



THE Connected Life

21-day personal
study guide for
those connecting
for the first time



INTRODUCTION

Somehow or other, God has got your attention and you are open to having a relationship with Him for the first time. This is the most remarkable time in the life of any human being, the realisation that the One who made heaven and earth actually loves them so much that He has moved heaven and earth to make such a relationship possible.

God loves you so much that He was willing for His only Son, Jesus Christ, to come from heaven to earth to live and die for – all that separates us from God and His best for us. We all have the choice of pleasing ourselves rather than doing things God's way, but by doing so we separate ourselves from God. This is the biggest disconnect a human being can face but God resolved this dilemma by sending His completely sinless Son, Jesus Christ, to live on earth and take all our sin (that is our wrong doing and selfishness) on His shoulders by dying on the cross in our place. This is God's completely undeserved gift of grace, available to anyone who genuinely wants to turn away from their old ways and live their life God's way. If you sense God 'nudging' you, that is the work of His Holy Spirit. He is calling you to live most wonderful life as His Child – His grace is all you need.



Life in the twenty-first century is highly dynamic, volatile and challenging. How do you respond to the immense economic, environmental and global pressures facing us? In what, or who, do you place your confidence? Things we used to be able to rely on – banks, pensions, careers – no longer offer the same security. Listen to some of the promises Jesus makes in the Bible:

‘I have bread for you, I have water for you to drink, I will provide for you, I will show you the way, I will help you, I am enough for you, I love you, I will let nothing separate you from me and I will bring you to my Father if you come to me. I will not necessarily change your circumstances although I can do anything, but I will do and be everything you need – if you come to me, I will bring you through this life to be with me forever to a place where all things are new. You must first trust me with your very life. So come and follow me.’

These amazing truths are from Jesus’ own words in the New Testament. If you will use this workbook for twenty-one days and ask God to help you, you will discover the joy of being connected to Christ and begin to learn that He has good plans for your life.

This 21-day personal devotional will help you in your journey to Christian faith. It may challenge you, but it will help you understand and define yourself with fresh certainty through your connection to the mission, person and power of Christ. For more information and resources for you, your local church, your leaders and your connected and unconnected friends, go to

www.connect4life.org.uk.

DAY 1 **REMAIN IN ME**

TRUTH IN CHRIST **1**

'I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing' (John 15:5)

POWER IN CHRIST **2**

Read John 15:1

3 CHECK YOUR CONNECTIONS

Reflect on the possibility that there are things in my life that need to be cut off so that I can bear more fruit

Circle your answer: **Yes** **No** **Uncertain**

BLUE PERSONAL ISSUE

BROWN TRUTH IN CHRIST TO APPLY

EARTH IN REAL LIFE OF LOVE AND SERVICE

PLUG IN **4**

Jesus takes care of us because He is the true vine – there are other vines which people can 'be in'. God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit are in partnership for your good! God is a nurturing gardener. He cares and tends the vine carefully. When branches need to be removed, He doesn't do it randomly, or carelessly rip them off. They are identified by the Holy Spirit (John 16:8) and pruned for purpose back to the place from where new growth can come. A cut off branch is dead – it cannot bear fruit, it has no potential except as firewood. God's intention is for you to bear much fruit for His glory showing yourself to be in Christ, His disciple becoming more like Him. If you are in Christ, you cannot help but bear fruit for Him.

If you are truly 'in Christ', you are joined to Him for ever and nothing can separate you from Him. These studies will help you assess whether you really are 'in Christ' or whether you've spent your life so far going through the motions. If you are in Christ, then know this about yourself:

MY IDENTITY
I am a child of God and that never changes (Ephesians 1:5)

MY VALUE
I know I am loved by God because His only Son Jesus died for me (John 3:16)

MY PURPOSE
My life is to do God's will and to enjoy Him – this is for His glory (Eph 1:14; Eph 2:10; 2 Cor. 5:9–10)

SWITCH ON AND GO **5**

Spirit of God, breathe on me. Lord Jesus, help me to honestly reflect on the strength of my connection with You. Father, I trust myself to you for the things that need to be cut back in me. Lord Jesus, as I go into this day, may Your words remain in me. Amen.

GETTING THE MOST FROM THE DAILY STUDIES

Taking the metaphor of a correctly wired electrical plug, each day we will look at:

- **Truth in Christ** **1**
- **Power in Christ** **2**
- **Your connections** **3**
- Blue = giving personal issues to Christ
- Brown = the live connection in Christ
- Earth = real life today
- **Plugging in** **4**
- **Switching on** **5**

May God build you in Christ through His Word and Spirit as you use this material – it will help you understand your identity, value and purpose, enabling you to face anything and everything.



TRUTH IN CHRIST

'For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life' (John 3:16)

POWER IN CHRIST

Read John 3:1–21

CHECK CONNECTIONS

I know there are things in my life I wouldn't want anyone else to know about

Circle your answer: **Yes** **No** **Uncertain**

I would love it if I could have a new start and be free from all the bad things I've thought, said and done

Circle your answer: **Yes** **No** **Uncertain**

I realise that if I take the step of turning to God it will be an exciting journey, but one where I will change

Circle your answer: **Yes** **No** **Uncertain**

PLUG IN

The name 'Jesus' means Saviour. God sent Jesus, His Son, to earth to die and save us from the consequences of our sin, those wrong things in our lives. 'Christ' means 'chosen one sent for you'. 'Jesus Christ' therefore means, 'Saviour, sent for you'. Trusting Him and His love for you will help you find life, peace, hope, healing and a future.

