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REASONS TO HAVE DAILY BIBLE HABITS

BY SCOTT KONCHEK

Creating daily Bible habits is one of the most transformative practices for spiritual growth. Engaging with Scripture regularly nourishes faith, provides guidance, and deepens your relationship with God. As Psalm 1:2 describes the blessed person who delights in the law of the Lord and meditates on it day and night, consistent Bible time yields lasting fruit.

Start by understanding your motivation: read the Bible daily to know God more intimately, align your life with His truth, and gain wisdom for challenges. This heartfelt "why" sustains you when enthusiasm wanes.

Choose a specific time and place to build consistency. Many find mornings ideal—pairing it with coffee or breakfast anchors the habit. Others prefer evenings for reflection. Select a quiet spot, like a favorite chair, and treat this as a non-negotiable appointment.

Begin small to avoid overwhelm. Commit to 10-15 minutes initially, perhaps one chapter or a few verses. Use a reading plan—apps like YouVersion offer guided options, or simple bookmarks track progress through books of the Bible.

Enhance engagement by journaling: note key verses, prayers, or applications. Pray before reading, asking the Holy Spirit for insight. For variety, try audio Bibles during commutes.

Accountability strengthens commitment—share your goal with a friend or join a group to discuss readings. Track streaks in a journal or app for encouragement.

If you miss a day, extend grace and resume without guilt. Habits form over weeks or months, not overnight. Persistence, fueled by God's grace, turns sporadic reading into a lifelong rhythm.

Over time, daily Bible habits renew your mind (Romans 12:2), equip you for every good work (2 Timothy 3:17), and fill you with peace and joy. Start today—open God's Word and let it shape your days.



THE DIVISION WITHIN THE CHURCH

by Scott Konchek

Divisions within the Christian Church arise from historical, theological, cultural, and social factors, with some tensions persisting for centuries and others intensifying in recent years.

Historical and Doctrinal Roots

Christianity's major branches emerged from ancient schisms:

- Oriental Orthodox separated after the Council of Chalcedon (451 AD) over Christology.
- The Great Schism (1054 AD) divided Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches, primarily over papal authority.
- The Protestant Reformation (16th century) splintered Western Christianity over issues like salvation, scripture, and church governance.

These foundational divides remain largely intact, though ecumenical efforts continue.

Recent Major Splits

In the 2020s, sexuality-related disputes triggered significant denominational fractures:

United Methodist Church: By 2025, roughly 7,600 U.S. congregations (about 25%) disaffiliated to form the conservative Global Methodist Church, citing disagreements over same-sex marriage and LGBTQ+ clergy ordination.

The remaining UMC removed prohibitions in 2024 and adopted regionalization in 2025.

Anglican Communion: In 2025, the conservative GAFCON alliance and Global South provinces announced a rival structure, rejecting the Archbishop of Canterbury's leadership over similar sexuality issues. This affects a substantial portion of global Anglicans.

Contemporary Drivers

The most polarizing current issue is human sexuality—specifically LGBTQ+ inclusion and biblical interpretation—particularly in Protestant bodies with decentralized authority. These debates often intersect with broader cultural and political polarization.

In U.S. evangelicalism, alignment with conservative politics (abortion, race, immigration, “culture wars”) has caused congregational splits, pastoral exits, and eroded trust. Local churches also fracture over secondary matters: worship styles, leadership approaches, power struggles, pride, gossip, and resistance to change.

Biblical and Theological Perspective

Scripture urges unity (1 Cor. 1:10; John 17:20-21) and distinguishes essential doctrines (worthy of separation) from preferential ones (calling for grace). Divisions ultimately reflect human sinfulness and differing scriptural applications amid societal change.

Hope Amid Fracture

Despite prominent schisms, many Christians and denominations pursue reconciliation and ecumenism. The Church's deepest unity is spiritual, transcending institutional breaks. Healthy disagreement can foster growth, but unnecessary division grieves the heart of Christ.



A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR COLLIN

Happy New Year!

I want to circle back to the message I delivered a couple of weeks ago on DEVOTION. The word from Deuteronomy 6:1-9 challenges us to love God with all our heart, soul, and strength. The big takeaway is simple: real devotion isn't just something we talk about, it's something we live out every day.

