

I Will Follow Where You Lead

DAY:

Monday

TITLE:

He Knows Your Name

KEY VERSE:

John 10:3 -- "To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out."

REFLECTION:

I love this verse because it makes everything personal. Jesus doesn't just swing open a gate and shout "everybody out!" He calls each sheep by name. He called me by name. There was a season in my life when I felt completely locked up -- trapped, unworthy, unseen. And Jesus showed up, opened that door, and called my name. Not my title. Not my role. My name. That means he knows exactly who I am, where I've been, and where he's taking me. He didn't just let me out either -- he led me out. There's a difference between being released and being led. Being released means you're on your own. Being led means somebody has a purpose and a destination already planned for you. You are not wandering. You are being led by a Shepherd who knows you intimately and loves you completely.

PRAYER:

Jesus, thank you for calling me by name and leading me out of dark places. Help me trust today that you know exactly where you're taking me. I don't want to wander -- I want to follow you.

DAILY ACTION:

Write your name at the top of a blank page and underneath it write: "Jesus knows my name and has a purpose for my life." Keep it somewhere visible all day.

DAY:

Tuesday

TITLE:

Led, Not Just Let Out

KEY VERSE:

Exodus 13:17 -- "When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them by the way of the land of the Philistines, although it was near, for God said, 'Lest perhaps the people change their minds when they see war, and return to Egypt.'"

REFLECTION:

I want you to notice something here that jumped out at me -- God didn't take the children of Israel the short way. He took them the long way on purpose. That sounds frustrating, right? But God knew something they didn't. He knew that if they went the short way, they'd see war and run straight back to Egypt. Back to bondage. Back to what was comfortable and familiar, even though it was killing them. I've done that. Gone back to what I knew instead of trusting where God was leading me. But here's what I've learned -- if God is

taking you the long way, don't assume you're lost. Don't assume he forgot about you. He's protecting you from something you can't even see yet. The wilderness is not punishment. Sometimes it's preparation. Trust the route he has you on even when it doesn't make sense.

PRAYER:

God, I'll be honest -- sometimes your route confuses me. Help me trust that you see what I can't see and that every step you lead me on has purpose. I choose to follow even when the path looks long.

DAILY ACTION:

Think of one area in your life where you've been frustrated with God's timing. Today, consciously choose to say out loud: "God, I trust your route."

DAY:

Wednesday

TITLE:

Fix Your Eyes and Keep Running

KEY VERSE:

Hebrews 12:2 -- "Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

REFLECTION:

Here's something I picture when I read this verse -- Jesus is running ahead of me. I'm in the race too, but he's setting the pace. If I take my eyes off him, even for a second, I start to veer. I've seen it happen in my own life. I get distracted by what somebody else is doing, by what the news is saying, by what my situation looks like, and suddenly I've drifted off course. But the instruction is simple -- fix your eyes on Jesus. Not on your problems. Not on other people. Not on what's comfortable. Jesus is still running. He never stopped. Even when I slowed down, even when I got tired, he kept going. And that's what keeps me moving -- knowing that he's ahead of me, that he's already been where I'm going, and that he never quits. Keep running. Keep your eyes on him.

PRAYER:

Jesus, I want to keep my eyes locked on you today and not get pulled off course by distractions. When I feel like stopping, remind me that you're still running ahead of me. Help me finish what you started in me.

DAILY ACTION:

During one moment today when you feel distracted or discouraged, physically stop, take a deep breath, and say: "Jesus, I fix my eyes back on you right now."

DAY:

Thursday

TITLE:

Deny Yourself and Pick It Up

KEY VERSE:

Matthew 16:24 -- "Then Jesus told his disciples, 'If anyone wants to come after me, he must deny himself, pick up his cross, and follow me.'"

REFLECTION:

Jesus could have made this verse a little gentler, couldn't he? He could have said follow me and I'll make everything comfortable. But he didn't. He said deny yourself first. Then -- and this is the part that shook the disciples -- pick up your cross. Every one of those men knew exactly what picking up a cross meant. Somebody is about to die. Jesus was telling them straight up that following him was going to cost them something. Not just minor inconveniences like giving up a television show or fasting for a day. He was talking about total surrender. He was talking about humility so deep that your own comfort and reputation don't matter anymore. Philippians 2 tells us Jesus himself emptied himself, took on a servant's form, and humbled himself to death on a cross. He showed us what it looks like. Following Jesus isn't about religion or rules -- it's about being all in, even when it's uncomfortable.

PRAYER:

Lord, I won't pretend that denying myself is easy -- it isn't. But I want to be all in with you today. Help me pick up whatever cross you've called me to carry and follow you without looking for the easy way out.

DAILY ACTION:

Identify one thing today -- a habit, a comfort, an attitude -- that you know you need to surrender to God. Take one step today to lay it down, even if it's small.

DAY:

Friday

TITLE:

The Holy Ghost Is With You

KEY VERSE:

John 16:13 -- "But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth; he will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come."

REFLECTION:

Here's something I love about the Holy Ghost -- he didn't stay out ahead of me like a tour guide shouting directions from a distance. He moved inside me. He trusts me so much that he took up residence in my heart. That means when I'm moving through life, navigating decisions, facing temptations, trying to run my race, the Holy Spirit is right there on the inside saying -- hey, don't touch that. Hey, watch this. Hey, go this way. We don't have to wonder if God is speaking to us. Every time we open this Word, he's speaking. Every time that quiet nudge rises up in our spirit, that's him. The question isn't whether he's leading -- the question is whether we're listening. I've learned to stop shutting him off just because I don't like what he's saying. He's not trying to rob me. He's trying to lead me into truth, into freedom, into everything God has for me in this new year.

PRAYER:

Holy Spirit, I want to be sensitive to your voice today and every day. I don't want to shut you out because I'm afraid of what you might say. Lead me into truth and help me trust that where you lead is always better than where I'd go on my own.

DAILY ACTION:

Set a reminder on your phone for midday today that simply says: "Am I listening to the Holy Spirit right now?"
When it goes off, pause and check in with God before continuing your day.