

Upside Down: Treat others the way Jesus treats you.

DAY 1

Jesus First

"He must become more important. I must become less important" (John 3:30 NIrV).

When John spoke these words, he was talking about Jesus! It's as if John were saying, "This is about Jesus! He's most important—not me!"

Though John had lots of followers of his own, he encouraged them to follow Jesus instead. John understood that his main job was to point people to Jesus. And that's our main job too, to make Jesus more important than ourselves.

When you love others and put them first,

When you are patient and kind, even when others aren't treating you that way,

When you cheer others on instead of seeking all the credit,

... you point people to Jesus!

Can you think of someone in your life who doesn't know about Jesus? What is one way you could show that person how much Jesus loves them today?

DAY 2

He Came to Serve

"Even the Son of Man did not come to be served. Instead, he came to serve others. He came to give his life as the price for setting many people free" (Mark 10:45 NIrV).

Imagine the wealthiest king, sitting on a tall throne. What might happen if that king stepped down from the throne, took off his royal robe and jewel-covered crown, and lined up with the servants instead? That's what Jesus did. He left the beauty and perfection of heaven behind to become like a servant. Jesus chose to put us first.

Jesus came to serve and give His life to set us free. In the space below, write down three ideas for ways you could serve others tomorrow. Ask Jesus to help you follow through as you become more like Him this week.

Three horizontal lines for writing inside a decorative cloud-like border.



DAY 3

Jesus In Me

"I have been crucified with Christ. I don't live any longer, but Christ lives in me. Now I live my life in my body by faith in the Son of God. He loved me and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20 NIrV).

When Paul wrote these words, he wasn't talking about being a better version of yourself. Followers of Jesus take on a whole new identity. Our old self has died. That means we don't have to work hard to make God like us. We don't have to prove ourselves to God to get Him to love us. When you put your trust in Jesus, you trade the "old you" for new life in Christ. It's Christ IN us, living inside us, guiding and helping us to love and care for others.



This week, when you face a situation and you aren't sure what to do, stop and ask Jesus to help you treat others the way HE would treat them.



DAY 4

A Good Work

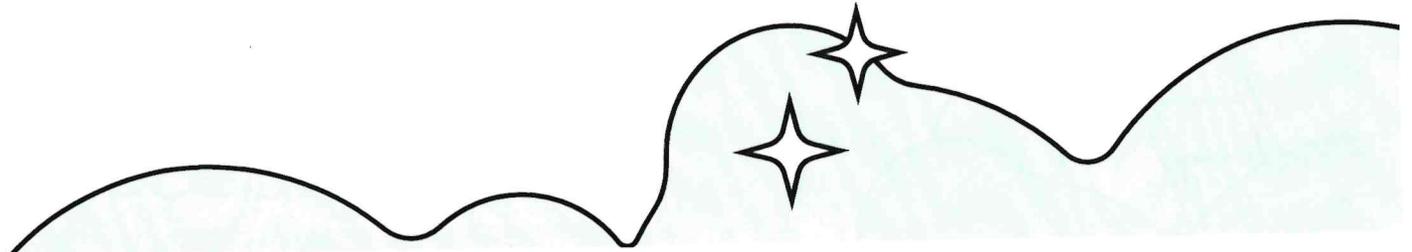
"God began a good work in you. And I am sure that he will carry it on until it is completed. That will be on the day Christ Jesus returns" (Philippians 1:6 NIrV).

God is with you. God is with you when you get things right and when you get things wrong. And what's even better, God will finish what He's started. The "good work" this verse talks about is the work of making you more and more like Jesus. You will fail and be forgiven, but with every mistake, you learn.



Write the words "God will finish what He's started" on a strip of paper. Tape that strip to the door frame of your bedroom. Every time you walk out the door, tap that strip, and pray a prayer like this one: "God, show me what You want me to learn today so I can be more and more like Jesus. I love You. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen."

Jesus must increase.
I must decrease.



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DAY 1

Amazing Faith

When Jesus heard this, he was amazed. He said to those following him, "What I'm about to tell you is true. In Israel I have not found anyone whose faith is so strong" (Matthew 8:10 NIV).

The centurion had faith that Jesus could heal his servant. And how did Jesus respond to this man's faith? Read verse 10 for a clue.

Jesus was amazed by his faith. Why? Because the Roman commander recognized who was really in charge! He knew that Jesus had the power to heal his servant. Do you think Jesus would be amazed by your faith? Do your words and actions show others that you put God first?

What is one simple habit you could start doing this week to help you put God first?

Unscramble the words below to give you a few ideas.

