Dr. Dustin Daniels | River Bible Church
John 3:22-36 | Humility in Ministry
Sunday November 22, 2026

WELCOME:
• Announcements

CALL TO WORSHIP:
• Prayer: Psalm 95:1-6
• Music

REVIEW:
Please turn your Bibles to John 3, as we continue our verse-by-verse exposition of John's Gospel this morning.

We examined *the* most famous passage in all of Scripture last week—John 3:16.

John 3:16*—For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.*

Last Week's KEYPOINT 3:
We don't define love, and love doesn't define God— God Himself defines love.

Last Week's KEYPOINT 1:
The source of God's love is within Himself.

External factors, circumstances, or emotions don't matter.

What does matter is God's character.

Last Week's KEYPOINT 2:
God's holiness is a loving holiness, and his love is a holy love.

We also discussed how people memorize John 3:16, but not verses 17-21.

The reason people don't memorize those verses is that there is a consequence for not believing verse 16.

Last Week's KEYPOINT 5:
Not believing in God's Son is an infinite evil committed against an eternal God.

Jesus not only taught that people who don't believe will be judged, but instead are *already* judged for their unbelief.

Lastly, we closed by looking at 1 Corinthians 13, the love chapter, to see the tangible fruit of love in our lives.

I hope we see the eternal chasm that divides worldly love from God's divine love.

- Worldly love is about my happiness, while divine love is about Holiness.
- Worldly love is consumeristic, while divine love is sacrificial.
- Worldly love is about feelings and emotions, while divine love is about faithfulness and obedience.

In other words, it's easy to love someone who loves you.

That's worldly love—even unbelievers can do that.

However, divine love is about loving the unlovable—loving those who don't like you, don't care for you, don't want to be around you, and even hate you.

Last Week's Summary:
God's definition of love—to love the unlovable.

God the Father has sent His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to do exactly that.

And as Christians, we are to follow our Lord's example.

We will never love perfectly, but we can love as God loves increasingly—through repentance and faith.

That's all a review from last Sunday.

INTRODUCTION:
Today, we shift gears.

The Apostle John now turns his focus to John the Baptizer.

The Baptizer is still preaching, teaching, and baptizing in the wilderness.

Throughout John's Gospel, we have learned that John's main role was to prepare Israel for their *Messiah*—the promised Deliverer for Israel who was prophesied by the OT prophets.

However, John's ministry is coming to a close, and today's passage emphasizes that.

Today's passage marks a significant theological fulfillment: *the Baptizer's role includes preparing Israel not only for their Messiah, but for their Groom.*

What on Earth does that mean? Let's find out together!

Please stand to read and honor God's Word.

SCRIPTURE:
John 3:22*— After this, Jesus and his disciples went to the Judean countryside, where he spent time with them and baptized.*

John 3:23*— John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water there. People were coming and being baptized,*

John 3:24*—John had not yet been thrown into prison.*

John 3:25— *Then a dispute arose between John's disciples and a Jew about purification.*

John 3:26—*So they came to John and told him, "Rabbi, the one you testified about, and who was with you across the Jordan, is baptizing—and everyone is going to him."*

John 3:27—*John responded, "No one can receive anything unless it has been given to him from heaven.*

John 3:28—*You yourselves can testify that I said, 'I am not the Messiah, but I've been sent ahead of him.'*

John 3:29—*He who has the bride is the groom. But the groom's friend, who stands by and listens for him, rejoices greatly at the groom's voice. So this joy of mine is complete.*

John 3:30—*He must increase, but I must decrease."*

John 3:31—*The one who comes from above is above all. The one who is from the earth is earthly and speaks in earthly terms. The one who comes from heaven is above all.*

John 3:32—*He testifies to what he has seen and heard, and yet no one accepts his testimony.*

John 3:33—*The one who has accepted his testimony has affirmed that God is true.*

John 3:34—*For the one whom God sent speaks God's words, since he gives the Spirit without measure.*

John 3:35—*The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hands.*

John 3:36*—The one who believes in the Son has eternal life, but the one who rejects the Son will not see life; instead, the wrath of God remains on him.*

May the Lord bless the reading of His Holy Word.

PRAY:
Not to us, LORD, not to us, but to your name give glory
because of your faithful love, because of your truth (Psalm 115:1).

EXEGESIS:
John 3:22*— After this, Jesus and his disciples went to the Judean countryside,*

"After this" or "After these things" refers to all the activity during Passover.

