



YOUTH MINISTRY DEVOTIONAL SERIES

This summer is going to look a lot different from most summers that you can remember. Instead of focusing on things you may be missing, make the most of this summer! Enjoy the disruption... try something new, but don't be distracted.

This guide is designed to help you make the most of your summer by spending some time each week, focusing on growing in your relationship with God.

Week 1 * Heart Check

Week 2 * Make a Plan

Week 3 * Pay Attention

Week 4 * Sleeping In

Week 5 * Expect Temptation

Week 6 * Just Do It

Week 7 * Friend Goals

Week 8 * The Year Ahead



WEEK 1 - HEART CHECK

“Has your relationship with God changed the way you live your life?”

- Francis Chan

In life, we set out with big goals but sometimes get complacent with where we are. We just go with the current of wherever life takes us. Every now and then we may be motivated to do something in the moment, however as quickly as we started, we get distracted, and it leaves us with no lasting change on how we live our lives.

This summer, I challenge you to take the next step in your faith journey. STOP whatever you're doing and be honest with God and with yourself. Wherever you are in your walk with God, a little self-examination is always helpful to move you forward.

Read James 1:22-25.

1. Heart check: These verses challenge us to not just listen to or read God's Word and then forget it. Is this something you struggle with? Why or why not?
2. Pray and ask the Lord that as you read and hear God's Word this summer, it would truly change you.

Read 2 Corinthians 5:16-17.

1. Heart check: We need to remind ourselves daily of what Jesus did for us in our lives and how it should affect our view of Him. How often do you remember what God has done for you in your life? How does knowing what Jesus has done change the way you live?
2. Take a moment and praise God for the work He has done. We love Him because He first loved us! (1 John 4:19)

As Christ followers, God is so much more than a thought. He is the One who created us, loves us, and holds all things together. We no longer regard God as the world does, but as a loving Savior.

1. Heart check: Is this true of you? Does your life reflect that you want God?
2. Pray and ask the Lord for an attitude of obedience and commitment throughout this summer. Commit to making the most of this summer to glorify God with your life!



DON'T WASTE YOUR SUMMER - WEEK 1

Challenge for the Week: Read Colossians 2:6-15. After you read it, underline the characteristics or actions of God you observe from this passage. Then, go back and circle any of the characteristics or actions that we are called to do in this passage.

Verses for the Week: Take time each day this week to read over these passages. Journal them in the space below. What are the principles and lessons found in these verses? If you had to sum up those lessons in one sentence, what would it be?

Day 1 - Psalm 4:4

Day 2 - Jeremiah 17:9-10

Day 3 - Psalm 19:14

Day 4 - Colossians 3:1-2

Day 5 - Proverbs 15:28

Day 6 - 2 Corinthians 13:5



WEEK 2 - MAKE A PLAN

“I thought when I became a Christian I had nothing to do but lay my oars in the bottom of the boat and float along. But I have soon found that I would have to go against the current.” - D.L. Moody

If we aren't careful, a lot of us will spend our summertime just living for that day. We search for anything to fix our boredom. What are some things that you easily spend too much time on?

Perhaps it is too much Netflix, too much Tik Tok, too much time alone, too much time on your phone, or too much time on your Xbox or Playstation. You find temporary things to do this summer that may bring relief to your boredom—fleeting moments of trying to find pleasure or rest in things and people, that at the end of the summer may lead to regret or the question, “What did I even do this summer?!”

We suddenly find ourselves with all this time on our hands! If we aren't careful, different things can grab our attention instead of the Lord, and our relationship with God isn't as much of a priority as it should be. Now, the question remains: what are you going to do with that time?

Read Proverbs 4:18-27.

1. What does the author tell us to pay attention to and why?
2. Do you have a hard time doing these things in the summer? Why or why not?
3. How could you do a better job at being attentive to the author's words and listening?
4. What do you think keeping “your heart with all vigilance” means? What does that look like for you?
5. Making plans is wise. Without it, we could easily become distracted by many temptations and stumble. What are your plans this summer? Specifically, what are your plans to make sure your relationship with God doesn't drift?