_____ on the way to school.

A Y R P

_____ your Bible.

E A D R

Take a _____ outside and notice

L K A W

all the things God has made.

DAY 2

First Things First

Wisdom teaches you to have respect for the LORD. So don't be proud if you want to be honored (Proverbs 15:33 NIV).

Think about the last time something good happened to you. Maybe your team won the championship game. Maybe you aced your spelling test. Maybe you got that brand new bike you really wanted for your birthday. Sometimes, we have backward thinking, believing that all the good things that happen are because of us. But a wise person knows that everything you are and everything you have comes from God. When you remember to say, "Thank You, God" instead of thinking that you should get all the credit, you honor God and acknowledge that He is most important

Speaking of backward thinking, can you see what's wrong with today's verse? Write it out the RIGHT way.

33:15: sbrevorP ".deronoh eb ot tnaw uoy fi duorp eb t'nod oS .DROL eht rof tcepsr evah ot uoy sehcaet modsiW"

Ask God to help you turn your thinking around so that it's not about you, but it's really about Him.

DAY 3

Trust and Obey

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart. Do not depend on your own understanding. In all your ways obey him. Then he will make your paths smooth and straight” (Proverbs 3:5-6).

God, the Maker of all things, is ready and willing to guide and direct our steps, just like today’s verse reminds us. God asks us to trust and lean on Him for help instead of trying to figure things out on our own. When you put your trust in Him and make Him most important, He will always lead you in the right direction.

You can start trusting Him by obeying His Word.

When He asks you to be kind, be kind.

When He asks you to put others first, put others first.

When He asks you to think before you speak, think before you speak!



What is one thing God asks you to do that’s hard? Tell an adult and then ask them to help you follow through and obey that hard thing as you trust God.

Remember God
is most important.

DAY 4

Don’t Forget

“LORD, I will remember what you did. Yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago. I will spend time thinking about everything you have done. I will consider all your mighty acts” (Psalm 77:11-12 NIrV).

What does it mean to remember something? It means to think carefully about something that happened in the past.

Can you think of a time when God helped you with something, big or small? Draw a picture in the memory box below of a time when you felt God’s love and care in the past.

MEMORY BOX

This week, when you face a situation where you feel unsure or nervous, take a look at your memory box above. Remember what God did to help you in the past and ask Him to help you right now. Thank God for loving you and helping you yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

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DAY 1

Love Your Enemy

"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor. Hate your enemy.' But here is what I tell you. Love your enemies. Pray for those who hurt you" (Matthew 5:43-44 NIV).

When you talk to God, do you ever think to pray for those who HURT you?

That's what Jesus said we should do. But guess what? Most of us don't ever think to pray for those who hurt us. In fact, the opposite is most likely true. When someone hurts us, we want them to hurt too. The last thing we want is for God to help them.

Loving your enemy is really hard. But a good way to start being kind is to pray for them. Ask God to change your heart towards them. Ask Him to help you forgive them for the wrong things they've done. Ask Him to help you choose to respond in kindness.

Think about someone who hurt you this week. Talk to God about the situation and ask Him to help you love like Jesus even when it's hard.

DAY 2

No Paybacks

"Don't pay back evil with evil. Don't pay back unkind words with unkind words. Instead, pay back evil with kind words. This is what you have been chosen to do. You will receive a blessing by doing this" (1 Peter 3:9 NIV).

When someone hurts you, do you ever want to hurt them back? Do you ever spout off an unkind word just because you want them to hurt too? It's easy to pay back wrong for wrong. But there is a better way.

When you know and follow Jesus, the way He lives through you should show up in how you treat others. And guess what? When you love like Jesus, there's a blessing waiting for you too.

In the space below, write down some ways you could respond kindly to unkind things people say.

DAY 3

Enemy to Friend

"But love your enemies. Do good to them. Lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then you will receive a lot in return. And you will be children of the Most High God. He is kind to people who are evil and are not thankful" (Luke 6:35 NIV).

Enemy is a strong word. If you were asked, "Who are your enemies?" it might be hard to come up with an answer. But there may be people in your world who are difficult to get along with.

The kid who drives you crazy? Remember, God loves him just as much as God loves you. And maybe the kindness you show could point him towards God's love.

Write the word "enemy" in large block letters horizontally on a piece of paper. Think about how God can help you turn that "enemy" into a friend by the way you treat them.

Using either of the "E's or the "N" from "ENEMY", write the word "FRIEND" in large block letters vertically down the page. Then color your picture completely so that the word "enemy" is gone and only "FRIEND" remains.

DAY 4

Do Over

"Be kind and tender to one another. Forgive one another, just as God forgave you because of what Christ has done" (Ephesians 4:32 NIV).