- Jesus' cleansing of the temple
- He went on to teach and perform miracles throughout the week.
- and His conversation with Nicodemus

After all that, Jesus took His Disciples and left the hustle and bustle of Jerusalem to get some fresh air in the country.

John 3:22*— where he spent time with them…*

In the Greek, "spent time" implies a lot of time.

We aren't told exactly how long, but don't miss the personal investment—He spent time with them.

It's easy to think that all these events in the Bible are back-to-back with no breaks, but that's not the case.

After the feeding of the 5,000…

Mark 6:31*—He said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a remote place and rest for a while." For many people were coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.*

By getting away to rest and recoup, Jesus shows us how to fill our cup.

In our culture today, this is a great lesson—let's not miss it.

Maybe you've heard people say, "I'll sleep when I die."

That's not only unbiblical and physically foolish, but flat-out sin.

Busyness doesn't bring blessings.

Many times we're running around killing ourselves with things that the Lord never told us to do.

Rest, sleep, having a Sabbath day, devotional time, and being mentored are all musts for our lives.

John 3:22*— where he spent time with them <u>and baptized.</u>*

Jesus' preaching ministry now leads to a very important new activity—baptism.

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the two ordinances that Jesus gave His church to perform until His return.

The Disciples' baptisms were similiar to John the Baptizer's baptism—a preparation for the Gospel which focused on repentance.

Ultimately, these baptisms foreshadowed Christian baptism as we know it today.

As a side note, we know from John 4:2 that Jesus wasn't the one performing the baptisms, but rather His Disciples.

John 3:23—*John also was baptizing in Aenon (EE-non) near Salim, because there was plenty of water there.*

At the same time that Jesus was teaching and preaching, and His Disciples were baptizing, John also continued his ministry—preaching and baptizing as well.

Today, we don't know exactly where the cities of Aenon (EE-non) or Salim were.

We do know they were fairly close to one another, based on the context of this passage—most likely near Samaria.

What's important is that Aenon (EE-non) is a Hebrew term meaning "Springs."

So it's obvious there was plenty of water in both locations for baptizing.

John 3:23— *People were coming and being baptized,*

So we now have both ministries overlapping— doing the same thing at the same time.

People were going to both Jesus and John.

This is great news, right?!

People see God moving in their midst, God is moving in people's hearts, and people are obedient and getting baptized and repenting of their sin.

So today, we would call this a revival!

John 3:24— *since John had not yet been thrown into prison.*

Unlike the Synoptic Gospels —Matthew, Mark, and Luke—John's Gospel doesn't say why the Baptizer was thrown into prison (Matt. 14:3–12; Mark 6:17–29; Luke 3:19; 9:7–9).

Most likely, it's because John's Gospel was the last to be written and the other Gospels already addressed it—so this is just a clarifying point.

However, to understand the setting for John's imprisonment, we have to understand that John the Baptizer is like a famous rock star at the height of his career at this moment.

His preaching drew crowds from all over.

Matthew 3:5—*Then people from Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the vicinity of the Jordan were going out to him,*

That's like saying— *people from Phoenix and all of Arizona were going to Cornville to be baptized.*

So picture this—anyone and everyone went to see the Baptizer—Pharisees, Sadducees, tax collectors, soldiers, the rich, and the poor.

People would walk for days on end to see, hear, and be baptized by John.

Some people thought that John was the reincarnation of Elijah!

In fact, John became so popular that King Herod sent for him and listened to him preach.

Mark 6:20—*When Herod heard him, he was very perplexed, and yet he liked to listen to him.*

Herod is like most people—intrigued when a man of God preaches, as long as it doesn't get too personal.

Nobody likes it when the preacher goes from preaching to meddling.

So when John preached against Herod and his incestuous and abominable marriage before the Lord, Herod got really uncomfortable, and Herodias got really mad.

Ultimately, Herod murdered the Baptizer.

So all that to say—John is famous. He is rock-star John the Baptizer.

However, we all know what fame does to people.

John 3:25— *Then a dispute arose between John's disciples and a Jew about purification.*

I don't know about you, but I love how Scripture records these kinds of details.

Scripture isn't shy about recording all the problems that people—especially godly people — have.

We've got two ministries performing the same duties—at the same time and in the same area.

This is great news! This area is being saturated with the Gospel, but look what happens—people in the ministries start fighting with one another.

Instead of rejoicing at the success of the other ministry— the success exposes their sinful ambitions.

And sinful ambitions cause us not to see each other as Brothers and Sisters in Christ, but as threats—or even enemies.

