

25. JUST DO IT,
TODAY!



*You must meet all obstacles
placed in your way and
overcome them one at a time.*

#NCSAMENTALHEALTHDEVOTIONS

JUST DO IT, TODAY!

Luke 9:23: "And He said to them all, 'if you want to come with Me, you must forget yourself, take up your cross everyday, and follow Me.'"

Have you ever used the words "I will start tomorrow"? Whether it was a diet or a new activity or a big project you had to tackle. Did you ever have the thought of not today, rather tomorrow? Tomorrow is a word that could be on your lips too often. Perhaps you said something like, "when this lockdown is over, I am going to" (whatever it is you are going to do). By doing that, you look into the future a lot. There is nothing wrong with having a vision for your future or with planning for tomorrow or for the days and the years to come, but there is danger in not living in the here and the now. Your mind is so focused on planning for the future that you forget you are alive today.

James 4:13 says: "Now listen to me, you say 'Today or tomorrow we will travel to a certain city, where we will stay a year and go into business and make a lot of money. You don't even know what your life will be tomorrow! You are like a puff of smoke which appears for a moment and then it disappears.'"

James is saying we talk a lot about tomorrow, but we don't even know if tomorrow is going to be there. The apostle is trying to tell us that we are planning so much for the future, that we forget to live today, that today is a gift that has been given to us. Today is all we have, and even the next 24 hours are not guaranteed. Let us work with the 24 hours we have. If I tell you that we are going to make a movie of the next 24 hours of your life and that the whole world will be able to view it, what will you do in the 24 hours?

**TODAY IS ALL WE HAVE, AND
EVEN THE NEXT 24 HOURS ARE
NOT GUARANTEED.**

What is today going to look like for you if you know that you are going to be recorded and people are going to watch how you live your life? Will you be proud of that movie?

Today is Monday, a day that everybody dreads. I don't know whether this has changed during lockdown. Maybe. Because you are at home you may not have what we used to call 'Monday blues', having to go to work after the weekend. This day has already started. The sun has risen. Maybe when you went to bed last night, you said: "Monday is a new day, it is a new week. I will get up at 4." Then, when the alarm clock went off, that little voice in your head said just 5 more minutes and then it turned out to be 10 more minutes and 20 more minutes and 30 more minutes in bed. You then woke up late and your day is a mess.

We are very willing to spend 5 more minutes on the things that will not bring us success, or the things that are not bringing any progress or development or true happiness in our lives. I often hear someone saying just 5 more minutes sleeping or playing, but I've never heard somebody saying 5 more minutes for the project. I've heard them saying 5 more minutes to spend with friends, or 5 more minutes for the programme on television, but I've never heard them saying they want to spend 5 more minutes on the cleaning of the house, or 5 more minutes on something that is uncomfortable. It's usually the uncomfortable things that are going to make our lives to be successful and happy.

We need to spend the 24 hours given to us well. I want to give you a challenge today. Plan and schedule your next 24 hour day as if it is the only day you will have.

**WHAT IS TODAY GOING TO LOOK
LIKE FOR YOU IF YOU KNOW THAT
YOU ARE GOING TO BE RECORDED
AND PEOPLE ARE GOING TO
WATCH HOW YOU LIVE YOUR
LIFE?**

Try it for one day, for the next 24 hours. If not today, plan it for tomorrow. There is a song that says: *'If tomorrow never comes, how am I going to live my life?'* If you have to live the next 24 hours as if you are not going to have the 24 hours thereafter, how are you going to live it? Live life as if tomorrow is never coming. I don't want you to now go and party and waste money and say goodbye to everybody because you are going to be dead after the 24 hours. Don't spend your day like some irrational people a few years back who thought the world was going to end. Some sold their homes, others took out loans and now they're sitting with a huge amount of debt. That is not what I mean with living your day as if you are not going to have tomorrow. If we are going to record your next 24 hours, what would you be busy with? Would you want to watch your own movie?