"But he broke it!"

"You messed up everything I just built!"

"What do you mean you forgot to bring your ball? We can't play without it?"

"But he said something mean first!"

It's not always easy to show love to others. Especially when they hurt you. But just because it's hard doesn't give us a pass to be mean. We love others "because of what CHRIST has done." Jesus died on the cross, taking on the punishment that we deserved ourselves so that we could be forgiven. And because of that amazing act, we are challenged to be kind and loving to each other.

Think about a time this week when someone wasn't kind to you. Now think about how you responded. After reading this verse, if you could go back in time, would you change the way you responded? Why or why not?

Love like Jesus even
when it's hard.

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DAY 1

Through Christ

"I know what it's like not to have what I need. I have learned the secret of being content no matter what happens. I am content whether I am well fed or hungry. I am content whether I have more than enough or not enough. I can do all this by the power of Christ. He gives me strength" (Philippians 4:12-13 NIV)

In a letter to the church in Philippi, the apostle Paul was explaining that he had learned how to make it through ANYTHING. The key for Paul was to stay focused on Jesus! When we put Jesus first, Jesus will help us face any situation that comes our way.

Remember, this verse doesn't mean you can do ANYTHING (like jump tall buildings in a single bound or walk through walls or run a mile in 2 minutes) you want to do. This verse reminds us that we can do anything that Jesus calls us to do. We can do anything that lines up with His will or His plan for us! And the best way to figure out what those "anythings" are is to focus on Jesus.

DAY 2

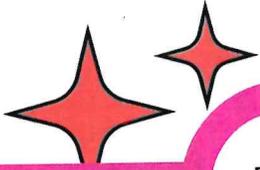
Always and Forever

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8 NIV).

What's the weather like outside today? What was it like yesterday? What about tomorrow?

Most everything around us changes. Seasons change. You grow up and learn new things. Your interests and tastes change too. But one thing that NEVER changes is Jesus! His love for you stays the same, yesterday, today, and forever. It's why you can trust Him. And if you are a follower of Jesus, it's why your relationship with Him should always come first.

Do you have a printed calendar at home or is there a place where your family writes down the schedule for the week? If so, at the top of your calendar or schedule, write out today's verse as a reminder that while the seasons/ days may change, Jesus stays the same!



DAY 3

Every Knee Will Bow

So God lifted him up to the highest place. God gave him the name that is above every name. When the name of Jesus is spoken, everyone will kneel down to worship him. Everyone in heaven and on earth and under the earth will kneel down to worship him (Philippians 2:9-10 NIV).

Paul is making it clear in his words to the church that because of what Jesus has done, one day “every knee will bow” in heaven, on earth, and under the earth. That means that everything in all of creation will one day show Jesus the respect He deserves. Jesus’ power and glory are greater than anything else. That day IS coming.

But until then, as a follower of Jesus, your job is to share His love with everyone. Putting Jesus first means sharing His love and kindness so that they might follow Him, too.



Look back at your Bible and use a yellow marker to draw sunbeams out from the word “Jesus” as a reminder that one day everyone will put Jesus first.

DAY 4

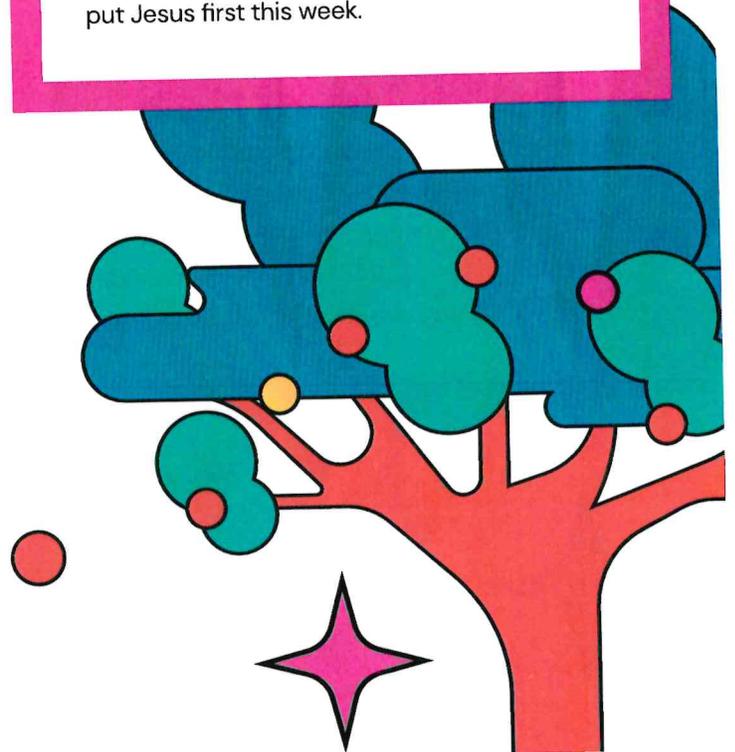
Jesus First

“My goal while I was with you was to talk about only one thing. And that was Jesus Christ and his death on the cross” (1 Corinthians 2:2 NIV).

