance to instead of zeroing directly on God. Think about this as well...so often we make more of so much less in our life, and we settle for less. But this is not from God.

I challenge you to show me a scripture in the Bible that argues you should settle for less than God's best. No, His Word is clear on this subject. Jesus said in **John 10:10** that "I came that they (which is you and me) may have life and have it abundantly." A scripture like that reminds us that God has an incredible plan for our lives. And what it **doesn't** mean is that we won't have any problems. Sadly, we live in a world that's filled with complication, but if we make the decision to up our level of faith and trust that God is always working for our good (*see Romans 8:28*), we can rest in that fact that God is always moving, setting things up for us—working all things for our greatest good.

Someone once told me, "Your worst day with Jesus will always be better than your best day without Him," ...and it's so true. But I get it. Perhaps you are thinking to yourself right now, "That's easy for you to say! You have no idea what I've been through or am going through right now!" And you're right—I don't, **but God** does. There is not a single grain of sand that He did not place Himself or a star that has gone unnamed. In fact, every single one of your tears He has saved in a jar (*see Psalm 56:8*). Why? Because you mean a lot to Him. Your tears, your fears, your sorrows...in addition to your success, your laughter and your hope—He sees them all and keeps track of everything.

Here is the point: **God is not distant; He cares for you**—sincerely and truly. And once you believe that, it is **the key that unlocks every other**

**door.** It is the tool you need to truly have a significant life. Still have questions? Still don't believe me? No worries! Questions are great things...

Think about it this way: perhaps you've experienced real love—from a parent, a friend, or perhaps a husband or a wife. And I am not just talking about a passing relationship. I'm talking about a deep and meaningful relationship. Someone who knows you—the **real you**—not the one you show on Instagram with a few filters or when you are at your very best. I want you to think about the friend, parent, or spouse who sees you at your *worst*—when you lose your cool and are very much not your most ideal self.

If they are truly your friend, they stick it out with you. They know you had a bad *moment* but are not a bad *person*. They realize you lost your cool, but that's not the thing that defines you. And so, it allows you the freedom to be who you are. It allows you to go through stuff and not get stuck. You trust them and they believe in you and that's a winning combination.

Now, using that same filter, imagine that God wants you to view your relationship with Him in the same way (though it's a major upgrade—you know, King of all and whatnot). He knows who you really are and loves you the very same. He sees you at your worst and still believes there is something incredible on the inside. He knows you—beautifully and simply—**without** complication.

So, when we talk about **more faith**, it means more belief that God actually likes you—that He loves you and has a great plan for your life. Remember, it's letting go of the *less*. It's leaving things behind like doubt and eliminating the distance between you and Him. Once you do that; once you really believe with all your heart that God is for you and not

against you, life and possibility open up in front of you! Sure, it doesn't mean life is just one big cake walk (wait, did someone say cake?), but it means that your faith will sustain you because the Source of all things (God) is sustaining you.

**Pray this today:** God, I won't stop saying it until I believe it: you have **more** for my life. I ask that you increase my faith today! I believe what you say about me more than what I say or think about myself. Help me increase my faith and to firmly believe Your Word. I know life isn't always easy, but I believe that you will never leave me nor forsake me...that in times where I need help, You'll faithfully be there. Help me to not only identify the areas where I'm settling for less, but to do something about it!

## WEEK THREE

There is something powerful when you belong to a family. And, I'll be clear right off the top. I am fully aware that families can also be very messy. There are family rifts, sibling drama, past hurts and pains. Personally, I understand and have experienced it myself. But just because there are challenges in being a part of a family doesn't take away my desire to be in one.

As you've increased your desire for **more** faith, it's also helpful to learn to live for **more** family. However, that's not my passive aggressive way to remind you to call your mother and tell her you love her. No, it's to say that you belong to a variety of families. There is your family you see often or perhaps at Holidays or family functions. They are the ones that asked if you are ever going to settle down, if your kids can behave better or if you are making the best investments with your 401(k). But you also

have other families—friends who have become like family, and, if you are a part of a church, and you have a church family.

Inside of *these* families—which can also have drama—there is also the potential for incredible moments, meaningful moments. Moments, people and conversations that help you navigate very tough experiences. And rarely, its less about what is being said, and more about them simply being there—the gift of presence. In a world where stuff invades from every direction and we are bombarded with media and information, there is still something far more powerful—people showing up and being present for one another.

It's easy to grow cold and distant in a culture that tells you that's the norm. Don't worry about others, be concerned about yourself—your followers, your influence—stay as small and selfish as you can. That is the way to success. But when we look to the Bible, we see a totally different approach.