Listen to this remarkable truth – if you will trust Christ with your life and follow Him, God sees you 'in Christ' and connected to Himself. This connection is life-changing – it puts you right with God, brings holiness and sets you free. If you are truly connected, you will be joined to Him for ever so that nothing can separate you from Him. These studies will help you to understand more about this vital truth.

Once you are 'in Christ' you will be able to say these three things:

IDENTITY

- I am a child of God and that never changes (Ephesians 1:5)

VALUE

- I know I am loved by God because His only Son Jesus died for me (John 3:16)

PURPOSE

- I want to use my life for the glory of my Father God and do His will (Ephesians 1:14; 2:10, 2 Corinthians 5:9–10)

SWITCH ON AND GO

Dear God, did you really love me enough to let Your Son die in my place? Forgive me – help me to trust You and live for You now. Amen.



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PERSONAL ISSUE

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TRUTH IN CHRIST
TO APPLY

EARTH

IN REAL LIFE
OF LOVE AND
SERVICE



TRUTH IN CHRIST

'Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him' (John 3:36)

POWER IN CHRIST

Read John 3:22–36

CHECK CONNECTIONS

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PERSONAL ISSUE

I have trusted Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour and want to follow Him and allow Him to be in charge of my life

Circle your answer: **Yes** **No** **Uncertain**

BROWN

TRUTH IN CHRIST
TO APPLY

I know there has to be a lot of change in my life now – Jesus must become greater and I must listen to the Holy Spirit

Circle your answer: **Yes** **No** **Uncertain**

EARTH

IN REAL LIFE
OF LOVE AND
SERVICE

I'm excited to think that I can now live my life for God and with Him

Circle your answer: **Yes** **No** **Uncertain**



PLUG IN

Yesterday we saw that a man named Nicodemus wanted to know how to be sure of his future – and Jesus told him straight. The answer was that Nicodemus needed to believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, who came to save him from his sin. Today we see John the Baptist also telling people that Jesus is the Christ, sent from God to save people from their sin.

Everyone has sinned. That is, we have all been disobedient to God and done our own thing (Romans 3:23). The consequences of this are serious and lasting – 'For the wages of sin is death ...' (Romans 6:23a). We get our just desserts – if we go our own way, God tells us the consequence is separation from Him. There is always a price to be paid for sin and either we pay it ourselves or we trust God that His Son paid for it when He died on the cross. However, the second part of Romans 6:23 gives us this good news for those who put faith in Jesus: '... but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord'.

Those who believe in Jesus Christ become connected and are given God's gift – eternal life. Why? Because Jesus has taken the full blame for your sin. Such a gift is one that must not be rejected. To do so is complete foolishness. Acceptance of it will open the gateway to the connected life in Christ. We shall look at what this opens up to you over the coming days



SWITCH ON AND GO

Dear God, this is all very new to me but it is truly amazing to know that You are willing to give me a completely new start. Teach me more each day and change me to become more like Your Son. Amen.



TRUTH IN CHRIST

'I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture' (John 10:9)

POWER IN CHRIST

Read John 10:1–15

CHECK CONNECTIONS

If I were a sheep, I would say that I have often grazed in dangerous pastures and needed a shepherd to care for me

Circle your answer: **Yes** **No** **Uncertain**

The idea that Jesus is a gate through which I can pass to safety gives me a feeling of security

Circle your answer: **Yes** **No** **Uncertain**

Being safe in the sheepfold is a picture of the church of Jesus – have you yet found a local church where you feel you are in safe pasture?

Circle your answer: **Yes** **No** **Not yet**

PLUG IN

Jesus Christ is not only your gate to safety but He is also your gateway opening up new possibilities for you. If you are 'in Him', no one can actually harm you. Paul puts it beautifully in Colossians 3:3 when he says, '... your life is now hidden with Christ in God'. Jesus told of two roads – one is broad and easy and leads to a wide gate through which many pass to their own sad destruction. The other is narrow like an uphill path but it leads to a small gate that opens to life. Only a few find this gate – which is Jesus Himself (see Matthew 7:13–14). As you come to know Jesus better, you will realise that He is everything for you and to you. Today we are looking at Him being your gate (to safety in a dangerous world) and your Shepherd.

It is in Psalm 23 that we learn about Lord who is the Shepherd who cares. Connected to Him, all our needs are met – both physical and spiritual. Why not take a few minutes to read this best-loved psalm and consider the many wonderful things that you are yet to learn about life in Christ. He will lead you so that you have all you need. And when you come to the end of this life just keep on walking with Him – His club is there to defend you and He is ever ready with His staff to rescue you in every situation. You need to recognise Jesus' voice – He speaks to us in many ways, as you will learn.

SWITCH ON AND GO

Lord Jesus, thank You for being my Shepherd and my all in all. Help me to recognise Your voice, to follow Your path and find the gate that leads to life and to Your Father. Amen.



BLUE

PERSONAL ISSUE

BROWN

TRUTH IN CHRIST
TO APPLY

EARTH

IN REAL LIFE
OF LOVE AND
SERVICE



TRUTH IN CHRIST

'Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty"' (John 6:35)

POWER IN CHRIST

Read John 6:25–48

CHECK CONNECTIONS

Circle your strength of agreement (1 = disagree; 10 = agree):

My own appetites have driven me, sometimes to over-indulgence, but I have always been hungry again

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I have been aware of a sense of internal dissatisfaction that I can't explain, but now I see that perhaps Jesus can satisfy that feeling OR could be the answer

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I want to know that Jesus is my provision for the journey

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

BLUE

PERSONAL ISSUE

BROWN

TRUTH IN CHRIST
TO APPLY

EARTH

IN REAL LIFE
OF LOVE AND
SERVICE



PLUG IN

Life with Jesus was anything but dull for His disciples! A crowd of 5000 had gathered because they had heard that He was able to heal the sick. Not only did Jesus do amazing works of healing, but He also provided for their other needs. They were hungry, so Jesus took the opportunity to teach them a lesson about need in the form of a parable, or story with a special meaning.