So, what does genuine devotion to Christ look like in our daily lives? It permeates our habits, priorities, and decisions. Here's a clear-cut breakdown:

1. Heart: This is a question of priority. Real devotion means God takes priority above everything else. Look at your routines. Are we setting aside time for prayer and reflection? Does God's truth, guide our decision-making? Our lives should reflect a heart fully devoted to Him.
2. Soul: Genuine devotion means building a continuous relationship with God. It's about walking with Him daily, making prayer a consistent habit, diving into Scripture regularly, and engaging in community with other believers. These aren't merely tasks on a checklist; they are means of deepening our relationship with Him.
3. Strength: Devotion is active. It requires our energy, talents, and resources. Are we using what God's given us to make a tangible impact? Whether it's leading at church, volunteering in the community, or simply being a dependable presence, our devotion should naturally motivate us to act.

Now, how does this play out in our roles as men? Here are some practical next steps that we can pursue in the weeks, months, and years to come.

As Husbands: "Love your wives as Christ loved the church" (Ephesians 5:25). Husbands don't just tell your wife you love her (which you should also do ☺) But truly show her daily how much you love her. When your wife truly hears and sees how much you love her, she is more willing to be led by the spiritual head of the house.

Extra credit... REMIND HER OFTEN THAT SHE IS A GREAT MOM.

As Fathers: Our kids absorb everything. Let them see a man who prioritizes faith and lives with integrity. Be there with them, guide them in prayer, and teach them about the love of Christ through your actions.

As Workers: Inject your faith into your work environment. Be honest, work diligently, and embody compassion. Be the guy who can be counted on to help out when others need it.

As Leaders: Lead with a servant's heart. Be proactive! If there's a need, fill it. Show others what genuine devotion looks like through your reliability and consistency.

Here's the challenge I gave for all of us a couple of weeks ago.

Make devotion a daily habit. Join our year-long Bible reading plan, "We Grow" by Gary Lewis in the You Version Bible App. My wife Becca and I are doing it together and have already experienced rich and deep discussion.

Dedicate time each day to Scripture—it will strengthen our faith and understanding. Take a hard look at your daily habits, identify one area where you can show more devotion—maybe it's by setting a family devotion night or dedicating extra time to prayer.

I encourage us to pop in for conversation with other fellas in the church and ask one another about what you read, what you learned, or what you have questions on in your daily reading. I'm telling you, this will lead to GREAT growth and conversation's.

Devotion means actively living our faith, not just when it's convenient, but as part of who we are. It means stepping up whenever and wherever we're needed. Let's commit to being men of true devotion, leading by example every day.

Let's make a real impact.

Love ya'll,

Pastor Collin Towersey



CHRISTIANITY NEWS

BY SCOTT KONCHEK

Orthodox Christmas Celebrations
January 7th marks Christmas Day for approximately 250 million Orthodox and Eastern Christians (including Russian, Greek, Ethiopian, and Coptic communities) who follow the Julian calendar. Festivities are underway worldwide, with major observances in places like Ethiopia's Lalibela (where pilgrims gather annually) and amid challenges in regions like Gaza and Ukraine.

Passion 2026 Conference Wrap-Up
The massive evangelical youth event Passion 2026 recently concluded, drawing over 45,000 young adults. Pastor Louie Giglio emphasized sending attendees out "for the glory of God," with many viewing it as a sign of ongoing revival among younger generations.

Evangelical Aid Efforts in Ukraine

Four years into Russia's invasion, evangelical churches and thousands of Christian aid workers continue extensive humanitarian and rebuilding work in Ukraine, forming a "volunteer army" amid stalled peace talks.

Celebrity Faith Announcements Stir Discussions

"Dilbert" creator Scott Adams announced plans to convert to Christianity amid a terminal cancer diagnosis, while adult film star Lily Phillips claimed rebaptism and a return to faith—sparking debates on sincerity and redemption in Christian communities.

Ongoing Global Persecution Concerns

Reports highlight continued threats, including potential destruction of a prominent church in China, recent attacks on Christians in Uganda and Sudan, and waves of violence against believers in India and Indonesia during the holiday season.

Upcoming Men's Ministry Events

Ongoing Tuesday morning zoom Bible study - 6:30 am
(Contact Bob Francis [bconelk@charter.net]
for zoom link)



The Forge
(Men's Bible study)
Tuesdays 6:30 - 8 pm
Feb 3rd - March 10th



Ways to serve

Contact Katie via email katie@freshwcc.org , by calling the church office 231-325-0344, or via the Fresh Wind app for service opportunities

* If you would like to see something in this newsletter or have a testimony you would like to share email skonchek@gmail.com