**Romans 12:5** (Message translation), paints this beautiful picture... “In this way we are like the various parts of a human body. Each part gets its meaning from the body as a whole, not the other way around. The body we're talking about is Christ's body of chosen people. Each of us finds our meaning and function as a part of his body. But as a chopped-off finger or cut-off toe we wouldn't amount to much, would we? So, since we find ourselves fashioned into all these excellently formed and marvelously functioning parts in Christ's body, let's just go ahead and be what we were made to be, without enviously or pridefully comparing ourselves with each other, or trying to be something we aren't.”

What does it mean? It means that we belong to a diverse whole and that we all have a part to play. It's about letting go of envy, greed, and jealousy, and celebrating one another. It means not getting our way

sometimes but knowing that ultimately, we work together and that we are better when we are together.

If you've ever tried to do life by yourself—alone—you know the depth of isolation and despair you feel. But if you've encountered people who encourage you, challenge you and love you unconditionally, you quickly realize how much bigger life feels. You understand and feel that you are not alone. It doesn't mean it makes everything perfect, but it makes the journey along the way much more enjoyable.

**Pray this today:** God, help me to find a family of friends or believers that I can belong to. I know that I am better when I find myself in community, so I'm asking You to send people my way! Help me to invest in others and the world around me. Thank You that you've called me to be the solution to a world in need.

## WEEK FOUR

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr said it so very well: *“Everybody can be great...because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.”*

This week, we add to the idea of greater faith and family by increasing the capacity to **serve others**. And it's not just something historical thought leaders talked about—Jesus Himself had a lot to say about serving others because it was the primary reason for His time on earth.

In **Matthew 20:28**, Jesus makes this profound statement: *“That is what the Son of Man [talking about Himself] has done: He came to serve, not be served—and then to give away His life in exchange for the many who*



*are held hostage.*” 2000 years later, this statement is striking and profound. We live in a “*it’s all about me world.*” Take three minutes on social media and it proves the point—people are more concerned about their selfish endeavors than the needs around them. As a culture, we’ve decided our way is the best way and our opinion is the only opinion worth hearing. Ironically, the only Person who is the Way, Truth and Life, took the position of a servant. We would be good to learn from the example of Christ.

Last week, we focused on the power of having a greater sense of family. The challenge was to lean into that idea—to seek and invest in more community. This week, the challenge is similar: to follow the example of Christ and look to attain a greater and deeper sense of service.

The world and its call to selfishness says, “Keep *everything* you have, and *you’ll be happy,*” and yet, we hear stories of people who have everything but still feel empty, alone, and struggle to find meaning. But you think about someone you may already know, say a mother who was generous or a father who always showed up to help their neighbors fix things around their house and they seem to be the happiest person on the planet and you think, “Wow, they just get it!” But what is the *it* that they get?

I believe they have tapped into the power of service. When you incorporate more service in your life, it pushes out selfishness and senselessness. When you live for others, it actually expands your capacity for **more**. And, we’re not talking about abandoning or sacrificing your self-care in the process of helping others but increasing the response time to jump in! Rather than immediately think, “Oh, I don’t have time for that,” or perhaps judging why people are in their dire conditions, you instead go to work trying to help.

I can think of countless people (both historical and personally in my own life) who have set a great example of living with **more service**. And though their commitment to have a greater sense of service may not have equated to financial success or fame, they are the people I want to be like. It reminds me that money, success or fame isn't everything. In fact, I can also think of countless people who have held onto everything and looked to make themselves happy...only to find out that at the end of their life, rather than building walls to keep people out, they created a prison that held themselves in.

And being a prisoner to selfishness is not God's will for any of us! But, where does that leave us? What are you supposed to do moving forward? We look back to a familiar passage from week two. John 10:10 (MSG) says, "*A thief is only there to steal and kill and destroy. I [Jesus] came so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of.*"

The point of these past four weeks is to remind you that there is more to live for. And when you live for more faith, more family, and more service, it leads to significance. It surpasses success and solidifies what we are here on the planet to do. We aren't here to occupy space, we aren't here to be a part of the problem, but to become a part of the solution. And that solution—the best we have to bring to those around us—is Jesus and how His Word instructs us to live.

**Learn to *live for more* and you'll never have to *settle for less*.**

**Pray this today:** God, I am thankful that you've called me to live a life of significance. I am grateful that you call me to live for more. Help me to understand what that means and to increase my level and commitment to live for more faith, family and service. I know I'm not called to do it in my own strength, but I am also aware that if I don't

make a personal commitment, I'll never make progress. So, be with me as I continue my journey on learning what it means to live for more.