What can we learn from this parable? The crowd was miraculously fed as Jesus multiplied five loaves and two small fish many times over! In doing so, He was not only meeting a physical need but also teaching a spiritual truth that is profoundly relevant for us today. When He told the disciples the meaning of the parable, some grumbled, some didn't understand it and some deserted Jesus. People react to the truth of being 'in Christ' in the same variety of ways today.

Jesus Christ is ALL you need for your spiritual life just as much as food and drink are vital for physical life. He is food for your soul. It is Christ Jesus Himself who imparts life to you. His Word, the Bible, is like bread for your soul. Equally, Jesus says 'If a man is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him' (John 7:37–38). So come eat and drink all that your soul needs!

SWITCH ON AND GO

Dear Jesus, I thank you that You are bread for my life and water for my soul. Help me understand what this means as I trust and follow You today. Amen.





TRUTH IN CHRIST

'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me' (John 14:6)

POWER IN CHRIST

Read John 14:1–14

CHECK CONNECTIONS

Circle your strength of agreement (1 = disagree; 10 = agree):

I agree that I need to stop going my own way in life and start going Christ's way

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I understand that a connection to Christ brings His power to my life

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

If Jesus Christ is a signpost to me, then I can be a signpost to others who need to know the way, the truth and the life

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

PLUG IN

Do you ever let your heart get troubled? Jesus Christ has not called you so that you go through life with a troubled heart. In John 14:1 He says 'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me.' There is certainly plenty in the world that could trouble us if we let it. But living a life connected to Christ means that He has dealt with all your troubles. He knows you have them, but He has overcome them. He says, 'In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world' (John 16:33).

Life 'in Christ' does not immunise you from troubles – those in Christ still get sick, lose jobs and have difficulties of many kinds. BUT ... the difference is that these things are faced in the power of Christ who has overcome all things. The Apostle Paul tells us: 'And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him (Romans 8:28). Think about that in relation to some of the tough things facing you right now.

Paul goes on to tell us that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ – no hardship nor even death itself. Let the truth of God's Word build you in Christ who is your way, your truth, your life: 'No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord' (Romans 8:37–39).

SWITCH ON AND GO

My Lord Jesus Christ, thank You for calling me and empowering me for life. You are my Way, my Truth and my Life. In every situation I face today, let me be a conqueror in Your strength, knowing that You will never leave me. Amen.



BLUE

PERSONAL ISSUE

BROWN

TRUTH IN CHRIST
TO APPLY

EARTH

IN REAL LIFE
OF LOVE AND
SERVICE



TRUTH IN CHRIST

'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life' (John 8:12)

POWER IN CHRIST

Read Matthew 5:14–16

CHECK CONNECTIONS

Circle your strength of agreement (1 = disagree; 10 = agree):

I do not want to be associated with darkness and secrets, but with light and truth

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

In Christ, I have a light that the world cannot put out

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I want to let the light of Christ shine in me so that others can see I am a changed person

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

BLUE

PERSONAL ISSUE

BROWN

TRUTH IN CHRIST
TO APPLY

EARTH

IN REAL LIFE
OF LOVE AND
SERVICE



PLUG IN

When Jesus came into the world it was as if a light was lit in a very dark place. Those who come to Christ receive and carry His light in their lives. Once you have His light, you can see the way ahead and there is no need to stumble.

Like many people, I used to have a real fear of the dark. I recall staying in my grandparents' large old Surrey farmhouse as a child and being petrified at night as I saw moonlight on a painting of trees that hung on the wall – two of the trees seemed like monsters that filled the room. When the sun came up and the birds sang, my cold sweat turned to joy as the light drove out the phantoms.

God's Word, the Bible, has the same effect. One of the names for Jesus is the 'Word of God', - it is His word that comes as a light to drive out darkness in us and around us. Here's a great truth: 'Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path' (Psalm 119:105). In Jesus Christ, we have the Light of Lights. He calls us to shine like stars in a dark world (Philippians 2:15) and to have nothing to do with darkness. On the contrary, as you are now 'in Christ', He says to you: 'You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven' (Matthew 5:14–16).



SWITCH ON AND GO

Lord Jesus Christ, thank You for being the Light of my life – I truly renounce darkness. I need have no fear of the dark and ask that You will help me shine bright today. In Your light, I can now see. Amen.



TRUTH IN CHRIST

'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die' (John 11:25)

POWER IN CHRIST

Read John 11:1–44

CHECK CONNECTIONS

Circle your strength of agreement (1 = disagree; 10 = agree):

I have feared death, but now I see that in Christ I no longer need to fear

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I understand that death comes before resurrection, just as it was with Christ

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I choose to live in the freedom of Christ, without fear

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

BLUE

PERSONAL ISSUE

BROWN

TRUTH IN CHRIST
TO APPLY

EARTH

IN REAL LIFE
OF LOVE AND
SERVICE



PLUG IN

Jesus has a remarkable way of turning things on their heads. He deliberately chose to arrive at Lazarus' home after he had died – He brought joy to the family, but not before first standing with them in their pain and using the moment to teach about the victory He would bring them over death itself. Jesus is the great table-turner of history. When all seems to be despair, resurrection bursts into the gloom like a new dawn.