Sinful ambition threatens our usefulness to the Lord and jeopardizes the ministry itself—why?

Because the Lord's work is no longer about the Lord—ambition becomes a personal problem that divides the Body of Christ.

We saw something similiar happen with the church in Corinth, Greece.

The Corinthians had a three-way church split at one time—a group that followed Paul, another that followed Apollos, and a third that followed Peter! (1 Cor. 1:12). Guess what?

The same thing happens today:
I follow MacArthur. I follow Sproul! I follow Joyce Meyer!

Let's look at the players—John's Disciples and a single Jew.

We don't know who the single Jew is—we don't know if it's a Disciple of Jesus or someone whom John baptized.

What we do know is that this man has caused a major problem.

The problem centered around *purification*—so around the baptism itself, maybe.

Maybe he wanted to know which baptism was better—John or Jesus.

Maybe the argument was around the mode of baptism—sprinkling or immersion.

Maybe the argument was over who could be baptized—like his infant son or daughter.

We don't know—what we do know is that these same controversies surround us today.

Regardless, these questions confused everyone, especially John's disciples.

John 3:26—*So they came to John and told him, "Rabbi, the one you testified about, and who was with you across the Jordan, is baptizing—and everyone is going to him."*

This sounds like a modern-day Elder's meeting.

- What are we going to do about the big church across the street?
- Have you heard about their children's program?
- Do you know they've had 100 baptisms in the past month?
- They've added a third service!
- They've been building onto their sanctuary!
- Have you heard that we're losing more and more families to them?
- We've got to do something different—we're losing our market share!

John 3:26—*and <u>everyone</u> is going to him."*

Notice the catastrophic language—EVERYONE.

Dear friends, please know that the Kingdom of God is not a competition.

Each local church contributes to God's Kingdom.

Every ministry is part of the Body of Christ.

However, when we compete with others, we're no longer contributing to the Kingdom of God—we're building our own little sandcastles within the Kingdom.

When we turn ministry into a competition, there are always winners and losers.

We tend to see their success as a result of our loss—at our expense.

This kind of thinking and wording turns congregations into customers.

It turns the pulpit into a performance and music into a concert.

Therefore, we become resentful of our Brothers and Sisters in Christ who we think are stealing our "customers."

That is what's happening to John's disciples.

The Apostle Paul dealt with this issue:

Philippians 1:15*—To be sure, some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of good will.*

Envy and rivalry point to a political ambition.

Many pastors have lost their influence and even their pastorate because they craved success and fame.

So John's disciples are missing the point of everything that John has taught them about their Messiah.

Many times, it's the Disciples who are the most vocal when others criticize their leader.

We saw it happen with

- Joshua trying to protect Moses (Num. 11:29).
- Abishai wanted to kill someone for insulting King David (Sam. 16:5-12)
- Some of Jesus' disciples tried to stop a man casting out demons in Jesus' name (Mk. 38-40)
- Peter slashing off the ear of Malchus during Jesus' arrest (Jn. 18:10).
- We saw it happen in the Reformation with Martin Luther and John Calvin.

Needless to say, John's disciples are missing the point.

The Baptizer's entire ministry was to prepare people for the Lord Jesus—this is the moment they were waiting to celebrate, not condemn.

John 3:27*—John responded, "No one can receive anything unless it has been given to him from heaven.*

So John embraces a teachable moment for his disciples.

Instead of feeling sorry for himself, John actually rejoices as his ministry fades from stardom.

John teaches his disciples that no one has success unless God is in it.

1 Corinthians 5:5*—What then is Apollos? What is Paul? They are servants through whom you believed, and each has the role the Lord has given.*

1 Corinthians 5:6*—I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.*

1 Corinthians 5:7*—So, then, neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.*

John teaches how to restrain ambition and embrace gratitude.

This gift from Heaven points to God's sovereignty over the smallest details in our lives.

KEYPOINT 1:
God's sovereignty keeps us humble.

Sovereignty refers to God's absolute rule over all his creatures and their circumstances.

Regardless of how well a church or ministry is doing, one thing is for sure—it's not due to people or our imagined spiritual leadership— it's only due to God.

All glory goes to God!

So, not only was John NOT perturbed by the success of Jesus' ministry, but instead he was pleased!

John knew he had nothing apart from God.

Any abilities, gifts, or ministry he possessed came directly from his heavenly Father.

KEYPOINT 2:
The Baptizer understood his place and role in the Kingdom.

