November 9-13, 2026 Edition

Following The Year(s) Of Jesus Part 253

What Are You Known For?

By: Aniela Humphries

November 7/8, 2026



When you read the Bible ask yourself if there's anything you're reading where God is speaking to you personally… anything that you need to start applying in your own life. Then try to reflect on what you read… what you heard from God throughout the day and we know you'll be blessed.

*** These are EXTREMELY rough drafts so if you see typos… well yuo knew the rest ;0) These are essentially the ramblings of thoughts running through Ed or Judy's mind the week before Ed teaches a lesson on these concepts. They are pretty much how Ed gets ready for the weekends. They are not necessarily coherent so if they don't make much sense… sorry about that.

**** Also these devotionals are the product of both Judy & Ed's experiences and education. Figuring out which are from Judy and which are from Ed (sometimes both are contained in a single day) is half the fun.

You can also get these devotionals on Riverside's Facebook page (www.facebook.com/EagleRiverside). You don't have to have a FB account to read them but if you do have an account if you "like" the Riverside page and click the box to get updates the devos will show up on your wall every weekday (along with other news and event updates).

Monday Reflection:

Picture it: junior high gym class. They're picking teams. Two captains - you know - the popular, athletic types. One by one - they take turns, choosing who they want to fill their teams. Their teams grow larger. The line you're in gets smaller. They've already fought over the good players. And now… it's just a couple other non-athletic types - and you. What's that feeling like? To stand there - waiting to be selected. Wanting to be chosen. To me - it felt like rejection. (Sorry - too vulnerable for a Monday?) It felt like I was forgotten. Or at least…. Not especially skilled in Dodgeball.

Now, imagine, if you will - flipping that scene around. Being chosen first. Having your name called as someone the team just wouldn't be complete without. Someone accepted - loved - and wanted. What does that feel like?

That feeling is what I imagine it must have been like when Jesus called His disciples. His chosen ones. The ones to whom he said, "Follow me."

In Matthew 4:19, He told Simon and Andrew, "Come, follow me and I will send you out to fish for people." Can you imagine? What must that have felt like? Hands busy with nets, clothes soaked from fishing. And Jesus chose them. Invited them to be part of His team.

And He invites you, too. He chooses you. You are invited into a life led by Jesus. He wants to know You. Will you take some time to get to know him?

Prayer: Jesus, thank You. Thank You for inviting me to follow You. To learn about You and to join Your family of believers. Help me remember what it feels like to be chosen. Amen.

Tuesday Reflection:

Yesterday, we talked about being chosen - being invited to join the team. Today, let's start to talk about what you do once you join.

Has anyone ever asked you what you're doing later? What a loaded question. Maybe it's the introvert in me, but that question makes me cringe a little. Like… why do you ask? If I say I'm not doing anything, does that mean I am volunteering to give your sick cat medicine through an eyedropper every 15 minutes over a three-hour period? Yes, that was oddly specific.

I say all this because I wonder what the disciples thought they were signing up for when Jesus said "follow me" and they did. One of the first things we discover is that this is no 9-to-5 day job. Being a disciple meant literally following Jesus.

It meant staying connected. Jesus invites them (and us) to live life with Him.

"Live in me. Make your home in me just as I do in you. In the same way that a branch can't bear grapes by itself but only by being joined to the vine, you can't bear fruit unless you are joined with me."
John 15:4 (The Message)

We stay connected. What does that mean to you? What do you think of when you think of connection? I think of a joining. A checking-in. A familiarity. A relationship.

Tomorrow, we'll talk more about what it means to stay connected, be "joined to the vine," and to "bear fruit." But for today, maybe let yourself wonder what being connected looks like to you. What would a relationship with Jesus look like where you took up His invitation to "Live in me"?

Prayer: Jesus, You invite me to live in You. Will You please show me what that means? And help me stay connected to You. Amen.

Wednesday Reflection:

Yesterday, we talked about staying connected to Jesus. He said we need to stay "joined to the vine" to "bear fruit." What does it mean to bear fruit?