You may be going through a dark night, but Jesus brings His light into that darkness. Even death could not hold Him down: 'By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also' (1 Corinthians 6:14). The claims of Jesus are not just abstract theories – He lived them out, died for them and was raised to life because of the truth of them. He was the answer to God's promise to send a saviour for messed-up mankind – He still is.

Now this is getting a little deeper into what it truly means to be in Christ! It means that the old condemned you can have a share in His death so that you can share in His resurrected life. Paul teaches that faith in the death and resurrection of Christ mystically joins those who believe to Christ. If you are in Christ, you can say: 'I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God ...' (Galatians 2:20–21). As you receive this, the power of God that raised Christ from the dead is working in you through His Holy Spirit and will give you new life.

SWITCH ON AND GO

Dear Father God, help me grasp these truths about Your Son who gives me new hope and a new life. I want Your power to be at work in me so that I may be IN CHRIST. Amen.





TRUTH IN CHRIST

"I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!" (John 8:58)

POWER IN CHRIST

Read John 8:48–59

CHECK CONNECTIONS

Circle your strength of agreement (1 = disagree; 10 = agree):

I want to receive your truth, Lord Jesus, even if it means I have to change

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Jesus Christ has the answer and is the answer to all that I need

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I am willing to build my life on Your Word and follow Your plans for me

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

BLUE

PERSONAL ISSUE

BROWN

TRUTH IN CHRIST
TO APPLY

EARTH

IN REAL LIFE
OF LOVE AND
SERVICE

PLUG IN

When Moses asked God His name, this was the reply: God said to Moses, 'I am who I am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: "I AM has sent me to you"' (Exodus 3:14). Translated into Hebrew as 'Yahweh' and sometimes as 'Jehovah', today in English we use the word 'LORD'. So when Jesus gives His name as 'I am', He is saying an awesome thing – that He is one with God and was with Him before He came to earth! This is the heart of the matter. Jesus is declaring that He is no ordinary man, but the Son of God. In John 17:24 Jesus says: 'Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.' Paul explains that Jesus is, '... the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation' (Colossians 1:15) and that He created all things. It was for His extraordinary claim of being the Son of God that the authorities passed the death sentence on Jesus (see Matthew 27:64). Yet it was only because of this that Jesus could identify Himself with 'I AM' – the One who needs nothing from us but can supply everything to us.

Paul tells us that Jesus came from God and entered humanity as a servant willing to die for it – so He was Son of God and Son of Man, both divine and human at the same time. He still is, for God raised Jesus from the dead, having paid for your sin and mine. In so doing, He was bringing many who trust in Him into an ever-growing family, the family of God. As you are in Christ, you come into this divine family with the most amazing inheritance – and all because Jesus is 'I AM'.

SWITCH ON AND GO

Father God, these truths from your Word are like honey to me! To know that Jesus came for me is almost too much for me to take in. Help me to receive this truth and live by it. Amen.



THE POWER OF GOD



TRUTH IN CHRIST

'...but we preach Christ crucified ... to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power ... and the wisdom of God' (1 Corinthians 1:23–24)

POWER IN CHRIST

Read 1 Corinthians 1:18–2:5

CHECK CONNECTIONS

Circle your strength of agreement (1 = disagree; 10 = agree):

I understand that I owe Jesus my life

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Somehow, then, this act of mercy brings the power and wisdom of God to me

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

If Jesus has served me through obedience even to death, I gladly serve Him today

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

BLUE
PERSONAL ISSUE

BROWN
TRUTH IN CHRIST TO APPLY

EARTH
IN REAL LIFE OF LOVE AND SERVICE



PLUG IN

It is remarkable that through His death Jesus brings us life. The cross was more than a horrific means of execution. Sin and death were finally dealt with there, and through faith in Christ, we receive fullness, a word that implies 'all that we need'. If Christ hadn't died we would be eternally separated from God. This is the penalty that came to us through Adam's disobedience: 'For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive' (1 Corinthians 15:22). Jesus says: 'Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends' (John 15:13).

As you trust in Christ you are no longer condemned for your own sin but declared 'not guilty' in Christ. In the *Chronicles of Narnia* C S Lewis uses the death of Aslan the lion to explain this: the lion dies, he could have shaken off his killers, but he did it voluntarily to break the witch's curse and bring life to the 'dead statues'. This is a picture of what Jesus did for you, to bring you out of death and the curse that you could not break. This is why you need to grasp what it means to be 'IN CHRIST'.

To the human mind, proud in self-ability and science, this makes no sense but appears foolish. Yet this is the wisdom and power of God for those who believe, and we are to receive it like little children. Listen to Jesus again: 'I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it' (Mark 10:15). It requires humility. Are you willing to receive this promise as a little child and trust God? As we humble ourselves, God then gives us what we don't deserve – His grace.

SWITCH ON AND GO

Lord God, help me to come to You like a little child and receive by faith this amazing gift of grace. Amen.





TRUTH IN CHRIST

'Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus' (Romans 8:1)

POWER IN CHRIST

Read Romans 5:1–11

CHECK CONNECTIONS

Circle your strength of agreement (1 = disagree; 10 = agree):

I know that my 'sinful old nature' needs to be surrendered each day

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Faith in Jesus Christ means I am put right with God and given a clean slate

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I want my character to reflect the likeness of Jesus to others today

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

BLUE

PERSONAL ISSUE

BROWN

TRUTH IN CHRIST
TO APPLY

EARTH

IN REAL LIFE
OF LOVE AND
SERVICE

PLUG IN

Christ died for you while you were a sinner – He didn't wait until you were nice and clean. In your former selfish life your actions were a declaration of independence from God – it was He who made you and wanted to have a friendship with you. But the death of His Son changed your position forever and put you right with God. In Christ, you are reconciled to God. But there is one huge condition – the small matter of your own death! Read these verses before I explain: 'Jesus replied, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life"' (John 12:23–25).

