

5-Day Bible Reading Plan and Devotional Guide

Based on "New Bodies, Familiar Faces: The Promise of Heaven"

Day 1: Rest for the Weary Soul

Reading: Matthew 11:28-30

Devotional: Jesus does not merely offer a solution to exhaustion — he offers himself.

The sermon reminded us that numbing out to distractions may quiet the noise

temporarily, but it never reaches the deeper place where the soul aches for stillness.

True rest is not the absence of activity; it is the presence of Christ. When you bring your labor, your grief, your unresolved tension, and your accumulated weight to him, he does not hand you a program or a technique. He gives you himself. Today, before you reach for a distraction, try reaching for him first. The rest he gives goes all the way down.

Practical Application: Set aside ten minutes today in complete silence. No phone, no background noise. Simply sit and invite Jesus into whatever is weighing on you. Let that be your starting point for rest this week.

Day 2: The Empty Grave Changes Everything

Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 51-57

Devotional: As the sermon stated, "If it was just love, we think love is enough. It's not."

The cross reveals the heart of God, but the empty tomb reveals the power of God. Paul writes in this passage that death itself has been swallowed up in victory, describing the transformation of our mortal bodies into something imperishable. The resurrection is not a theological footnote — it is the entire foundation of Christian hope. You are not holding on to a philosophy or a moral code. You are holding on to a person who walked out of a grave. That changes the weight of every struggle you are carrying today.

Practical Application: Write down one area of your life where you have been living as though death, defeat, or despair has the final word. Then write beside it: "But the grave is empty." Carry that reminder with you today.

Day 3: Not Limited by Time or Space

Reading: John 20:19-29

Devotional: Locked doors could not keep Jesus out. The disciples huddled in fear, and without warning, without knocking, without needing permission, Jesus stood among them and spoke peace into the room. This is the nature of the resurrected Christ. He is not confined by the barriers that confine us. Our heavenly bodies, as the sermon described, will one day share in that freedom — not bound by time, not imprisoned by geography, not restricted by the limitations of this decaying flesh. But even now, the same Jesus who walked through locked doors walks through the walls you have built around your heart. Fear does not have to be your permanent address.

Practical Application: Identify one locked door in your heart — a place of fear, bitterness, or doubt where you have not allowed God access. Pray specifically and honestly today, asking him to walk through it.

Day 4: Citizenship That Outlasts Everything Temporary

Reading: Philippians 3:17-21

Devotional: Paul's words in this passage describe a people whose minds are set on earthly things and contrast them sharply with those whose citizenship is in heaven. The sermon put it plainly: everything here is temporary. Your possessions, your relationships, your health, your plans — all of it is passing. That is not meant to discourage you; it is meant to reorient you. When you loosen your grip on what is fading, you free your hands to hold what is eternal. Heavenly-mindedness is not escapism. It is the clearest form of realism available to a believer. You were made for more than this, and God has secured that more through Jesus Christ.

Practical Application: Take inventory of where your emotional energy is most invested this week. Ask yourself honestly whether those investments are building toward something eternal or something temporary. Adjust one priority accordingly.

Day 5: New Bodies, Familiar Faces

Reading: Luke 24:13-35

Devotional: Two discouraged disciples walked away from Jerusalem, and Jesus walked with them without their knowing it. When he broke the bread, their eyes were opened and they recognized him — and then he was gone. The sermon drew a breathtaking picture from this account and from the Transfiguration: in heaven, we will have recognizable, glorified forms. We will know and be known. The child lost too soon will know your name. The ancestor whose faith shaped your family will greet you by face. Every quiet act of kindness done in Jesus' name will be remembered and celebrated across generations. Heaven is not an abstraction. It is a reunion, a restoration, and a revelation of everything God has been doing all along.

Practical Application: Think of someone in your life, living or gone, whose faith has shaped yours. Write a brief note of gratitude — either to send to them if they are living, or as a prayer of thanks to God if they are not. Let heaven feel closer today than it did yesterday.