DON'T WASTE YOUR SUMMER - WEEK 2

Challenge for the Week: Get a calendar or write out all the days and weeks that are left in the summer. Write down plans and goals you want to accomplish each week this summer. This will help to have something to aim for.

Verses for the Week: Take time each day this week to read over these passages. Journal them in the space below. What are the principles and lessons found in these verses? If you had to sum up those lessons in one sentence, what would it be?

Day 1 - Proverbs 3:5-8

Day 2 - Proverbs 14:15-16

Day 3 - Proverbs 15:22

Day 4 - Proverbs 16:13

Day 5 - Proverbs 19:21

Day 6 - Psalm 143:8



WEEK 3 - Day ATTENTION

“When something becomes so important to you that it drives your behavior and commands your emotions, you are worshipping it.” - J.D. Greear

Summertime or not, there are always things trying to grab your attention. One of the most attention-grabbing things is our devices: our phones, tablets, gaming devices, computers, etc. We see them everywhere. What are the top three things in your life that “call” for your attention? Do they bring you closer or further from God?

Electronics are such an easy attention-grabber. Non-electronic things grab our attention, too. Things like sports, friends, and even food can capture our eyes for a good while. All of these in moderation can be fun and awesome, but we are called to so much more than to live for temporary things.

Jesus offers us so much more than just the here and now. He offers us an eternal inheritance (Hebrews 9:15) by making us free when he died for our sins and took the punishment we deserve! We were made to live for so much more. Pastor John Piper reminds us, “A mind fed daily on TV diminishes. Your mind was made to know and love God.”

Read Proverbs 9:13-18

1. This passage says that foolish things scream for our attention and try to distract us. Are the people, places, or things in your life that are calling for your attention considered folly or wise?

Read Luke 12:13-21

1. What do you think the point of this passage is? How does it relate to how we should spend our time?

Read Hebrews 12:1-2

1. What clings to us? How does that affect our walk with God?
2. What should be our focus according to this verse and why?



DON'T WASTE YOUR SUMMER - WEEK 3

Challenge for the Week: Read Psalm 119:37. Pray and ask God to show you an area in your life that is a time-waster. Make a choice to not do that thing this week. Choose to spend time pursuing something that stirs your heart for Jesus.

Verses for the Week: Take time each day this week to read over these passages. Journal them in the space below. What are the principles and lessons found in these verses? If you had to sum up those lessons in one sentence, what would it be?

Day 1 - Proverbs 29:25

Day 2 - 1 Corinthians 6:12

Day 3 - Galatians 4:9

Day 4 - Matthew 6:19-20

Day 5 - 1 John 2:15-17

Day 6 - Philippians 4:8



WEEK 4 - SLEEPING IN

“Laziness means more work in the long run.” - C.S. Lewis

Summer is a great time to get refreshed from the school year. I get it. You have to wake up super early during the school year, so taking advantage of sleeping in until you have to get up is often a main goal in the summer. Sleeping in does not necessarily make you lazy or a “sluggard,” but it can lead to it if we are not careful. Sluggishness is a heart issue before it shows up as something you do.

Rest is good. Even God rested on the seventh day of creation. Sleeping is not bad, but it becomes sluggishness if we are not responsible with it. The dictionary defines sluggard as “a habitually lazy person.” The root word in sluggard is the word “slug.” What are the characteristics of a slug?

So we have to ask ourselves: am I neglecting anything else that may be important in order to sleep? Time with God, church, family, or friends? Being a sluggard has to do more than just sleeping for a long time. It has more to with a mindset we have about life and how we use the time we are given. Let’s see what God’s Word says about being a sluggard.

Read Proverbs 6:6-11

1. From these verses, what are the lessons we can learn from the ant?
2. What are some things you could be “preparing” or working toward this summer, instead of just “resting” the summer away?

Read Proverbs 20:4

1. What is the main lesson from this verse?

Read Proverbs 26:13-14

1. Why is the sluggard talking about there being a lion in the road?
2. What are some excuses that you make in your own life, to keep yourself from getting out of bed and getting to work?