Do you? Or are you trying to be all things to all people?

- How are you using the gifts God gave you?
- Who have you served this week?
- Are you giving your God-given gifts away to others, or hoarding them for yourself?

God uses and blesses us not because of who we are but despite who we are!

John 3:28—*You yourselves can testify that I said, 'I am not the Messiah, but I've been sent ahead of him.'*

How quickly we all forget the deep things of God!

And apparently John's disciples have a bad case of the normals—they forgot how John taught them that he was the fulfillment of Malachi's prophecy.

Malachi 3:1—*See, I am going to send my messenger, and he will clear the way before me.*

John knew who he was and the job he was tasked to perform.

This takes immense self-awareness and humility.

From the start, John said that he was *the voice crying in the wilderness.*

He knew he was the herald of the kingdom of God—the forerunner of the King Himself.

John had pointed people to Jesus, and now his testimony was bearing fruit—even though his disciples didn't see it that way.

Now as his ministry began to wind down, John's faith did not waver.

If the Lord chose to change or end John's ministry, John was content.

Why? Because everything is a gracious gift from God, not something a person is entitled to.

John 3:29*—He who has the bride is the groom. But the groom's friend, who stands by and listens for him, rejoices greatly at the groom's voice.*

To us, it sounds like John changes subjects—*what's marriage have to do with John's ministry ending?*

But to his disciples, John provides an illustration.

Throughout the OT, Scripture refers to the Lord Jesus as the Groom and the Church as His bride.

Isaiah 54:5 ESV*—For your Maker is your husband, the LORD of hosts is his name;*

Isaiah 62:5*— For as a young man marries a young woman, so your sons will marry you; and as a groom rejoices over his bride, so your God will rejoice over you.*

Let's look at this again…

John 3:29—*But the groom's friend, who stands by and listens for him, rejoices greatly at the groom's voice.*

In the first century, the "friend of the bridegroom" is like our best man today.

He had a unique place at a Jewish wedding.

- He acted as the liaison between the bride and the groom
- He arranged the wedding
- He took out the invitations
- He presided at the wedding feast.
- He brought the bride and the groom together.

That was John's joy: Jesus had come, and people were going to Him. The friend had every reason to celebrate!"

John 3:29—*So this joy of mine is complete.*

The Baptizer uses this well-known marriage metaphor, telling his disciples that his task is complete—and so is theirs.

So… the focus has shifted from him to the Lord Jesus as the groom.

John 3:30—*He must increase, but I must decrease."*

Here we come to a famous verse by John the Baptizer.

We talked about favorite verses last week—personal-life verses—and this may be one for some of you.

Notice the compelling/necessary language—*must*.

This is the third "must" of John chapter 3:

- We "must be born again," (John 3:7),

- "the Son of Man must be lifted up" on the cross (3:14),
- and now Jesus "must" increase while we "must decrease."

What's interesting is that many of us will say, "Sure, the Lord must increase in my life."

But the humiliating part of this verse is that the second half is nearly impossible—*we must decrease*.

It takes great humility and self-awareness to decrease.

ILLUSTRATION:
Think about a wedding photographer— His job is to capture the moment through photographs.

He chooses the lighting, finds the right angle, and captures their joy.

But imagine that every time he took a picture, he stepped in front of the lens.

Every photograph became a selfie!

We would say, "You've misunderstood why you're here. This wedding isn't about you."

John the Baptizer understood why he was there.

Nobody remembers the photographer, the caterer, or even the minister—but everyone remembers the bride and groom.

"Preach the gospel, die, and be forgotten."
— Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf.

KEYPOINT 3:
Humility opposes human nature.

Recognizing and then rejecting our pride is alien to the very core of humanity.

We naturally want to increase, not decrease.

Why do you think Satan told Eve… "You will be like God!" (Gen. 3:5)

But being born-again changes everything.

We can now make small, practical, daily choices to humble ourselves.

KEYPOINT 4:
We can only decrease to the degree that the Lord increases.

Think of it like scales in balance, or children on a teeter-totter.

There seems to be an ebb and flow in our daily lives as we practice this humility.

It's not about perfection, but sanctification.

Sanctification is about cooperation with the Lord.

In other words, the Lord Jesus must increase in each of our lives—and by default, we must decrease.

As Christians, this shift *has* to happen. It must take place— *I have to decrease. He must increase.*

What John was teaching his disciples is that the measure of success for any ministry is not how many people follow the minister, but how many people follow the Lord Jesus through the minister.

