

CHOOSE YOUR FIRE

7-DAY STUDENT CHALLENGE DEVOTIONAL

WHO'S IN THE GROUP CHAT?

For seven days, slow down, read the Scripture, answer honestly and complete one practical challenge. Do not use these pages to judge everyone around you. Ask Jesus to shape your relationships - and to shape the kind of friend you are becoming.

BIG IDEA

Love everyone. Forgive freely. Choose access wisely.

YOU WILL NEED

A Bible, something to write with and the courage to be honest with God.

DAY 1

WHO HAS ACCESS?

READ: 1 Corinthians 15:33

Do not be misled: Bad company corrupts good character.

DEVOTIONAL

A group chat is really a circle of access. The people closest to you influence what you laugh at, what you normalize, what you hide and how seriously you follow Jesus. This does not mean you reject everyone who believes or behaves differently. Jesus calls us to love people. But love does not require equal access. Ask God to show you whose approval carries the most weight in your life - and whether that influence is helping you become more like Christ.

REFLECT

1. Whose opinion can change your choices fastest?
2. What behavior have you begun treating as normal because of your circle?
3. Who consistently points you toward Jesus?

TODAY'S CHALLENGE

Write the names of three people with the greatest influence on you. Beside each name, write one way that relationship is shaping you.

PRAY

Jesus, help me see my relationships honestly. Teach me to love everyone while giving influence wisely.

DAY 2

THE FIRST FIRE

READ: John 18:15-18, 25-27

Peter stood with them, warming himself.

DEVOTIONAL

Peter followed Jesus, but at a distance. Around the courtyard fire, acceptance felt safer than identification with Christ. Peter did not begin with a public rejection of Jesus; he simply changed his answer so he could remain comfortable. We can do the same through actions - joining gossip, hiding convictions or laughing at cruelty so nobody thinks following Jesus changes us. The easiest fire is often the circle where no one expects us to be who Jesus called us to become.

REFLECT

1. Where are you tempted to hide your faith?
2. What would courageous obedience look like in that setting?
3. What does fitting in currently cost you?

TODAY'S CHALLENGE

Choose one situation today where your actions will openly agree with your faith, even if it feels uncomfortable.

PRAY

Jesus, give me courage to belong to You publicly and privately. Keep me from trading conviction for acceptance.

DAY 3

WHAT IS BREAKING UNDER THE TOWEL?

READ: Hebrews 4:13

Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight.

DEVOTIONAL

Hidden compromise still shapes us. We may think nobody sees the language changing, the boundaries moving or the compassion disappearing. God sees beneath the towel - not because He is searching for a reason to reject us, but because He loves us too much to pretend the breaking is harmless. Shame says to hide the pieces. Jesus invites us into the light. Honesty is not the end of your story; it is often where restoration begins.

REFLECT

1. What part of your life are you most tempted to hide?
2. How has secrecy affected your thoughts or choices?
3. Which trusted adult could help you walk in truth?

TODAY'S CHALLENGE

Tell God the complete truth in prayer. If safety allows, ask a trusted Christian adult for accountability this week.

PRAY

God, You already know me completely. Replace my hiding with honesty and lead me toward healing and wholeness.

DAY 4

LOVE EVERYONE. CHOOSE ACCESS WISELY.

READ: Proverbs 13:20

Walk with the wise and become wise.

DEVOTIONAL

A boundary is not revenge. It is a decision that protects obedience and healthy relationship. You can forgive someone without returning the relationship to the same level of access. You can love someone without allowing their influence to direct your life. Biblical boundaries are rooted in love, humility and wisdom - not punishment, superiority or bitterness. The goal is not to label people as bad. The goal is to recognize which relationships help you follow Jesus faithfully.

REFLECT

1. Where might you need a loving boundary?
2. How can a boundary protect obedience without becoming punishment?
3. What access should be earned through trust and consistency?

TODAY'S CHALLENGE

Write one specific, respectful boundary you may need. Share it with a trusted adult before acting impulsively.

PRAY

Jesus, make my boundaries loving and wise. Free me from bitterness, pride and fear.

DAY 5

THE SECOND FIRE

READ: John 21:9-19

Come and have breakfast.

DEVOTIONAL

Peter's failure did not end his story. At the second charcoal fire, Jesus fed Peter before confronting him. Jesus told the truth, made room for repentance and restored Peter to purpose. Healthy accountability is not humiliation. It does not expose someone for entertainment or keep failure permanently attached to their name. The fire of Jesus produces restoration: truth plus love plus a faithful next step.

REFLECT

1. What was different about Peter's second fire?
2. Why must restoration include truth?
3. How does Jesus respond differently from shame?

TODAY'S CHALLENGE

Encourage someone today with both grace and truth. Remind them who they can become in Jesus, not only what they did wrong.

PRAY

Jesus, bring me back to Your fire. Restore what compromise has damaged and teach me to restore others gently.

DAY 6

BECOME THE FRIEND YOU NEED

READ: Ephesians 4:15

Speak the truth in love.

DEVOTIONAL

It is easy to make a list of what we want from friends: loyalty, honesty, encouragement and accountability. Jesus also asks us to become that kind of friend. Truth without love becomes harsh. Love without truth becomes shallow permission. Christian friendship holds both together. It refuses gossip, celebrates growth, confronts privately, protects dignity and stays present through repentance and change.

REFLECT

1. Are you safe for friends to tell the truth?
2. Do you confront privately or discuss people publicly?
3. How can you help a friend remain whole?

TODAY'S CHALLENGE

Send one message that builds someone up. If a hard conversation is needed, pray first and speak directly rather than talking around them.

PRAY

Jesus, make me a truthful, loyal and restorative friend. Let my influence lead people closer to You.

DAY 7

CHOOSE YOUR THREE

READ: Hebrews 10:24-25

Spur one another on toward love and good deeds.

DEVOTIONAL

Jesus loved the crowds, lived life with twelve and invited three disciples into especially close moments. Not everyone had the same access. Your trusted circle does not have to be large, but it should help you remain honest, whole and responsive to God. Choose people who can celebrate you without flattering you, correct you without shaming you and walk with you after failure. Then commit to becoming that person for them.

REFLECT

1. Who could be part of your trusted three?
2. What qualities make someone safe and spiritually healthy?
3. What regular rhythm could keep your circle accountable?

TODAY'S CHALLENGE

Invite one to three trusted people into a simple rhythm: a weekly check-in, prayer message or honest conversation.

PRAY

Jesus, surround me with wise voices and make me a faithful voice in the lives of others. I choose Your fire.