

A close-up, warm-toned photograph of a person reading a book. The person's face is partially visible, with their eyes on the pages. A white mug filled with dark coffee sits on a surface in the foreground. The background is softly blurred, showing what appears to be a window with some light spots.

# STEP ONE

Devotions for people  
who don't do devotions.

Day Eight

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# DAY EIGHT

## Behaving

### *Mark 15-16*

Last day of the devotional and our last “b” word - behave.

By now you know what you are in for and are not expecting me to list a bunch of ethical standards you need to bend your behavior too. You are right. I won't give a list of do's and don'ts for alcohol consumption, movie ratings, acceptable language, or political party to vote for. There is not a standardized code for Christians to check the boxes on.

*But that doesn't mean you aren't supposed to behave a specific way.*

**You are.**

You will need to change how you behave if you are going to become like Jesus. This might be especially hard if you are undisciplined. You see, you are wanting to become a disciple of Jesus and you can't be a disciple of Jesus without discipline. This truth helps us see the kind of change in our behavior we need to be aiming for. We aren't trying to behave better. We are training to behave better.

I'll elaborate. You are not trying to be nicer, less angry, more generous, more encouraging, etc. Those things will happen for you but not because you are “trying”. They happen because you are “training”. This difference between “training” and “trying” is critical to understand as you work to become like Jesus. It will save you from a ton of frustration and put you on the right path.

Imagine the frustration as you try to be kinder now that you are following Jesus. You will be frustrated because trying to do something before you have trained to have the strength to do it is a recipe for failure. Go try to do fifty push-ups. No, I mean like seriously try - use every ounce of your will power. Be really sincere. Give it your all. Not going to happen, unless you have trained.

**The changes to your behavior you need to make as you follow Jesus are of the training type and not the trying type.**

Don't try to be less anxious. Instead, train yourself to get up a half-hour earlier a day and have devotions and anxiety will cease. Don't try to be less tempted. Instead, train yourself to memorize a verse from the bible and say it to yourself every hour and

temptation loses its grip. Don't try to be more confident. Instead, train yourself to listen to the affirming words of Jesus about how valuable you are and confidence will flow. Do you see how that works?

**The biggest behavior change you need to make is to your schedule.**

Following Jesus should change your schedule to include some intentional “training” time. This devotional has already taught you a training program for about half an hour a day. Keep this going. Although this is technically the last day of this devotional, by now you are ready to continue on your own.

You are done Mark today. Move on to Acts. Use this format going forward. Admiration. Confession. Prayer. Journal your thoughts daily. Read a chapter or two of Acts. Do it daily, daily, daily. Training yourself for physical fitness has some value but training yourself for spiritual fitness has immense value.

Thanks for reading these devotionals. It has been my privilege to try to get you started on something so life-changing.

Now I am pushing you out of the nest.  
**You can do it.**

# Journal:

1. Admiration
2. Confession
3. Prayers for Family and Friends
4. Write out a commitment pledge to Jesus stating your intention to make time with him a daily priority

# Calibrating prayer:

*Jesus, I submit myself to your training program. In the same way you got up early to pray and meditate on Scripture - so will I. I trust that as I train to be like you, the frustrating trying ceases and I will become mature and complete. Let's go!*