DON'T WASTE YOUR SUMMER - WEEK 4

Challenge for the Week: Wake up 30 minutes earlier than you need to and use that time in a wise way to serve others, read, pray, or spend time with God.

Verses for the Week: Take time each day this week to read over these passages. Journal them in the space below. What are the principles and lessons found in these verses? If you had to sum up those lessons in one sentence, what would it be?

Day 1 - Proverbs 10:4-5

Day 2 - Proverbs 15:9

Day 3 - Proverbs 24:30-34

Day 4 - Proverbs 26:15-16

Day 5 - 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12

Day 6 - Hebrews 6:11-12



WEEK 5 - EXPECT TEMPTATION

“The flesh inclines us more to believe a temptation than a promise.”

- Thomas Watson

1 Peter 5:8 says, “Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.” Isn't it funny that when you think of someone or something “prowling,” you may think of it as someone being sneaky and quietly coming upon you? However, it says that Satan is like a roaring lion. We often think that Satan slowly deceives us until all of a sudden we are sinning with no clue how we got there. Granted, he does that, too, but he is often like a roaring lion.

Sometimes the things we are tempted by are calling to us so loudly that it is all we can hear. The desire is so obvious, and it is too easy to give in. It is so appealing that we forget everything else but fulfilling or giving in to that sin.

We start minimizing the sin in our mind. We believe that it would not be a big deal or give no thought to it at all. We forget where the consequences of sin will leave us and that sin only promises one thing: death. We forget the promises of God that gives us hope. We forget the commands of God that He has given us for our joy. God knows how forgetful we are and reminds us often to be on guard for temptation .

Read 1 Peter 5:8-9

1. From these verses, what lessons can we learn about temptation?
2. What are some temptations that are common for you and your friends?
3. Are there temptations that are more difficult for you in the summertime? What are they?
4. What are ways to stand firm against temptation?

Read Ephesians 6:10-20

1. What does this passage tell us about the armor of God?
2. What happens when we pursue these things?
3. What is the result from putting on the armor of God?



DON'T WASTE YOUR SUMMER - WEEK 5

Challenge for the Week: This week, memorize one of the Scriptures from this week's lesson.

Verses for the Week: Take time each day this week to read over these passages. Journal them in the space below. What are the principles and lessons found in these verses? If you had to sum up those lessons in one sentence, what would it be?

Day 1 - Proverbs 23:17-18

Day 2 - 1 Peter 2:9-11

Day 3 - Ephesians 5:14-17

Day 4 - James 4:7

Day 5 - Ephesians 6:11

Day 6 - 1 John 5:21



WEEK 6 - JUST DO IT

“Do all the good you can. By all the means you can. In all the ways you can. In all the places you can. At all the times you can. To all the people you can. As long as ever you can.” - John Wesley

Ever have someone tell you, “Don’t put off tomorrow what you can do today?” Ever put it off anyway? Us procrastinators out there are silently laughing to ourselves, because we have a good system going—wait until the last minute to start homework and “work better” under pressure.

However, the most important question is this: Are you spending time with God today? Or are you waiting until tomorrow or some future date to “get right” with God?

A lot of us live our life with the “I-will-later” mentality. That is, until we have a sober moment of reality and realize that we are not promised tomorrow. Summer is one of those seasons of life that can go under the radar and our procrastination habits can come out in full force.

Read Proverbs 21:5

1. What is the main point of this passage?
2. Some of us are bigger procrastinators than others, but we all do it to some level. What are some things you procrastinate on?
3. What excuses do you give yourself to avoid praying, reading God’s Word, and spending time with Him?

Another area we procrastinate in is serving others. We are often so busy building and orchestrating our own lives that focusing on others is not on our radar. Read Philippians 2:3-4

1. What is this passage telling us to consider?
2. We all want to help others, but acting on it can be a challenge. What are some things that keep you from helping others?

