

# appnotes

## DAY

### 1

#### READ JOHN 2:23-25

Are you cool? How do you know? How long will you be cool? The longer you live, the more you realize that what is trendy is temporary. Chasing such a fickle target is a foolish pursuit. We never grow out of the pressure of wanting to fit in and be accepted. It influences what we wear and what we watch. It even drives what we live and what we drive. Jesus knew that living for the approval of others was a waste of time. Instead, He did what His Father had called Him to do and let people respond as they would. Some believed. Others were skeptical. But Jesus kept going where God was leading. The next time you want to cave in to be cool, remember that it is better to follow Jesus than the crowd.

## DAY

### 2

#### READ LUKE 23:1-11

A king or president deserves respect and is often treated to the very best of everything. When Pilate confronted Jesus and asked Him if He was the King of the Jews, Jesus did not respond by demanding the respect due to Him. Jesus submitted to God's plan for His life, even though it was painful at that moment; He knew His comfort was not as important as God's eternal plan. Even when our momentary comfort is at stake, we can trust that God's eternal plan is perfect. We can be disciplined in our finances so we can be generous towards those in need. We can volunteer locally or globally to serve others. We can be intentional with the time we have with our kids, knowing that the time spent now will reflect in eternity. With that in mind, what is the Next Step you can take to live for God?

## DAY

### 3

#### READ MATTHEW 6:1-18

Clean the kitchen; check. Get the oil changed in the car; check. Do the weekly shopping; check! It's satisfying to check things off the list, isn't it? Sometimes, though, we can fall into the trap of checking off items on a spiritual list: Bible reading, check; church, check; giving, volunteering, praying; check! In this passage, Jesus is not telling us NOT to do these things, but He's warning us to check our motives. Why do I attend church, give, and serve? Am I doing it so others will see me and say, "What a good person"? Or am I more concerned with what God thinks; the God who created me and deserves all of my worship? God's opinion is the only one that matters, and He sees into our hearts and already knows the truth about us. Let's live authentic lives so others see the truth, too!

## DAY READ MATTHEW 4:1-11

4

You live on a stage. In today's world, perhaps more than at any other time in history, we live our lives before an audience. We perform on social media platforms with tweets, Instagram photos, and Facebook posts. We check back to see how many likes, shares, and comments we've received. We feel the pressure to perform when we compare our parenting skills at play dates. We feel the pressure when the students at the café table challenge our beliefs. What other people have to say about us matters to us! But Jesus was not so easily persuaded. He knew who He was (the Son of God) and why He was here (to save a lost world). So when He was tempted to trade in God's approval for worldly success He chose not to—He lived His life for an Audience of One. He lived to please His Father in heaven, and no one else. Are you living for an Audience of One?

## DAY READ 1 THESSALONIANS 2:4-8

5

When was the last time your boss told you that you're doing a good job? When was the last time you told your kids how proud you are of them? No matter how old we are, we all like to be told we're doing a good job, to be praised and complimented. That is a good thing; it can motivate us to do even better. Sometimes, though, we let that approval become our sole motivation. We can do loving things because we love the praise. In Paul's letter to the Thessalonians, he reminds them that he and his team didn't come to please people. They didn't want the Thessalonians, or anyone else, to praise their speaking ability, and they weren't in it for the money; they only wanted to please God. What motivates you?

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