Christ died so that there might be many seeds of life. His death means life for you. So it is that we must follow His example and 'die' to our old self-centred way of living. Our new way of living is 'in Christ'. It is in this way that we find life (Luke 9:23–24). No death, no resurrection! That is true for Christ and by faith 'the old condemned you' was crucified with Christ when He hung on the cross, for it is only in this way that you are joined to Christ. As you connect to Christ this way, what happened for Him now happens for you – His power over death and sin now becomes yours. Paul said, 'For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain' (Philippians 1:21). Now that you live in Christ through your death to self, life is all about walking with Him. When life in this body is over you will be with Him forever. Until then, walk by faith, in Christ.

SWITCH ON AND GO

Dear Father, thank You that Your Son died for me while I was still a messed-up sinner because You love me. Help me to live with You and for You. Amen.





TRUTH IN CHRIST

'It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counsellor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you' (John 16:7)

POWER IN CHRIST

Read John 16:5–16

CHECK CONNECTIONS

Circle your strength of agreement (1 = disagree; 10 = agree):

I realise that I cannot live successfully as a follower of Jesus Christ just through being called a Christian, let alone in my own strength

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I need God's help if I am to see this all the way through

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I find it difficult to surrender all areas of my life to God but I don't want any areas to be 'no go' to Him

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

PLUG IN

The disciples had to leave everything behind in order to follow Jesus. There was a cost to be counted – and there still is. Many were caught up in the early excitement but then fell away. Jesus told them a parable: if they were to build a tower, they would first need to work out if they had enough bricks to complete it (Luke 14:28–30). Likewise, they needed to consider if they truly were going to follow Him for the long haul. In another parable told by Jesus, seed is sown on different types of ground. Some finds hard or shallow ground, some is pecked by the birds, but some finds good soil and truly grows. So it is with us. In the long run we cannot 'pretend' to be Christian – unless we are truly connected to Christ, it will become clear at some point that we are not genuine. After Jesus' death the early disciples were discouraged and frightened and began drifting away – that is until they met the risen Jesus! He explained that they would be given the Holy Spirit to help them continue His work on earth.

This Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Holy Trinity, not an abstract force. Note that Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as 'Him', not 'it'. We see this throughout the New Testament. He, the Holy Spirit, has been sent to Christians so that we are not alone. He comes to guide us, counsel us, teach us and empower us for life on earth, whilst preparing us for heaven. The Holy Spirit of God comes to 'live' with those who trust in Christ. You will never be alone again as you walk with God – He will always be with you by His Spirit.

SWITCH ON AND GO

Dear Lord Jesus, I acknowledge my total need of You to help me follow You through this life. Please send me Your Holy Spirit. Amen.



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TRUTH IN CHRIST
TO APPLY

EARTH

IN REAL LIFE
OF LOVE AND
SERVICE



TRUTH IN CHRIST

'...if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God' (Romans 8:13–14)

POWER IN CHRIST

Read Romans 8:9–27

CHECK CONNECTIONS

Circle your strength of agreement (1 = disagree; 10 = agree):

I want to live a life surrendered to You

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I can call Almighty God, who created all things, 'Abba, Father'!

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I want to live as a child of God today, in the power of the Holy Spirit

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

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BROWN

TRUTH IN CHRIST
TO APPLY

EARTH

IN REAL LIFE
OF LOVE AND
SERVICE



PLUG IN

By now you should be astonished at what it truly means to be 'in Christ'! If you are not, start the 21 days again until you get it! I mean it, as it took me years! God's plan was to add you to His family as a son or daughter so that you can call Him by the intimate name of 'Abba Father' – this is a remarkable privilege. He does not want to be distant and aloof, but to have a loving and intimate relationship with you. You were not randomly selected, you were chosen to be in God's family. Paul speaks of it as adoption (verse 23) and gives us a further glimpse of our privileges in Christ.

The child of God no longer lives for him or herself but for God; we no longer live in our own strength, but in His; on top of this there is a great future inheritance. Your joy and mine is that you now have a reason to live, to enjoy life with God and to live in such a way as to bring Him joy.

There is a groan in creation because it has been spoilt and longs for renewal. We see it in sickness, pollution, extinction, disease, war, famine and every other manifestation of sin. This deep groan began when mankind first disobeyed God and opened the Pandora's box of grief that comes from choosing to live for ourselves instead of for God. The great news, however, is that the groan of creation has been matched by the groan of the Holy Spirit who intercedes on your behalf with God Himself. Jesus Christ invites you to ask the Holy Spirit as a good gift given by His caring Heavenly Father – see Luke 11:13. So let's ask Him!

SWITCH ON AND GO

Heavenly Father, I am so thankful that in Christ You see me as Your child and that I can call you 'Father'. Please send Your Holy Spirit to be with me now and always. Amen.





NEITHER HEIGHT NOR DEPTH

TRUTH IN CHRIST

'If God is for us, who can be against us?' (Romans 8:31)

POWER IN CHRIST

Read Romans 8:28–39

CHECK CONNECTIONS

Circle your strength of agreement (1 = disagree; 10 = agree):

I choose to believe this truth rather than lies which put me down

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I am strengthened because I know Christ is interceding for me from His place at God's right hand

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

There is nothing that can separate me from God's love in Christ today

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

PLUG IN

Knowing that God is for me means that I can face anything and everything. In Christ, that is also true for you. Amazingly, you cannot lose! God has covered all eventualities as He works out things for your life. Listen to Him: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future" (Jeremiah 29:11). God has 'predestined' you (chosen you ahead of time) to become like His Son, so that Jesus might be the first of many brothers.

