

Living the Ascension Life

Daily Devotional for May 19: The Hour of Glory

Reading: John 17:1-5

Jesus declared, "The hour has come." This wasn't just about one moment, but a trajectory of suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension. God's glory shines brightest not in our comfort, but in our willingness to pour ourselves out for others. The cross wasn't defeat—it was victory. The tomb wasn't the end—it was a new beginning. Today, consider what "the hour" means in your life. Are you clinging to your own way, or are you willing to die to yourself? God's glory is revealed when we surrender our plans and embrace His transformative path. The ascension reminds us that sacrifice leads to glorification, and our willingness to follow Christ's trajectory brings heaven to earth.

Reflection: What needs to "die" in your life so resurrection can begin?

Daily Devotional for May 20: Baptized into His Death and Life

Reading: Romans 6:3-11

Baptism isn't just a ritual; it's a declaration of trajectory. Like Jesus, we die to ourselves, rise to new life, and ascend to live in unity with God. Going under the water symbolizes our old self drowning—our selfishness, our need to be first, our insistence on our own way. Rising from the water represents resurrection power flowing through us. But the journey doesn't end there. We're called to live ascended lives, so united with Christ that others see Him in us. This isn't a one-time event but a daily choice. Each morning, we choose to die to ourselves and live for others. Are you still living in the tomb of self-centeredness, or have you embraced resurrection living?

Reflection: How can you practically "die to yourself" today and put someone else first?

Daily Devotional for May 21: The New Trinity on Earth

Reading: John 17:20-23

Jesus prayed for unity so profound that the world would recognize God's presence among us. A new trinity emerges: Christ's example, our faithful living, and the Spirit's guidance creating visible unity. This isn't uniformity—we don't all have to think alike. It's unity amid diversity, love transcending differences. When the church argues over politics, immigration, or sexuality, we obscure God's glory. When we embrace, forgive, and serve across our differences, we reveal the divine. The world is desperate for authentic community, not another divided institution. People won't believe our message if they can't see our love. Unity isn't agreement on everything; it's choosing relationship over being right, choosing love over division.

Reflection: Who do you need to extend grace to, even though you disagree with them?

Daily Devotional for May 22: Taking Your Toys to Another Sandbox

Reading: Philippians 2:1-11

From childhood to adulthood, our selfishness remains remarkably consistent. Children take their toys and leave when they don't get their way. Adults leave churches when their preferences aren't met. Paul challenges us to have the same mindset as Christ, who didn't grasp at His rights but emptied Himself. The ascension shows Jesus returning to glory, but only after complete self-giving. We're called to the same humility. Stop asking, "What am I getting out of this?" Start asking, "How can I serve?" The fellowship hall needs servers, not more complainers. The nursery needs volunteers, not critics. Your church needs people willing to die to preferences and live for mission. Christ's ascension didn't mean abandoning us; it meant empowering us to continue His work.

Reflection: What "toy" (preference, comfort, or right) do you need to release for the sake of unity?

Daily Devotional for May 23: At Our Best When United

Reading: Acts 2:42-47

History proves we accomplish extraordinary things when united in love. Methodists built universities to educate minds and souls. Christians founded hospitals to heal bodies and spirits. The early church turned the world upside down through radical generosity and unity. Today's divisions—political, social, theological—blind us to our calling. Stop listening to voices of division and hate, regardless of their platform or popularity. Stop voting for, supporting, or amplifying those who tear down rather than build up. The world doesn't need more Christians fighting culture wars; it needs Christians living resurrection lives, serving sacrificially, loving extravagantly. When we unite across differences to combat suffering and evil, God's glory pours out. Our best days aren't behind us—they're ahead, if we choose unity over division.

Reflection: What voice of division do you need to stop listening to? What unifying action can you take today?