

HIGHLANDS CHURCH

Study Guide

How to Live for Jesus

Thomas Slager
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Major Points

- 1 **Live in anticipation of eternity with Jesus — our bodies are temporary tents, and groaning in this life should spur us toward the hope of our eternal dwelling with God.**

2 Corinthians 5:1

- 2 **Live to please Jesus — aim small, miss small. Fix your eyes on Christ with intentional, focused devotion rather than vague spiritual hopes.**

2 Corinthians 5:9

- 3 **Live for the love of Jesus — receive His love, let it control and compel you, then freely give that love to the people around you.**

2 Corinthians 5:14

- 4 **Live as witnesses of Jesus — as people reconciled to God, we are all ambassadors and ministers of reconciliation, called to verbally share the good news.**

2 Corinthians 5:20

Key Quotes

“Everyone goes somewhere forever, and that person you love deeply, Jesus wouldn't tell them, well done, good and faithful servant.

at 25:57

“How many mistakes am I away from being that same guy?

at 34:27

“The old you is dead. Who you used to be apart from Christ, those things you used to do on the outside, they're dead. They're gone.

at 32:33

“This isn't just like, I'm just going to hope I somehow please the Lord. I'm going to look at something very specific, and if I miss it, I'm going to be off just by a little bit.

at 21:42

“The beauty of the gospel is that God saw us even while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

at 39:06

Discussion Questions

1. Pastor Slager talked about our bodies being like tents — temporary structures that remind us something better is coming. How does thinking of your body and current life as 'temporary' actually

change the way you handle everyday frustrations or physical struggles?

2. The sermon highlighted the tension Paul felt — being 'hard pressed' between wanting to be with Jesus and wanting to stay and serve. Have you ever felt that tension between longing for heaven and feeling called to keep doing work here? What did that look like for you?

3. Pastor Slager shared the story about meeting a homeless man at JJ's Deli and how quickly he judged him based on outward appearance. When was the last time you caught yourself doing that, and how might seeing people as 'new creations' change the way you interact with them?

4. The idea of 'aim small, miss small' was applied to pleasing Jesus — not just having a vague desire to honor God but getting specific about it. What would it look like for you this week to get really specific about one area where you're aiming to please Jesus?

5. Pastor Slager emphasized that the word 'persuade' in 2 Corinthians 5:11 is a verbal, talking word — not just living a good example. Why do you think it's so hard for many of us to move from silently living out our faith to actually speaking about Jesus with people we love?

Word Studies

βῆμα

bēma

Greek

A raised platform or tribunal where a judge presided, used in athletic contexts for awarding prizes and in judicial contexts for rendering verdicts.

συνέχω

synechō

Greek

To press together, constrain, or hold in grip from all sides, conveying an overwhelming compulsion that leaves no alternative course of action.

καταλλαγὴ

katallagē

Greek

The restoration of a formerly hostile relationship to friendship and harmony, emphasizing the exchange from enmity to peace with God.

Cross References

Colossians 3:1-2

Expands on living in anticipation of eternity by instructing believers to set their minds on things above where Christ is seated, connecting heavenly-mindedness with practical daily living.

1 Samuel 16:7

God's declaration that He looks at the heart rather than outward appearance directly parallels Pastor Slager's point about seeing people as God sees them rather than judging by external circumstances.

Isaiah 52:7

Celebrates the beauty of those who bring good news and announce salvation, connecting the Old Testament prophetic anticipation of gospel messengers with Paul's call to be ambassadors of reconciliation.

Hebrews 11:13-16

Describes Old Testament saints who lived as strangers and pilgrims on earth, longing for a heavenly homeland — illustrating the same tent-like temporality and eternal anticipation Paul describes in 2 Corinthians 5.

Ezekiel 36:26

God's promise to give a new heart and new spirit foreshadows the 'new creation' reality Paul proclaims in 2 Corinthians 5:17, showing that inner transformation has always been central to God's redemptive plan.

Further Reading

- **Mere Christianity**

by C.S. Lewis

- **The Gospel in a Pluralist Society**

by Lesslie Newbigin

• **Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church**

by N.T. Wright

Scripture References

REFERENCE	TYPE	TIME	CONTEXT
Romans 12:1	Referenced	4:18	<i>Therefore I urge you, brothers, by the mercies of ...</i>
2 Corinthians 5:1-21	Referenced	5:06	<i>For we know that if the tent that is our earthly h...</i>
John 14:1-6	Read Aloud	10:03	<i>"Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; ...</i>
Revelation 21:3-4	Read Aloud	14:12	<i>And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "...</i>
Revelation 22:7	Read Aloud	14:54	<i>"And behold, I am coming soon. Blessed is the one ...</i>
Philippians 1:21-24	Read Aloud	16:49	<i>For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. I...</i>
Matthew 22:37-40	Referenced	30:00	<i>Jesus said to him, "You shall love the Lord your ...</i>
John 3:16	Referenced	26:08	<i>For God so loved the world, that he gave his one a...</i>
Romans 10:9	Referenced	39:22	<i>that if you will confess with your mouth that Jesu...</i>
1 Corinthians 15:42-44	Referenced	9:27	<i>So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body ...</i>
2 Corinthians 5:2-5	Read Aloud	11:31	<i>For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our h...</i>
Revelation 22:10	Referenced	15:00	<i>He said to me, "Don't seal up the words of the pro...</i>
Revelation 22:12	Read Aloud	15:06	<i>"Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense ...</i>
Revelation 22:20	Read Aloud	15:12	<i>He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I a...</i>
2 Corinthians 5:6-8	Read Aloud	15:31	<i>So we are always of good courage. We know that whi...</i>
Revelation 21:23	Referenced	16:15	<i>The city has no need for the sun, neither of the m...</i>
2 Corinthians 5:9	Read Aloud	18:56	<i>So whether we are at home or away, we make it our ...</i>
Romans 8:8	Referenced	19:16	<i>Those who are in the flesh can't please God.</i>
2 Corinthians 5:10	Read Aloud	22:39	<i>For we must all appear before the judgment seat of...</i>
Philippians 2:10-11	Referenced	24:31	<i>that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, o...</i>
Matthew 25:21	Referenced	24:42	<i>"His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithf...</i>
Matthew 7:23	Referenced	24:52	<i>Then I will tell them, 'I never knew you. Depart f...</i>
Matthew 5:14-16	Referenced	26:30	<i>You are the light of the world. A city located on ...</i>
2 Corinthians 5:11-12	Read Aloud	25:43	<i>Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persua...</i>
2 Corinthians 5:13-15	Read Aloud	29:19	<i>For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if ...</i>
2 Corinthians 5:16-17	Read Aloud	31:10	<i>From now on, therefore, we regard no one accordin...</i>
2 Corinthians 5:18-19	Read Aloud	35:34	<i>All this is from God, who through Christ reconcile...</i>
2 Corinthians 5:20-21	Read Aloud	37:26	<i>Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God maki...</i>
Romans 3:23	Referenced	38:16	<i>for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory o...</i>

REFERENCE	TYPE	TIME	CONTEXT
Romans 6:23	Referenced	38:30	<i>For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift o...</i>
Romans 5:8	Referenced	39:00	<i>But God commends his own love toward us, in that w...</i>