In your one day, work a little bit on your goals. Live your dreams for the next 24 hours. What you perhaps can do is to write down who you want to be and for the next 24 hours, **be that person**. If you say you want to be a pianist and you don't play that well, then still play the piano today. If you say you want to be a loving father, then for the next 24 hours be a loving father. If you say you want to be a singer, then sing today even if it is in the shower. If you want to be an artist, then draw today. If you want to have a homey home, then make your home a homey home today. If you want to have a clean house, then clean your house today. If you say you want to be a godly parent, then start today by doing home worship with your children. Be a little bit of that person today because today is all you have. Then, at the end of the 24 hours, evaluate how you feel. Evaluate whether you've accomplished what you've planned to accomplish and then plan to do the same the next day. (But don't think about tomorrow today. Tomorrow is yet to come. Live from day to day for now.)

**PLAN AND SCHEDULE YOUR NEXT
24 HOUR DAY AS IF IT IS THE
ONLY DAY YOU WILL HAVE. TRY
IT FOR ONE DAY, FOR THE NEXT
24 HOURS.**

Another reason why we are not living life to its full potential is because of our **feelings**. Many of us are trapped by our feelings. Have you ever felt like, "I don't really want to get out of bed"? (That is when you must get out of bed), or "I don't really want to workout"? (Workout then), or "I don't really want to hammer on that project"? (Hammer on that project then). If you're not sure what you should be doing today, ask yourself what the things are that you really don't want to do today. Those are the things you should be doing for the next 24 hours.

All of us need to **rest** and you should slot that into your daily, weekly and monthly schedule as well. But stick to that schedule, don't sleep the whole day, don't snooze the button when you've put aside 10 minutes for a quick nap. Take the 10 minutes and then get back to your schedule and do the things you need to do.

You might feel overwhelmed by the task ahead, but remember God is available to help you. Each day is a gift and you need to learn to value the opportunities God has given you. Today, God has put breath in your lungs. He woke you up this morning. You wouldn't be alive today if God did not make your heart beat. An interesting thing world medical scientists say they cannot discover, is why the heart beats because there is nothing that keeps it beating. I can tell you who or what keeps the heart beating. God keeps your heart beating. Every day when you wake up, God is the One who makes your heart to beat.

When you realise this day is a **gift** and that God has left you with all these opportunities to perfect this day to the best of your ability, you will live it very differently. Heaven will take note of the type of day you have lived. The angels are recording what you are doing.

**EACH DAY IS A GIFT AND YOU
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YOU.**

I am not saying this to put you on a guilt trip. I am only saying that heaven takes note and when you live this day well, there are extra blessings and extra strength that will be given you for the next task at hand. God blesses us when we put in effort.

The feeling of you not wanting to do something might be a sign that you need some time off, some time away. These signs could be correct, but don't take off today. Schedule your time off. If you need a holiday because you've been overworked, then work towards that time off and enjoy the well-earned rest, guilt free. You cannot really rest when you leave things incomplete, whether it is the dishes that need to be washed or the project that is overdue. You may say you can easily ignore it and relax, and that may be true for a little while, but then all those things you have to do, come back into your conscience and the guilt piles up. The procrastination is worse, you feel more guilty, tenfold, and you are behind schedule even more.

There is a saying, *'Don't give in to the immediate gratification that is whispering in your ear.'* Do not listen to the little voice that says, "Just relax, you can do that tomorrow." Rather lift those weights, sprint that hill, work that project, get out of bed. Try this for **one day only**. Stop thinking about the future and how exhausting it is going to be. Think only of today. 'If you die' or you feel like you miss out or end up feeling miserable, tackle them, one thing at a time.

What I mean with 'if you die' is that some people sometimes say: "I'm going to die if I have to do all of this." You won't die, but if you think you are going to die, just do it! If you think you are going to miss out, just do it! If you think you are going to feel miserable, just do it!

**DO NOT LISTEN TO THE LITTLE
VOICE THAT SAYS, "JUST RELAX,
YOU CAN DO THAT TOMORROW."**

Do it for just one day. Test it and see if you feel miserable or if you've died or if you've missed out on life.

There is this thing nowadays that people are calling FOMO. FOMO is an acronym for **Fear Of Missing Out**. A lot of times you don't tackle the very important things because you are scared that you are going to miss out on the fun of life. You need to learn that there are rewards in doing the small things of life consistently. You must meet all obstacles that are placed in your way and overcome them, one at a time. As much as you are concentrating on the 24 hours in your day, you also need to concentrate on the task at hand. You may have scheduled ten things to do today and those ten things may become overwhelming. Do not think of the ten you have scheduled. **Think of the one you are doing right now.** Right now you are reading this article. Do it well and enjoy it and when you are done, do the next task at hand. You need to overcome only one thing at a time. If you overcome the first difficulty, you'll be stronger to meet the next and with every effort you will become stronger and stronger.

