



August 9, 2026

Joining in God's Mission of Renewing Love

Day 1: You Are Sent

Reading: Matthew 28:18-20

Devotional: Jesus does not whisper the Great Commission as a suggestion. He declares it with the full weight of all authority in heaven and on earth. Before He says "go," He establishes who He is. The commission flows from His authority, not your confidence. You may feel ordinary, unprepared, or unqualified, but the One sending you lacks nothing. Your calling is not dependent on your personality or giftedness. It rests entirely on Christ's authority and His promise to go with you. You are not sent alone. You are sent with the King.

Reflection: In what area of your life have you been waiting to feel ready before stepping into your mission?

Practical Application: Begin each morning this week by saying aloud, "God, I am yours. Use me today." Write down one person in your life you sense God is calling you to pursue intentionally.

Day 2: Controlled by Love

Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:14-15

Devotional: Paul identifies the single driving force behind everything he does: the love of Christ. Not ambition. Not obligation. Not guilt. Love. He understood that Christ died for all, and that changes everything about how we live. When the love of Christ truly takes hold of a person, it displaces the lesser things that once controlled them -- anxiety, approval-seeking, resentment, and fear. You cannot manufacture this love on your own. But you can ask God to deepen your understanding of what Christ has done for you, and let that understanding become the fuel for how you live toward others.

Reflection: Honestly examine what is currently controlling your decisions. What do you sacrifice for, protect at all costs, or rearrange your schedule around?

Practical Application: Spend time meditating on what it cost Jesus to reconcile you to God. Let that reality sit with you before you move on with your day. Ask the Holy Spirit to replace whatever is controlling you with a deeper awareness of Christ's love.

Day 3: A Ministry Entrusted to You

Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:17-19

Devotional: Salvation is not simply a rescue from something. It is a sending into something. Paul makes clear that God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, has entrusted us with the ministry of reconciliation. This is not reserved for pastors or missionaries. It belongs to every person who has been made new in Christ. The word "entrusted" carries real weight. God has placed something valuable in your hands. He is making His appeal to the world through ordinary people like you. Your story, your words, your presence -- these are instruments in God's hands for reaching those still far from Him.

Reflection: Do you think of yourself as someone who has been entrusted with a ministry? What would change in your daily life if you truly believed that?

Practical Application: Write down two or three people in your life who are far from God. Commit to praying for them by name every day this week. Ask God to open a natural door for a meaningful conversation with at least one of them.

Day 4: Ambassadors, Not Audiences

Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:20-21

Devotional: An ambassador does not represent themselves. They carry the message and the character of the one who sent them. Paul's use of this word is deliberate and weighty. You are not a spectator of God's mission. You are a participant in it. The church is not a place you attend to consume. It is a community that equips you to go and contribute. The gospel you carry is not your own invention. It is the announcement that God, in Christ, has made a way for every person to be reconciled to Him. That message deserves to be carried with urgency, humility, and love.

Reflection: In what areas of your life have you been functioning more as an audience member than as an ambassador?

Practical Application: Identify one specific sphere of your life -- your workplace, neighborhood, family, or school -- and ask God to show you one concrete way to represent Him there this week. Follow through on it before the week ends.

Day 5: Living Like It Is True

Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:11, 16; Matthew 28:20

Devotional: The way we live either reinforces or contradicts the message we carry. Paul says that because we know the fear of the Lord, we persuade others. He also says we no longer regard anyone from a merely human point of view. That means every person you encounter -- the difficult coworker, the drifting friend, the frustrating neighbor -- is an image bearer in need of grace. Jesus closes the Great Commission with a promise: He is with you always. Not sometimes. Always. That promise is not meant to comfort you into passivity. It is meant to embolden you into action. Go, because He goes with you.

Reflection: Are there people in your life you have been viewing according to the flesh rather than as someone God deeply loves and is pursuing?

Practical Application: Choose one relationship that feels difficult or distant. Commit to approaching that person this week with intentional grace and genuine interest. Pray before the interaction and trust that God is making His appeal through you, even in the ordinary moments.

Discussion Questions:

The concept of reconciliation runs throughout both Matthew 28 and 2 Corinthians 5 — how does understanding that God reconciled you to himself first change the way you approach sharing that message with others?

The sermon warns that a person can attend church every week, know religious language, and still never be truly reconciled to God — what does genuine reconciliation look like in your own life, and how would you know the difference?

Pastor Greg points out that God makes his appeal through ordinary people in ordinary conversations — how does it change your sense of responsibility when you consider that a conversation with a friend or coworker may be God's appeal working through you?

The sermon closes by asking whether the way we live actually reflects the message we claim to believe — in what specific ways does your daily **life** either support or undercut the message of grace, forgiveness, and reconciliation that you say is true?