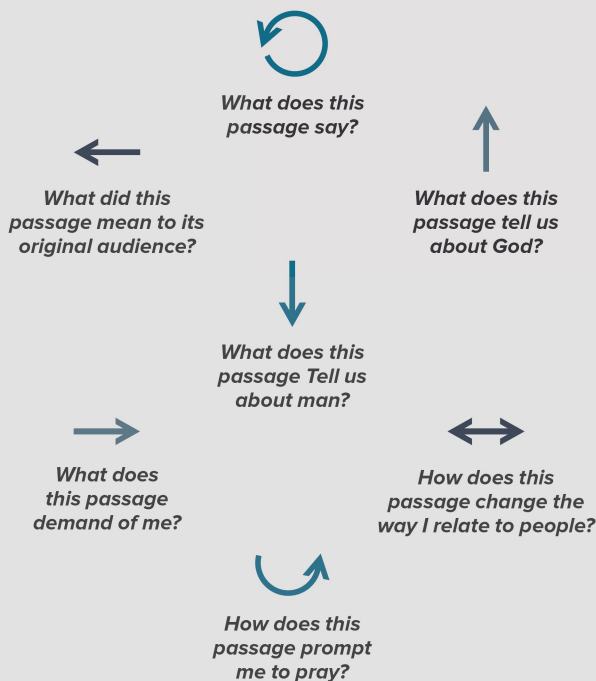


DAILY DEVOTIONS



The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



Day One **JOHN 16:16**

Jesus was in the upper room with His disciples just hours before He would be betrayed and arrested, ultimately leading to His crucifixion. He had just shared with His disciples that He would leave them soon, but that it was to their advantage (v. 7). When Jesus was on the earth, He lived as the perfect picture of God's character for all the world to see. But after a relatively short ministry, through His life, death, and resurrection, Jesus accomplished all the Father had for Him to do, and He ascended to heaven. This is what Jesus referred to when He said His disciples would see Him no more. However, He told the disciples that, "after a little while you will see me." Jesus was the very presence of God on the earth. Only a few days after His ascension, the Holy Spirit would come to earth again in the person of the Holy Spirit. God was with us in Christ, and He is with us still in the Spirit.

➤ **How does it make you feel to know that God is still with us today?**

➤ **How does the Spirit's presence make a difference in your life?**

Day Two

JOHN 16:17-18



The disciples, over and over again, had trouble understanding the things Jesus said. When He shared the parable of the soils (Mark 4:1-20), they had no clue about the deeper principles He taught. When Jesus first predicted His death and resurrection, Peter and the other disciples refused to accept this. Here, again, the disciples simply couldn't grasp what Jesus meant by His leaving soon and going to the Father. When we feel like we struggle to understand what the Bible teaches or how to apply it to our lives, remember, we're in good company. The disciples, whom God used to turn the world upside down, struggled with the same things.

- **When have you struggled to understand a specific passage or teaching of the Bible?**

- **What steps can you take to grow in understanding ideas that may be difficult?**

Day Three

JOHN 16:19-20

Jesus noticed that the disciples struggled to grasp what He had shared with them, so He took the time to clarify. For the past three years, the disciples had devoted their lives to Him. They had left all they had known to follow Jesus, and in much the same way that Jesus loved them, they genuinely loved Him. The very event that would cause the world to rejoice—Jesus' death—would cause the disciples to weep and mourn. To this point, though Jesus had shared multiple times about His suffering and death, the disciples hadn't grasped it. However, soon they would, and they would be utterly overwhelmed with grief. However, this wouldn't last long—there would be reason to rejoice soon enough.

- **When have you refused to accept or follow through on something God communicated to you?**

- **When have you experienced difficult circumstances' turning into reason to rejoice?**

Day Four

JOHN 16:21-22

Word on the street is that childbirth is one of the most painful experiences imaginable. During those moments, the mom-to-be is consumed by the pain and struggle associated with bringing a new life into the world. But in the big picture, the pain lasts only for a little while, and the blessing of being a new mom is well worth the temporary suffering. The disciples would experience something similar. At Jesus' death, and in the following days, they would be overwhelmed with grief. However, when they found that the tomb was empty and Jesus was alive, everything changed. They forgot all the suffering as they were captured by the beautiful reality that their beloved Messiah was alive. What was even better—never again would that joy be taken. Jesus is alive, and that's never going to change.

- **What is the most painful experience you can remember? How would you describe it?**
- **How does it impact the ways you live to know that Jesus—the reason for our joy—is alive, and that this will never change?**

Day Five

JOHN 16:23-24



When Jesus was on the earth, the disciples asked Him a lot of questions. However, Jesus went away. Thankfully, He didn't leave them, or us, without answers. Today, we don't go to Jesus with our questions. Instead, because the Holy Spirit is present with us and Jesus is our High Priest, we have access to the Father. When we study Scripture and pray, the Holy Spirit opens our eyes to its truths and empowers us to live out what we learn. When we live for God, according to the Spirit's ministry, we experience the joy that is available only through Christ.

- **How does God answer our questions today?**
- **How have you experienced the joy of Christ in real ways?**