It is like climbing a mountain. When you stand at the bottom it may seem impossible to overcome, but then you take the first step and with one step at a time, you will ascend to the highest heights on that mountain and finally you will reach the summit.

I am reminded of a story that pastor Aaron Gordon, a good friend of mine, told me. He shared his experience of trying to hike up Table Mountain one day. Table Mountain is an extremely high mountain in South Africa. It is very steep, not a gradually inclined mountain. He said as he was trying to climb this mountain, he felt like he almost died. On his way up, he passed an elderly couple (in their sixties), climbing this mountain, and it seemed as if they were not even breaking a sweat.

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The gentleman told him not to feel bad or to compare himself and his fitness levels with theirs because they had been climbing Table Mountain each week for the last 40 years. That was why him and his wife could climb the mountain so easily and why it looked as if they weren't breaking a sweat.

There is a life lesson to be learnt from the story: 'do something every single day or every single week for the next 40 years and you will be great at it.'

Being consistent is not always easy on your own and that is why many fail. Philippians 1:6 says: "And so I am sure that God, who began this good work in you, will carry it on until it is finished on the day of Jesus Christ." This verse is saying that God who began the work, will finish it. In other words, the urge that is pushing you to do something, is placed in you by God. Don't forget that He started that igniting fire inside you to tackle things and that He will complete it if you stick with Him. He is the One who is working in us and through us. Most of us need a kick-start, like a fire lighter, to get the flame going and then we also need a fuel source to keep the engines running. The beauty of Christianity is that we already have both and that is Jesus. Jesus is the fire lighter that ignites the good work in us and He also is the One who inspires us through the Holy Spirit to keep on pushing. He is the little voice that tells us what to do and He will also come again to complete the work in us.

You are not going to be perfect after you've completed today, but you will have advanced one step towards that perfection, towards living the life you have dreamt of. You need to look to Jesus, then you will overcome.

**PHILIPPIANS 1:6 SAYS: "AND SO I
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CHRIST."**

You will overcome feelings of 'you don't want to do it', and the urge for instant satisfaction, and the fear of the enormity of the task that lies ahead. Don't look at all the tasks you have planned. Only do one at a time. Feelings of anxiety can become overwhelming when you think about all that has to be done in one day or in the week or in the month to come. Stop! You are not expected or required to do it all at once.

Remember you are expected to live one day at a time only. God is giving you today only. Tomorrow is unsure. If you then only have today, if you only have the next 24 hours, your success is going to depend on how you spend these 24 hours. Try to spend them wisely. Motivational gurus will tell you this means work, work, work, work, work and to push toward that one goal. This will evidently result in the neglect of all other aspects of life. According to them, if you need to give up sleep or if you need to give up family time to meet your goal, then do it. When they think of pushing towards your goals, they mean money and fame and business success. But your 24 hours have to be beautiful, not just focused on work, work, work and money, money, money. As Christians, we are called to live life **holistically**, to spend our time growing in all aspects of life.

Many of us have unfortunately become quasimodos in life. Have you ever watched the story 'Hunchback of Notre Dame'? It is about a man who has a big lump on his back that is over developed in comparison to the rest of his body. We have become quasimodos in life because we've succeeded in one area of life, but neglected all other areas. When you go to the gym, there is always this one guy in the gym who has this huge upper body and tiny legs because he skipped the leg exercise day.