Small wonder that Romans 8 has been likened to Mount Everest in the Bible, with the magnificent truth and views it gives us of God. As His child, God is committed to working out everything in your life, even the apparently 'bad' things, for your good! Often you may not see until later the good He brings out of a hard situation. Yet just knowing this can give you confidence that He knows what He is doing even in hard times – after all, we must remember that God is Sovereign, and so who are we to question what He does?

Paul tells us that God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing ... in Christ. There it is again! What God says, He means and it is therefore true! As God has justified you, He dares anyone to condemn you. In Christ, all the old stuff and sins of the past are forgiven. Not only this, God has also worked out things He wants you to do with the life He has given you. Listen: 'For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do' (Ephesians 2:10). The original word for 'workmanship' can be translated as 'work of art' – think of yourself as being God's 'work of art'!

SWITCH ON AND GO

Father God, how awesome to know that You are for me and love me as Your work of art! Help me today to live for You and do the things that You have prepared for me, in the power of Your Holy Spirit. Amen.

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BROWN
TRUTH IN CHRIST
TO APPLY

EARTH
IN REAL LIFE
OF LOVE AND
SERVICE





TRUTH IN CHRIST

‘Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armour of God ...’ (Ephesians 6:10–11)

POWER IN CHRIST

Read Ephesians 6:10–18

CHECK CONNECTIONS

Circle your strength of agreement (1 = disagree; 10 = agree):

I now realise that as a Christian I am engaged in a daily struggle with the enemy of God

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I can be strong ‘in the Lord’ whenever there is a personal attack on me

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

It is my responsibility to put on the full armour of God

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

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PERSONAL ISSUE

BROWN

TRUTH IN CHRIST TO APPLY

EARTH

IN REAL LIFE OF LOVE AND SERVICE



PLUG IN

The analogy of heavenly armour for our daily spiritual battle comes to Paul as he writes from prison, surrounded by Roman soldiers wearing actual armour. Christians are in a daily battle against the ‘world, the flesh and the devil’ – the three enemies of our soul. The ‘world’ represents godless patterns of thinking (Romans 12:2), the ‘flesh’ is our inner struggle against ‘selfishness of every kind’ (1 John 2:16) and the ‘devil’ is one of the names given to Satan, the fallen angel who rebelled against God and now schemes against His creation, especially those who have put faith in Christ.

To be ‘in Christ’ already places you on the winning side as more than a conqueror (see Romans 8:37), but it also places you on the devil’s hit list as a special target to try to bring down and turn against God. Be aware that the devil and his demons know your weaknesses and have tailor made ‘schemes’ just for you. But also be aware that ‘in Christ’ you cannot lose because God has already won the battle: ‘And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross’ (Colossians 2:15).

Today’s passage explains how each piece of spiritual armour is a gift to protect you. The Holy Spirit of God also fights alongside for you. When you feel weak, realise that this is because you really are in a battle. Being a Christian is no walk in the park; but you will get through every day ‘in Christ.’ If you go into the day in your own strength, you’re setting yourself up for spiritual failure and disappointment. Each piece of armour is a reminder that God is for you. So take ground for God today by knowing this truth: ‘I can do everything through him who gives me strength’ (Philippians 4:13).

SWITCH ON AND GO

Dear Lord Jesus, thank You that because of Your victory I can now take my stand against the devil’s schemes in Your strength and mighty power. Amen.





TRUTH IN CHRIST

'It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery' (Galatians 5:1)

POWER IN CHRIST

Read Galatians 5:1–6

CHECK CONNECTIONS

Circle your strength of agreement (1 = disagree; 10 = agree):

I realise that my freedom is not to be abused for personal indulgence

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I know that Christ gives me power for life through His Spirit in me

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I choose to live God's way today by the power of His Spirit

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

BLUE

PERSONAL ISSUE

BROWN

TRUTH IN CHRIST
TO APPLY

EARTH

IN REAL LIFE
OF LOVE AND
SERVICE



PLUG IN

The Apostle Paul was determined that people should understand that to be a Christian means being 'in Christ' – and that this is an act of grace that cannot be earned, and is not deserved. The traditional, uptight Pharisees struggled to receive this message because they thought they had to 'do' something to earn God's favour. They missed the truth that Christ brings us freedom from the legal code, which is just as well because our human nature is incapable of living in obedience to it. There are still many today who think they can earn favour with God by doing good deeds or keeping religious laws. This is even taught in some churches, and by some Christians – this is not the true freedom that Christ gives us.

You must never let anyone take you back to trying to earn favour with God through keeping the law, for your relationship with God is all about grace, in Christ. But remember that the abundant life in Christ is also about living for God, not for self. So, love God with all your heart and love your neighbour (that is, all those people God brings into your life) just as you love and care for yourself. This is part of the works God has prepared for you and it is as we walk with Him through them that we find happiness. Each day, ask the Holy Spirit to fill you afresh and help you keep in step with Him. As you do so you will find your character changing to become more like Jesus. Your life will begin bearing the fruit of the Spirit – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

SWITCH ON AND GO

Come to me today Holy Spirit. Thank You for Your work in me that is changing me bit by bit. Help me to keep in step with You today rather than expecting You to keep in step with me! Amen.