Read Proverbs 3:27-28

1. What is this passage telling us about serving? Is it easy to do? Why or why not?



DON'T WASTE YOUR SUMMER - WEEK 6

Challenge for the Week: This week, pick an area where you can serve (in your neighborhood, with your family, missionaries, etc.) and serve there this week in some capacity. Ask if the Lord is asking to give your time, money, or possessions.

Verses for the Week: Take time each day this week to read over these passages. Journal them in the space below. What are the principles and lessons found in these verses? If you had to sum up those lessons in one sentence, what would it be?

Day 1 - James 4:13-17

Day 2 - Proverbs 21:5

Day 3 - Proverbs 21:13

Day 4 - Luke 12:33-34

Day 5 - Matthew 5:42

Day 6 - 1 John 3:18



WEEK 7 - FRIEND GOALS

“What draws people to be friends is that they see the same truth. They share it.” - C.S. Lewis

Summer is a time to hang out with friends. Hopefully this summer we will get to hang out together in person at some point. Sometimes we make new friends; sometimes we lose some old ones. Either way, who we surround ourselves with has an impact on us in some way.

So, how do you choose your friends? Do you have common interests? Do they just happen to share the same life circumstances as you? Your friends may look very different from you—and that's OK—but they should have similar values to help keep your eyes on Christ. You can be silly and have fun with friends, but friends should also have your back when times are tough and lead you toward Christ and not away from Him.

Does this mean you should only hang out with Christians? No! But your closest friends and influences should encourage you in your faith, and not lead you away from Jesus.

1. Who is the person you go to first to ask for advice?
2. Who is the person you laugh with the most?
3. Who is the person who has seen you cry the most?
4. Who is the person who knows your secrets the most? Do you trust them?
5. Do your closest friends influence your walk with God in a positive way? How so?

Friendships have the power to encourage us, but they can also tear us down. Read the following passages and then share the principles or lessons you learn in less than one sentence and in your own words:

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 _____

Proverbs 27:17 _____

Proverbs 27:5-6 _____

Colossians 3:12-17 _____

It's easy to start comparing these verses and asking yourself if your friends have these qualities, but take a moment and ask yourself, do *you* have these qualities? Are you a good friend to others?



DON'T WASTE YOUR SUMMER - WEEK 7

Challenge for the Week: Read and meditate on Hebrews 10:23-25. Set up a time to meet with another brother or sister in Christ. Get together to pray or read God's Word. Share what God is doing or teaching you. There is a lot we can learn from each other due to the fact that we have fellowship with one another, because Jesus has cleansed us from our sins (1 John 1:7).

Verses for the Week: Take time each day this week to read over these passages. Journal them in the space below. What are the principles and lessons found in these verses? If you had to sum up those lessons in one sentence, what would it be?

Day 1 - Proverbs 13:20

Day 2 - Proverbs 18:24

Day 3 - Proverbs 22:24-25

Day 4 - Galatians 11:10

Day 5 - 1 Peter 4:8

Day 6 - John 13:34-35



WEEK 8 - THE YEAR AHEAD

“When everything considered valuable in life is seen to be nothing in comparison to the glory of Christ, you learn rather well that Christ alone is worth living for.” —Matt Chandler

As we get to the end of summer, routines are going to change again and you'll be back to spending more of your day in a classroom.

Be intentional with the upcoming weeks and months, and make plans for the upcoming year. Set some goals. Figure out what the new attention-grabbers might be in this new season. Expect temptation. Remember to be wise in your choice of friends. It is equally important that you commit your school year to the Lord daily so as to not waste the opportunities given to you.

Pray for your upcoming school year, but also remember to follow God in the little things daily. Francis Chan encourages us: “God cares more about our response to His Spirit’s leading today, in this moment, than about what we intend to do next year. In fact, the decisions we make next year will be profoundly affected by the degree to which we submit to the Spirit right now in today’s decisions. It is easy to use the phrase “God’s will for my life” as an excuse for inaction or even disobedience. It’s much less demanding to think about God’s will for your future than it is to ask Him what He wants you to do in the next ten minutes. It’s safer to commit to following someday instead of this day.”