**REMEMBER YOU ARE EXPECTED TO
LIVE ONE DAY AT A TIME ONLY.
GOD IS GIVING YOU TODAY ONLY.
TOMORROW IS UNSURE.**

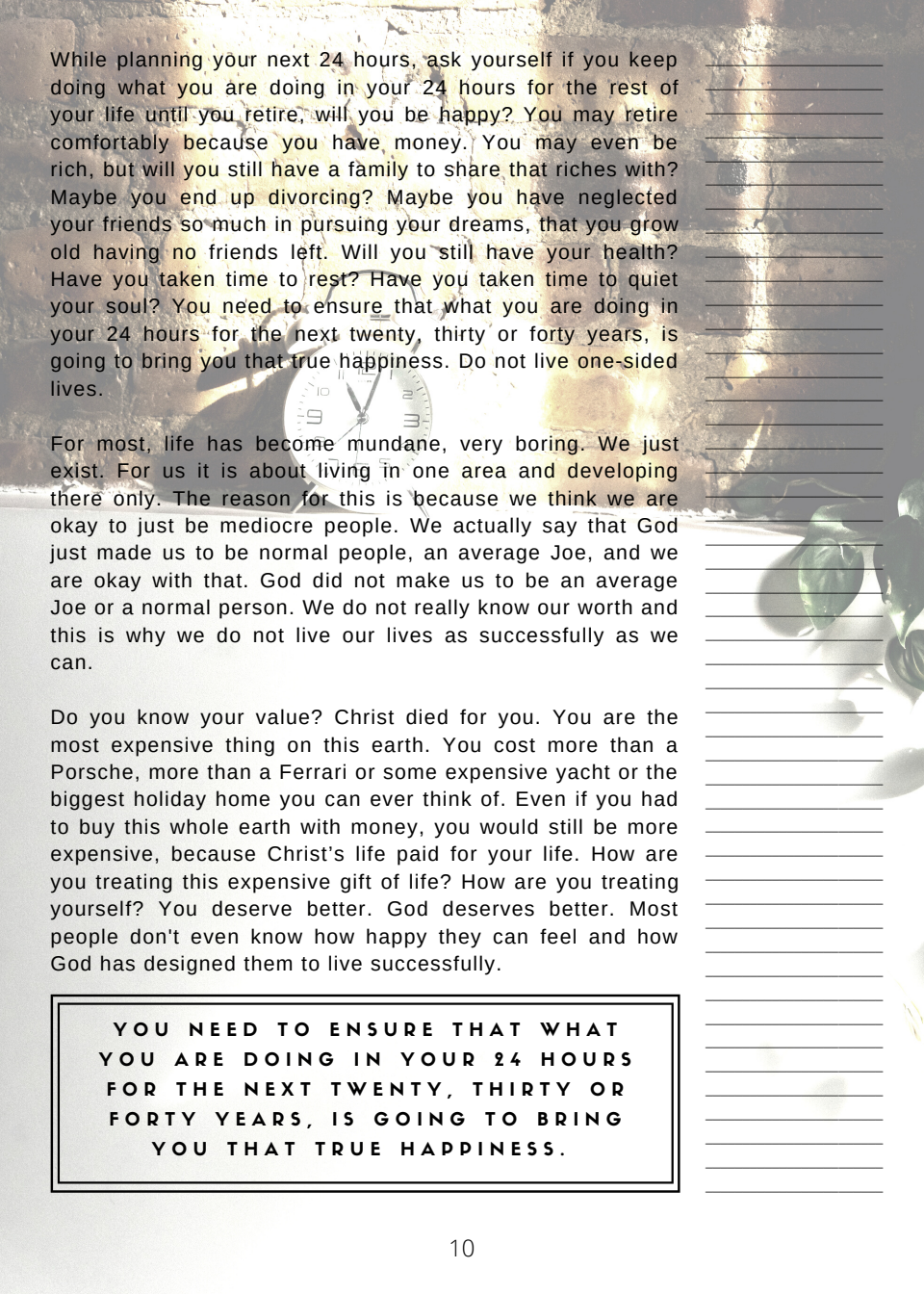
I once saw a young guy who only exercised his arms. He had huge biceps and triceps, massive arms, but the rest of his body looked like a little child. I wanted to say well done to him because he was in the gym and well done that he was exercising, but he was doing it very unequally. He should be proud of what he has done, but he should have slowly started incorporating the other exercises in the gym, the ones that he didn't like, the ones that were uncomfortable.

That is exactly how life is. We are not working on the things that are uncomfortable and we are becoming unbalanced. We should work on all areas of life. God expects us to be holistic Christians, Christians who are not transformed in one area of life only. Maybe we are spiritual giants, but our family life is busy diminishing.

Don't make the mistake many people make. They think all other aspects of life will automatically fall into place just because they are good in one area. You might have said something like: "Once I get that job and have the money and that car and that house, then I will have a happy marriage." No, you won't!