TRUTH IN CHRIST

'I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing' (John 15:5)

POWER IN CHRIST

Read John 15:1–17

CHECK CONNECTIONS

Circle your strength of agreement (1 = disagree; 10 = agree):

I know that there are things in me that still need to be pruned

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

As I remain in Christ, I will bear fruit for Him

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I will allow God to keep pruning out the dead wood in my life

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

BLUE

PERSONAL ISSUE

BROWN

TRUTH IN CHRIST
TO APPLY

EARTH

IN REAL LIFE
OF LOVE AND
SERVICE



PLUG IN

If ever there was a parable that speaks of the vital need for us to be connected to Christ, it is this one. God the Father is likened to a gardener who carefully tends the plants in His garden. He made all things and looks for each to do what it was made for, bear fruit. The key verse is this: 'This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples' (verse 8). Jesus is the 'true vine'. The only branches that will bear fruit are those that are healthily connected to Him so that essential sap, life and nutrition are received. This is a lovely picture of what it is to be 'in Christ'.

Would you say you are now in Christ, or are you still apart from Him?

Branches that are not connected to the vine bear no fruit and are good only for firewood. Jesus is the fruit-bearer who comes looking for fruit – read about His encounter with the fig tree in Matthew 21:19. In the last book of the Bible, Revelation, we see the risen Jesus walking among the churches looking at their fruit. If Jesus came looking, what kind of fruit would He find you bearing? Would it be fruit that shows you to be His disciple to the glory of His Father? The good news is that if you want to bear fruit for Christ He will wisely prune back the dead bits, carefully and precisely. His Word and Spirit are likened to a sharp two-edged blade which He uses to shape us. Sometimes this comes as the discipline of a loving Father for a wayward child (see Hebrews 12:5–12), but His very act of discipline is evidence of His love and care for us. God the Father has only good gifts for us but cares enough for us to prune us as we remain connected to Him through Christ.

SWITCH ON AND GO

Dear Father, I know You will prune me with love and care for You are the Gardener wanting me to be fruitful. May Your Word and Spirit cut out my dead wood. Amen.



CHOICE FRUIT INDEED!



TRUTH IN CHRIST

'No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. Each tree is recognised by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thorn-bushes, or grapes from briars' (Luke 6:43–44)

POWER IN CHRIST

Read Luke 6:43–49

CHECK CONNECTIONS

Circle your strength of agreement (1 = disagree; 10 = agree):

Bad fruit has no place in my life anymore

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I want my heart to be a storehouse of good things from Christ

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I want to be a wise person putting into practice the words of Jesus

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

BLUE

PERSONAL ISSUE

BROWN

TRUTH IN CHRIST
TO APPLY

EARTH

IN REAL LIFE
OF LOVE AND
SERVICE



PLUG IN

In Genesis, the first book of the Bible, we see that God the Creator makes living things to multiply and reproduce the original excellent design. Every time an item bears fruit, it does so to the glory of its Designer. This is true of plants, trees, fish, birds, animals ... and people, whom God made in His likeness to be in relationship with Him and each other.

Disciples of Christ have the seed of the Good News sown in their hearts and should be bearing a good crop (see Day 11). What fruit should we bear? We will be followers of Christ, drawing others to Him (Matthew 28:19–20); we will be prayerful (John 15:7), joyful (John 15:11), loving (John 15:12) and grow to become mature in Christ (Ephesians 4:13). This means we bear a likeness to Christ in our characters (Romans 8:29) and in our speech (Luke 6:45); we will be co-workers with God (1 Corinthians 3:9–15), building with the best quality materials that last and stand on a firm foundation (Luke 6:48).

The fruit of the Spirit will be evident in our lives every day (see Day 15) and we will show faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness and love (see 2 Peter 1:5–8).

As well as this 'general' fruit there are also some specific 'works' that God has prepared in advance especially for you to do. There are people only you will meet, situations only you will be in and tasks for which you are uniquely equipped through your God-given talents and life experience. The Holy Spirit will help you to change and live as Christ in every situation and role that comes to you.

SWITCH ON AND GO

Dear Father, send Your Spirit to help me change to become more like Jesus and to do the specific works You have prepared for me. Amen.





TRUTH IN CHRIST

'This is how we know we are in him: whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did' (1 John 2:6)

POWER IN CHRIST

Read 1 John 1:5–2:6

CHECK CONNECTIONS

Circle your strength of agreement (1 = disagree; 10 = agree):

I know that I have sinned – I have confessed it and I am sorry for it

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I know that Jesus Christ speaks in my defence and I am forgiven

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I want to walk in the light as Jesus did

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

BLUE

PERSONAL ISSUE

BROWN

TRUTH IN CHRIST
TO APPLY

EARTH

IN REAL LIFE
OF LOVE AND
SERVICE

PLUG IN

So this is where the rubber hits the road! If you have persevered in these readings, you may already have come to a conclusion as to whether or not you are 'in Christ'. If not yet, you have an opportunity over the next few days to consider whether the 'connected life' is for you.

The connected life means that, in Christ, you are free from the power of sin, guilt, shame and death. The unconnected life is one still under the power of sin and subject to physical death that sadly separates us forever from the love of God. What we can stop is the immense power of our pride, so cleverly manipulated by Satan as he attempts to keep us in our sinful state. It takes a lot to acknowledge that we have failed God and need His forgiveness before we can start to live in the power of His grace. If you are wondering again whether you can go for this, hear the words of Jesus: 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness' (2 Corinthians 12:9).

Remember what we have considered these past days: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are all rooting for you! You *can* walk in the light – it begins with one step out of the darkness into His Light and carries on one step at a time in the grace and power of God. Four days ago came this truth: 'I can do everything through him who gives me strength'. That includes the first and every subsequent step. All of us who begin the journey of the 'connected life' are works in progress, but God knows the finished picture for each of us and is able to complete everything He begins. After all, He is the 'Alpha' and 'Omega', that is, the Beginning and the End.