As school approaches, let us do some heart checks and remind ourselves how God commands us to live in obedience.

Read 2 Timothy 2:22

1. What does this verse call us to pursue?
2. As you think about the activities you pursue during the school year, what would it look like to pursue what this verse calls you to?

Read Proverbs 16:3

1. Pray for your teachers, your classes, the people you surround yourself with, etc.

Read Proverbs 2:6-8

1. According to these verses, what is given, and who gives it to us?

Read 1 Peter 5:7. As you go forward in the new year, remember that standing firm is not relying on strength in yourself. You will quickly grow tired or proud if you try to depend on your own strength. That is a recipe for an early burnout. True strength is admitting where you are weak and realizing that God is strong .



DON'T WASTE YOUR SUMMER - WEEK 8

Challenge for the Week: Read Romans 12:9-21. Which of these areas do you need work on? Write down some spiritual goals for the next school year. Write an encouraging letter to yourself with goals you set for yourself in the year ahead. Set it aside to be opened later this fall to see how you are doing in accomplishing your goals.

Verses for the Week: Take time each day this week to read over these passages. Journal them in the space below. What are the principles and lessons found in these verses? If you had to sum up those lessons in one sentence, what would it be?

Day 1 - Proverbs 3:5-6

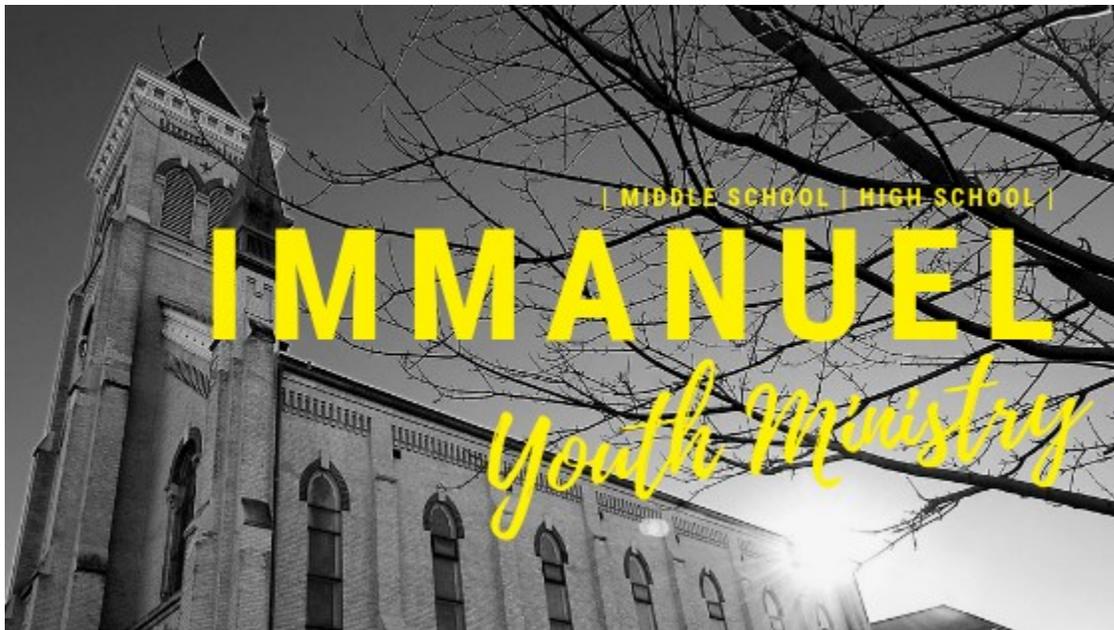
Day 2 - Proverbs 17:24

Day 3 - Proverbs 8:33-35

Day 4 - Matthew 5:6

Day 5 - Psalm 119:2

Day 6 - 1 Corinthians 15:58



Be sure to check out more resources for Middle School and High School Youth on our website:

<https://immanuel-ed.org/youth-ministry>

Materials are updated weekly!