"You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you."
John 15:16 (NIV)

Our fruit is what plays out in our lives through our actions and through our relationships. Are we generous with our time? Gentle with our words? Patient with our… You know what, you can probably fill that last one in because chances are you might have grimaced at the word "patient."

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.
Galatians 5:22-23 (NIV)

Who we are shows in what we do, what we say, and how we treat others. And the kind of fruit we bear depends on the kind of tree or vine we're connected to.

Perhaps it's time to check your connection. Are you connected to Jesus? Or are you detached from the vine?

Want some help remembering those fruit of the Spirit? I present to you - The Fruit of the Spirit.
https://youtu.be/gA-TMUDQ7us?si=RTKg8gEYkgxpQv2R

Prayer: Thank You, Holy Spirit, for filling us and helping us bear fruit. Please help us stay connected to Jesus and choose to walk this life with Him. It's in Your name we pray, Amen.

Thursday Reflection:

On Wednesday, we learned about the fruit of the Spirit. Got them all memorized? I'm sure there's a great VeggieTales song that could help you remember them. Go ahead and watch that video from yesterday. I'll wait.

Aren't you glad I invited you to watch that? Because today, we're talking about the importance of extending the invitation to others. The invitation to "follow me." To follow The Way that Jesus modeled with His life.

Sounds daunting, right? To live like Jesus. But, boy, do we have a habit of making things harder than they need to be. To live like Jesus really boils down to three main things: love, accept, and forgive.

"By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."
John 13:35 (NIV)

Love in a way that people are pointed back to Jesus. That they are so blown away by your loving kindness that they can't help but see Jesus.

Accept each other. We'll get more into this one tomorrow.

Forgive. Jesus was big into this one. When Peter asked him how much forgiveness was enough forgiveness, Jesus essentially told him to keep counting. He calls on us to forgive in a way we want to be forgiven by God.

Love. Accept. Forgive. That's the way Jesus led His ministry. And what an invitation it is to ask others to join us in living that way ourselves.

Tomorrow, we'll look at our final point for the week. But for today, spend some time thinking about what your life could look like if you loved, accepted, and forgave people in a way that pointed them back to Jesus.

Prayer: Thank You, Jesus, for modeling a way of life for us. Thank You for showing us how to love each other, accept one another, and forgive. Help us to extend the invitation You gave to follow You. Amen.

Friday Reflection:

This week, we talked about Jesus' invitation to follow Him. The beauty of being chosen by Jesus. The job we're to do when He invites us to "follow me." How to stay connected to Him. And how to extend the invitation to others.

Today, our final step is reminding ourselves that we are called to come as we are.
I remember seeing an advertisement for Riverside Community Church, long before I started attending here. It had a statement in it that said, "Jeans are church clothes" or something like that. And, let me tell you, that was NOT what I was used to wearing to church on Sundays. The church I grew up in expected Sunday attire. Typically, dresses for women and suits for men. So it took a bit for me to adjust. I showed up at Riverside for the first time dressed up. No one stared. No one said anything besides, "Welcome - we're glad you're here!" and "Here's where we keep the donuts." It became evident rather quickly that at Riverside, you could truly "come as you are."

The grace I received at Riverside went beyond what I wore. It was directed at where I was in my faith journey. And who I was as a person. Riverside did not ask me to change to come to church. Jesus didn't either. Ever heard that quote by Max Lucado? "'God loves you just the way you are, but He refuses to leave you that way. He wants you to be just like Jesus."
Jesus answered them, "It is the sick people who need a doctor, not those who are healthy.

I have not come to ask good people to change. I have come to ask sinners to change the way they live."
Luke 5:31-32 (ERV)

We have this tendency, as you know, people, to make groups. The in-crowd and the outsiders. But Jesus wants everyone. He wants us all to come as we are - and then let Him change our hearts. For the better.

Today, check your heart. Are you allowing Him to change you? If not - why not? What's holding you back?

Prayer: Jesus, thank You for welcoming us just the way we are. And please, Lord, help us to change for the better. One more thing: please help us not get in the way of You reaching others by asking them to change to come to You. Amen.