Just because you have a good income does not mean your marriage is going to be happy. You will have a good income, but you will have to work on your marriage in order to have a happy marriage as well. Your work won't give you that. Do not listen to those talks that say you've got to give it all to work on that one dream. What about your family? Is part of your schedule today something for your family? Is part of your schedule today about your happiness, about your friends? Have you incorporated something into your day to day schedule that speaks to your health? You need to live life holistically.

**WE ARE NOT WORKING ON THE
THINGS THAT ARE UNCOMFORTABLE
AND WE ARE BECOMING
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ALL AREAS OF LIFE.**



While planning your next 24 hours, ask yourself if you keep doing what you are doing in your 24 hours for the rest of your life until you retire, will you be happy? You may retire comfortably because you have money. You may even be rich, but will you still have a family to share that riches with? Maybe you end up divorcing? Maybe you have neglected your friends so much in pursuing your dreams, that you grow old having no friends left. Will you still have your health? Have you taken time to rest? Have you taken time to quiet your soul? You need to ensure that what you are doing in your 24 hours for the next twenty, thirty or forty years, is going to bring you that true happiness. Do not live one-sided lives.

For most, life has become mundane, very boring. We just exist. For us it is about living in one area and developing there only. The reason for this is because we think we are okay to just be mediocre people. We actually say that God just made us to be normal people, an average Joe, and we are okay with that. God did not make us to be an average Joe or a normal person. We do not really know our worth and this is why we do not live our lives as successfully as we can.

Do you know your value? Christ died for you. You are the most expensive thing on this earth. You cost more than a Porsche, more than a Ferrari or some expensive yacht or the biggest holiday home you can ever think of. Even if you had to buy this whole earth with money, you would still be more expensive, because Christ's life paid for your life. How are you treating this expensive gift of life? How are you treating yourself? You deserve better. God deserves better. Most people don't even know how happy they can feel and how God has designed them to live successfully.

YOU NEED TO ENSURE THAT WHAT YOU ARE DOING IN YOUR 24 HOURS FOR THE NEXT TWENTY, THIRTY OR FORTY YEARS, IS GOING TO BRING YOU THAT TRUE HAPPINESS.

The reason why you don't end up living life successfully is because you have this thing of 'classism' in your heads. I don't even know if I could call it that. I don't know what term I could use to describe this. Most people think that the high-level people in society are cut from a different cloth. They think those people are of a different kind of breed and therefore they themselves cannot get to where those other amazing people are in life and what they have in life. That is a lie. We are all cut from the same cloth. We are all God's children, created in His image. The one is not a better design than the other.

Peter is a CEO of a fortune 500 company, Susan is this amazing mother and wife and the kid is a genius. We look at these people and we say there is something different about them, it must be a better design than ours. Maybe we were the factory rejects when God made us. This is a lie! Please don't buy into these lies.

Maybe we think it is because Peter was created a human 7S, while we are just a 3.0. Or God made Susan an iPhone while we are only an Alcatel. Be careful of your thoughts regarding who you are and what your capabilities are. These thoughts will sabotage you from living your day, your next 24-hours, successfully. We are all 7S's. We are all iPhones. We are not mediocre in comparison to others. We all have exactly the same opportunities and capabilities within us.

You may say that it is not true, that you don't have the same opportunities because that guy has money. It is not about the money. It is not about the situation. It is about God giving you strength, about Him giving you muscles and a very capable brain.

**WE ARE ALL GOD'S CHILDREN,
CREATED IN HIS IMAGE. THE ONE
IS NOT A BETTER DESIGN THAN
THE OTHER.**

When you put them to use, even if it takes longer than others, you will have the life God designed you to have. The brain doesn't care whether you are successful or whether you live life to your full potential, the brain just wants to keep you alive and wants to keep your heart beating. Your brain will try and trick you because it only wants you to survive. Your brain will trick you into only surviving and not thriving. Your brain can become your own worst enemy. Be careful of what you are thinking and what you are believing in your mind regarding yourself.

There was this man once who told me that I could never become a pastoral counselor, because it wasn't my talent. He said I was not born with it and God did not give me that talent and I (putting it in my own words) could not upgrade or improve to a different level which God didn't make me. This was a very disgusting thing that was said to me. It took hard work not to allow those words to affect me. The way I overcame this was by constantly looking at Jesus and His Word and His promises towards me.