Yet here in Chapter 3, we see that John still had disciples.

These were followers who found it impossible to transfer their allegiance to Jesus.

We even see some of John's disciples years later in Acts.
Tragically, the Baptizer's disciples were gripped by envy as they saw the ministry they were involved with beginning to lose its popularity to another ministry.

KEYPOINT #5
What John's disciples perceived as competition, John saw as completion.

John 3:31*— The one who comes from above is above all. The one who is from the earth is earthly and speaks in earthly terms. The one who comes from heaven is above all.*

There's a little play on words here.

Jesus had not merely come from Nazareth.

Jesus came from Heaven.

Remember what Jesus told Nicodemus?

John 3:13*—"And no one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.*

John obviously refers to himself as the one who speaks from the earth.

He repeats himself to make sure his disciples understand that the Lord Jesus is who they should be following.

John 3:32*—He testifies to what he has seen and heard,*

"What he has seen and heard" refers to Jesus' eternal existence and infinite knowledge.

John 3:32—*and yet no one accepts his testimony.*

Very few people, at least to that point, believe the Lord Jesus—including John's disciples.

Instead of believing the truth, people chose to believe opinions, rumors, and every kind of lie about Jesus.

It was true then, and it's true now.

John 3:33—*The one who has accepted his testimony has affirmed that God is true.*

It's pretty clear that John's disciples are not Believers yet.

If we think about it, there would be no greater insult to the Lord Jesus than John's disciples not believing what John taught them about Jesus.

John 3:34—*For the one whom God sent speaks God's words, since he gives the Spirit without measure.*

Here we see the mystery of the Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit—three in One.

These words show how the Holy Spirit empowered Jesus' earthly ministry.

The OT prophets were led, empowered, and inspired by the Holy Spirit.

John the Baptizer was "filled with the Holy Spirit while yet in his mother's womb" (Luke 1:15).

The prophets were sinful servants whom the Spirit empowered for their calling.

However, Jesus is the sinless Son, upon whom the Spirit rests without measure.

Colossians 2:9*—For the entire fullness of God's nature dwells bodily in Christ,*

John 3:35*—The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hands.*

Here we see two things:

First, the special love that the Father has for his Son.

Second, the Father has entrusted all things into His hands.

John 3:36*—The one who believes in the Son has eternal life, but the one who rejects the Son will not see life; instead, the wrath of God remains on him.*

Here we have a comparison—the one who believes has life; the one who doesn't believe has God's wrath.

There is no grey area.

APPLICATION:
Today, we see a clear thesis in John's passage: *the Baptizer's disciples see competition, while John sees the fulfillment of his calling.*

As I close, I'd like us to ponder how John got there.

John 3:30*—He must increase, but I must decrease."*

KEYPOINT 4:
We can only decrease to the degree that the Lord increases.

So, how do we make these small, practical choices on a daily basis, to humble ourselves?

In other words, how do I live this passage out? *To decrease while the Lord increases?*

First things first—**confession**.

We must acknowledge and confess that we don't want to decrease.

Everything in my sinful human nature wants to increase—increase in:
- Health
- Finances
- Friends
- Success
- …you fill in the blank!

So we must always start with confession—getting real with God.

He already knows it—but there is a blessing when you confess it.

Second—**contentment**.

To thank and praise God for what we do have—keep in mind that *everything* you have is a gift from God.

1 Timothy 6:6*—But godliness with contentment is great gain.*

1 Timothy 6:7*—For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out.*

I've never seen a U-Haul trailer attached to a hearse, have you?

1 Timothy 6:8*— If we have food and clothing, we will be content with these.*

First, *confession*. Second *contentment*.

Third—**conviction**.

To pray that the Lord would convict you—in the moment—of when you're trying to increase in life.

Conviction leads to the self-awareness of your sin.

Self-awareness leads to confession.

Confession leads to contentment.

—

When this heavenly philosophy of the Lord increasing and with me decreasing is operating in our lives, it produces a supernatural joy, a heavenly humility, and a divine freedom that is impossible to explain.

How liberating it is to have a proper philosophy of God's sovereignty and His gifts to us.

Recognizing that *everything* comes from God frees us from worldly angst, jealousy, and drama—and even from unnecessary relationship and financial problems.

Why? Because we're not striving to get more—instead, we become joyful and content with what we've been given.