Knowing Jesus is more important than being the smartest, or strongest, or toughest, or most popular. It’s more important than having the latest gadgets or the most money or the coolest stuff. All of those things can distract us from what’s most important— knowing Jesus and helping others know Him. Our goal should be just like Paul’s, to put Jesus first.



Grab a dry-erase or a washable marker. Write the words “JESUS FIRST” in large block letters across the top of the mirror. As you get ready this week, read those words as a reminder to put Jesus first this week.



Make time for
Jesus first.

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DAY 1

Salt of the Earth

"You are the salt of the earth. But suppose the salt loses its saltiness. How can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything. It will be thrown out. People will walk all over it" (Matthew 5:13 NIrV).

Jesus said that you are the salt of the earth. That means you can add value or make a difference in the world around you. It's about showing others who Jesus is by allowing Him to work IN you. It's His spirit, His Holy Spirit, living inside you that allows you to stand up for what is right and show others who He is. And when you allow the Holy Spirit to guide you and to help you do the right thing, you can make a big difference in this world.

Ask your grown-up to cook something WITHOUT adding salt. How do they taste? Now add a little bit of salt. What difference does the salt make? Just like the salt makes your food taste better, we should ask God to help us make the world a better place too.

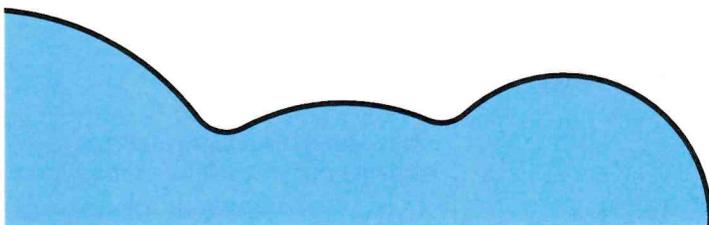
DAY 2

Others First

"Don't do anything only to get ahead. Don't do it because you are proud. Instead, be humble. Value others more than yourselves. None of you should look out just for your own good. Each of you should also look out for the good of others" (Philippians 2:3-4 NIrV).

Think about your morning routine. You jump out of bed, throw on your clothes, scarf down your favorite cereal, brush your teeth, and then run like crazy to the bus stop. At any point did you stop and think about putting someone else first?

Grab a piece of cardboard or heavy paper. Cut it into a rectangle to look like a license plate. Draw a thin border around the edge. In the center, write "U B4 ME" (translation: "You before me.") Put your license plate in place where you will see it every morning as a reminder to choose to put someone else first!



There's More! →

DAY 3

The Golden Rule

"In everything, do to others what you would want them to do to you. This is what is written in the Law and in the Prophets" (Matthew 7:12 NIV).

Have you ever heard of the "golden rule"? The golden rule says to treat others the way you want to be treated. It's not hard to think about how you would want someone to treat you, right? Of course not! You want people to be kind to you, to listen when you talk, to laugh when you say something funny, to help you when you need it. When it comes to showing humility, one of the best things you can do is remember the golden rule and to put it into practice. Think about how you would want someone to treat you and then treat the person with you the same way!



Grab a piece of paper and some crayons. Draw a long, thin rectangle to look like a ruler. Inside the ruler, write today's verse. Then color the ruler yellow or gold with a crayon or marker.

DAY 4

Just Like Jesus

"I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet. So you also should wash one another's feet. I have given you an example. You should do as I have done for you" (John 13:14-15 NIV).

You know what can get REALLY stinky? Your feet! Ever smelled a pair of soccer cleats after a two-hour practice? Gross!

But feet got way dirtier in Jesus' day. Because you had to walk everywhere you went, and your feet were only protected by sandals, everything on the road made its way onto your feet. When Jesus grabbed a towel and got down on His hands and knees, the disciples couldn't believe it! And when He was finished, Jesus said: "You should do as I have done."



Jesus didn't mean we should wash everyone's stinky feet. But we should be willing to serve when we have an opportunity. What is ONE way you could serve someone like Jesus did at home, at school, and in your friend group this week?

Jesus showed us how to be humble.