SWITCH ON AND GO

Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I want to walk as one with You, in the light, one step at a time. Thank You that You will finish the good work you've begun in me. Amen.





TRUTH IN CHRIST

'How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!' (1 John 3:1)

POWER IN CHRIST

Read 1 John 2:26–3:10

CHECK CONNECTIONS

Circle your strength of agreement (1 = disagree; 10 = agree):

I no longer want to live a sinful life under the power of the devil

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

God tells me He is my Father and that I am His child because of Christ

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

In Christ, I find the true identity that will shape my life and all I do

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

BLUE

PERSONAL ISSUE

BROWN

TRUTH IN CHRIST
TO APPLY

EARTH

IN REAL LIFE
OF LOVE AND
SERVICE



PLUG IN

Identity cards and passports give factual details about you, but they can be forged and they do not identify the real, inner you. Only you and God know the *real* you: what you think, what motivates you, your morals, secrets, how you live behind closed doors – you know these things and so does God, but everyone else only sees the person you choose to reveal to them at any given time.

Adam and Eve disobeyed God and hid from Him – and mankind has been doing that ever since. But Christ has changed all that for those who are 'in him'. If you are 'in Christ', you have a new identity – one you need not hide, so the days of pretending are over! Listen: 'Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!' (2 Corinthians 5:17). In Christ, the real you is made new. Your identity is forever declared by God in His lavish love to be that of His child, fully accepted and forgiven. This is such an amazing and fundamental truth to get hold of: God Himself places an incredible value on you.

In Christ, the new, real you has no shame but is given access to God at any time. You have security for life and death, with no fear of decay, having the promise of eternal life. God is now looking for you to live consistently in the power of His Spirit, no longer under the power of sin but confessing and being forgiven for sin if you do falter. The old condemned you could not resist sin in the past, but the child of God can. So now, in Christ, be the best you can be for the glory of the One who declares that you are His child, your Father God.

SWITCH ON AND GO

Dear Father God, thank You that You accept me as Your child, in Christ. Help me to live now in the power of your Spirit in every circumstance and way that I can. Amen.





TRUTH IN CHRIST

'We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us' (2 Corinthians 5:20)

POWER IN CHRIST

Read 2 Corinthians 5:11–6:2

CHECK CONNECTIONS

Circle your strength of agreement (1 = disagree; 10 = agree):

I should no longer live for myself but for the One who died for me

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

God has entrusted to me great riches in Christ, for whom I am an ambassador

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

The grace of God in my life must be visible, or else it is in vain

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

BLUE

PERSONAL ISSUE

BROWN

TRUTH IN CHRIST TO APPLY

EARTH

IN REAL LIFE OF LOVE AND SERVICE



PLUG IN

Amazingly, God loves you! As a child of God, Jesus Christ is your brother. He shares His inheritance with you. You have every spiritual blessing in Christ – in Him, you are made holy and blameless before God. Listen: 'And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession – to the praise of his glory' (Ephesians 1:13–14).

In other words, by the gift of His Spirit God guarantees you an inheritance of 'glorious riches' in Christ that you will receive once your life on earth is over. God does not lie – the best truly is yet to come. Those in Christ are the safest, happiest and most fulfilled people on this planet: 'Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade – kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time' (1 Peter 1:3–5).

Know your value today as a child of God with all the rights, privileges, empowerment and responsibilities that come with this. Knowing this, now place your value in things that matter to God rather than things that matter to people. Jesus told us to store up treasure in heaven, not on earth: 'For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also' (Matthew 6:19–21). Treasures in Christ are invaluable.

SWITCH ON AND GO

Father, Son and Holy Spirit – who am I that You should include me in Your family? Please help me to be a good ambassador for You and to adopt Your values. Amen.





TRUTH IN CHRIST

'Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen' (Ephesians 3:20–21)

POWER IN CHRIST

Read Ephesians 3:10–21

CHECK CONNECTIONS

Circle your strength of agreement (1 = disagree; 10 = agree):

I acknowledge that my security, significance and self-worth are all in Christ	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Christ strengthens me with power in my inner being through His Spirit	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I want to live to the measure God has for me today – fullness in Christ	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

PLUG IN

The purpose of your life in Christ is to live for the praise of God the Father (Ephesians 1:11–14), showing the character of Jesus in every situation and pointing people to Him so that they too might become connected to Him.

Jesus came from heaven to earth to show the way to be connected through Him to God – His life and ministry were earthed in obedience to God, leading ultimately to His death for you on the cross. You now stand in grace and not condemned under law. It is through faith in Christ Jesus that divisions are taken away – once joined to Him, as children of God we are 'all one in Christ Jesus' (Galatians 3:26–28). This is so that you '... might receive the full rights of sons. Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir' (Galatians 4:4–7).

Your purpose is no longer uncertain. You now have meaning and understand what life is all about – to live with and for God, in Christ, through the power of His Spirit. If these twenty-one days have helped you in this journey, give thanks to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Make the rest of your life count for God as you grow in maturity in Christ. Find a church that is connected to the mission, person and power of Christ. You need to feed your inner being on God's Word, to talk your day through with God in prayer and to ask His Spirit to be with you. Once in Christ, always in Christ!

SWITCH ON AND GO

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all (2 Corinthians 13:14).



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PERSONAL ISSUE

BROWN

TRUTH IN CHRIST TO APPLY

EARTH

IN REAL LIFE OF LOVE AND SERVICE