PRAYER:
SONG:

BENEDICTION:

May the LORD bless you and protect you;

may the LORD make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you;

may the LORD look with favor on you
and give you peace." (Num. 6:24)

Dr. Dustin Daniels | River Bible Church

John 3:22-36 | Humility in Ministry

Sunday November 22, 2026

KEYPOINT 1:

God's sovereignty keeps us _____.

KEYPOINT 2:

The Baptizer understood his _____ and

_____ in the Kingdom.

KEYPOINT 3:

Humility _____ human nature.

KEYPOINT 4:

We can only _____ to the degree that the Lord

_____.

KEYPOINT 5:

What John's disciples perceived as _____,

John saw as _____.

SERMON NOTES:

POP QUIZ

1. Who actually performed the baptisms during Jesus' ministry, according to John 4:2?

A. Jesus Himself

B. Jesus' disciples

C. The temple priests

D. John the Baptizer alone

2. What subject sparked a dispute between John's disciples and a Jew?

A. Purification

B. Paying taxes

C. Sabbath observance

D. The resurrection

3. What complaint did John's disciples bring to him about Jesus?

A. Jesus had stopped teaching

B. Jesus refused to receive visitors

C. Jesus was criticizing John's baptism

D. Jesus was baptizing, and everyone was going to Him

4. Treating ministry as a competition can cause us to view other believers as what?

A. Teachers and mentors

B. Threats or enemies

C. Guests and neighbors

D. Partners in prayer

5. What did John remind his disciples that he had previously said about himself?

A. He was the Messiah

B. He would replace the temple priests

C. He was not the Messiah but had been sent ahead of Him

D. He would always draw the largest crowds

6. In John's wedding illustration, whom did John compare himself to?

A. The groom's friend

B. The bride

C. The groom

D. A wedding guest who arrived late

7. In the wedding photographer illustration, what showed that the photographer had misunderstood his purpose?

A. He arrived without an invitation

B. He photographed the wedding guests

C. He asked the couple to stand together

D. He kept stepping into the photographs and making selfies

8. What distinguishes Jesus from someone who merely comes from the earth?

A. He received an education in Jerusalem

B. He comes from heaven and is above all

C. He began His ministry before John

D. He avoids speaking about earthly matters

9. How does the sermon describe the Holy Spirit's relationship to Jesus?

A. The Spirit rests upon Him without measure

B. The Spirit empowered Him only at His baptism

C. The Spirit replaced His divine nature

D. The Spirit gave Him the same limited assignment as every prophet

10. According to John 3:36, what remains on the person who rejects the Son?

A. The responsibility to earn salvation

B. The promise of eternal life

C. A neutral standing before God

D. The wrath of God

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Monday — Making Time for the Lord

1. Jesus spent time with His disciples. How intentional are you about spending time with the Lord, and what most often distracts you?
2. Where has busyness crowded out rest, prayer, or opportunities to fellowship with other believers?
3. What change could you make this week to spend less time in the world and more time with the Lord and His church?

Tuesday — Recognizing Jealousy and Rivalry

1. When someone else receives recognition, what does your first reaction reveal about your heart?
2. Have you allowed comparison with another person or ministry to weaken your gratitude for what the Lord is doing around you?
3. Who could you encourage or pray for this week as a practical way of celebrating the Lord's work through someone else?

Wednesday — Receiving Your Calling with Gratitude

1. How does remembering that your abilities and opportunities come from the Lord change the way you view your accomplishments?
2. John knew he was sent ahead of the Messiah. How can recognizing your own responsibilities help you serve faithfully without needing to do everything?
3. Is there a role, opportunity, or position you are treating as an entitlement? What would it look like to hold it with open hands before the Lord?

Thursday — Finding Joy in Making the Lord Known

1. John rejoiced when people went to Jesus. What brings you greater satisfaction: being appreciated yourself or seeing someone grow closer to the Lord?
2. How does the wedding photographer illustration challenge your motives when you serve?
3. How could you encourage someone needing joy this week?

Friday — Practicing Humility

1. What does "He must increase, but I must decrease" look like in my life today?
2. Where do you find it hardest to surrender attention, control, or credit, and what desire lies beneath that struggle?
3. What small act of humble obedience could you practice today, trusting the Lord even if no one notices?

Saturday — Responding to the Son

1. Are you receiving the Lord's testimony as truth, or allowing personal preferences and other voices to outweigh what He says?
2. John 3:36 contrasts believing in the Son with rejecting Him. Are you resting in the Lord for eternal life, and how could that assurance help you speak to someone who doesn't believe?

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