I told myself I am not going to believe that person telling me I am a 3.0 while he is a 7S. I told myself God reassures us that He doesn't call the equipped, He equips the called. God says when He gives us one talent, we must go and improve that talent to become five or six talents. He will then, as the Master, say to us: "Well done, My good and faithful servant. I have put you in charge of little but now I will put you in charge of much because you have been faithful."

You are called to develop, to grow. You have the potential and the ability inside you. You are called by God to love today and to use today to the best of your ability.

**GOD HAS GIVEN YOU STRENGTH, YOU
MUSCLES AND A VERY CAPABLE
BRAIN. WHEN YOU PUT THEM TO USE,
EVEN IF IT TAKES LONGER THAN
OTHERS, YOU WILL HAVE THE LIFE
GOD DESIGNED YOU TO HAVE.**

What lies has your brain been listening to? Lies that other people are made better than you?

Be careful of saying that you will make it tomorrow or you will do it 5 minutes from now or you are not good enough. Some are waiting for heaven to live life. They say: "I can't live life here on earth because there is just too much nonsense going on. With all the tragedies and me not being the person I am supposed to be, I will rather wait." Don't wait for heaven. If you are waiting for heaven to be happy, if you are waiting for heaven to live life successfully, today is going to be very miserable. Be warned, transformation and growth are not going to stop here on earth. There will still be things for you to learn in heaven. You are still going to have dreams and aspirations to achieve.

So start living that growth process today. Plan your 24 hours to do the small tasks faithfully and see your life transform. Life is not about that one success, it is about the sum of all the small tasks you've done faithfully throughout the various aspects of life. This is the call on you today. Strive today to live the life of Christ, to be like Him. As He lived His life in a balanced way, live that life today. Seek to know the ways of the Lord.

Let me share a few verses from the Bible that speak about how people lived their everyday lives.

- Numbers 7:11 speaks of how people would come to present their gifts before the altar of God every day.
- Nehemiah 11:23: "Each day the different clans of Israel take turns in leading the temple music as they sang praises to God."
- Psalms 19: 1-2: "... the sky reveals God's glory and actions each day."

**YOU ARE CALLED BY GOD TO
LOVE TODAY AND TO USE TODAY
TO THE BEST OF YOUR ABILITY.**

- Psalms 119:164: "... seven times each day I will thank God for His righteous judgements."
- Jeremiah 52:34: "Each day lived, given a man his regular allowance for his needs."
- Ezekiel 43:25: "Each day the temple had sacrifices of goats and bulls and rams without defect." Meaning that we too can make sacrifices each day.
- Matthew 6:34: "Each day has enough of its own troubles."
- Therefore each day: "we should repent and we should also forgive those who repented" (Luke 17:4).
- Revelation 4: 8 says when we get to heaven we will never stop singing: "Holy, holy, holy" before God's throne.
- 1 Samuel 18:10 says David played his harp each day.
- Chronicles 16:23 says each day people sang and proclaimed the good news that God has saved them.
- Nehemiah 4:21 talks about Israel and how they worked each day rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem, while some others stood guard. We have different tasks that lie ahead of us today. It is not the same for each person. Some build, some stand guard nearby.
- Nehemiah 8:18 says that every day during the festival they were feasting and they repeated God's law.
- The Bible tells us that every single day Mordecai went and checked on Esther while she was in the court of the king. So we need to care for others everyday (Esther 2:11).
- Psalms 88:8 says "... each day I lift my hands up in prayer."
- Jeremiah 21:11 says "... justice should be done every day."
- Jesus taught in the temple every day, Matthew 26:55.
- Acts 16:5 says that the church grew stronger in faith every day.

**LIFE IS NOT ABOUT THAT ONE
SUCCESS, IT IS ABOUT THE SUM OF
ALL THE SMALL TASKS YOU'VE DONE
FAITHFULLY THROUGHOUT THE
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- Acts 17:11 tells why their faith grew stronger: "... they studied the Scriptures to see that there was truth in them every single day."
- Hebrews 3:13 says that there is help for us today and that we should help others to deal with the tragedies of sin and the deceitfulness of sin.

It is clear from the Bible that many people had things which filled their days and they were faithfully going about their tasks each day. What will your day be filled with today and each day into the future?



**WE HAVE DIFFERENT TASKS THAT
LIE AHEAD OF US TODAY. IT IS
NOT THE SAME FOR EACH PERSON.
SOME BUILD, SOME STAND GUARD
NEARBY.**

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