



people



Pastor Mason Phillips | February 22, 2026

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Day 1: The Heart of God's Law

Devotional: God's entire law hangs on two commands: love God and love your neighbor. These aren't separate requirements but interconnected expressions of the same heart. You cannot truly love God while harboring hatred, indifference, or judgment toward people He created. The religious lawyer knew the right answer intellectually, but Jesus challenged him to live it practically. Today, examine your heart honestly. Do you use biblical knowledge as a badge of righteousness while avoiding messy relationships? Are you more concerned with appearing holy than being loving? God's righteous requirements aren't fulfilled by rule-keeping alone, but through love in action. The question isn't whether you know the truth, but whether you're doing it.

Reading:

Matthew 22:34-40 NKJV

But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?”

Jesus said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.” “This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ “On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

Reflection: In what ways have you prioritized procedures, traditions, or personal preferences over the needs of people, and how might God be calling you to change that?

Day 2: Moving Toward Compassion

Devotional: The priest and Levite both saw the wounded man, but only the Samaritan truly saw him. There's a difference between noticing a problem and seeing a person. The religious leaders looked with judgment, calculating the inconvenience and risk to their ritual purity. The Samaritan looked with compassion and moved toward need. How often do we "pass by on the other side" of hurting people because helping would disrupt our schedules, challenge our comfort, or threaten our reputation? Jesus didn't come to observe humanity's brokenness from a safe distance—He entered into it. Today, ask God to give you eyes that truly see people, not just problems. Let compassion move you toward someone who needs God's love expressed through your hands.

Reading:

Luke 10:30-37 NKJV

Then Jesus answered and said: “A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him,

and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

“Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, ‘Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.’

“So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?” And he said, “He who showed mercy on him.” Then Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”

Reflection: How does the distinction between 'looking' at someone's problem versus truly 'seeing' the person challenge your approach to those who are struggling around you?

Day 3: The Cost of Righteousness

Devotional: Jesus didn't just teach about loving others; He demonstrated it at the ultimate cost. He left heaven's glory, took on human flesh, and paid the price for our healing with His own blood. Loving people righteously always costs something—time, money, comfort, convenience, or pride. The Samaritan invested effort, time, and resources into a stranger's restoration. He didn't just feel sorry; he acted sacrificially. What is love costing you? If following Christ never requires sacrifice, you may not be following Him closely. Today, consider where God is calling you to invest in someone else's healing. Don't hide behind busyness or self-protection. Kingdom investment always yields eternal returns, even when it's expensive in the moment.

Reading:

Philippians 2:5-11 NKJV

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus everyone should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Reflection: What is the cost you are most reluctant to pay when it comes to loving your neighbor—time, attention, money, or something else—and why?

Day 4: Mercy Over Judgment

Devotional: Mercy triumphs over judgment. This isn't just a nice sentiment; it's a spiritual principle that determines how we relate to both God and others. The Levite judged the wounded man's situation and walked away. The Samaritan showed mercy and drew near. We're quick to evaluate people's problems, assign blame, and protect ourselves from entanglement. But God calls us to prefer mercy—to see people as He sees them, wounded by sin but not beyond redemption. You were once half-dead in your trespasses, but Someone moved toward you with compassion. How can you withhold that same mercy from others? Today, replace one judgment with one act of mercy. Choose to see someone's humanity rather than their failure.

Reading:

James 2:8-13 NKJV

If you really fully the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you do well; but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.

For He who said, “Do not commit adultery,” also said, “Do not murder.” Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty. For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgement.

Reflection: How does viewing the Good Samaritan story as an allegory of Christ's rescue of humanity deepen your understanding of what Jesus has done for you?

Day 5: Go and Do Likewise

Devotional: Jesus ends the parable with a command: "Go and do likewise." Love isn't theoretical; it's practical. It's not just feeling compassion but acting on it. John reinforces this: if we have the world's goods and see our brother in need but close our hearts, how does God's love abide in us? The answer is sobering—it doesn't. Authentic Christianity moves beyond words and feelings to tangible action. You've been rescued, healed, and restored by Jesus. Now He's asking you to throw the life raft to someone else who's drowning. Don't use your holiness as an excuse to avoid messy people. Use your healing as motivation to reach them. Today, identify one person God has placed in your path and take one practical step to show them Christ's love.

Reading:

1 John 3:16-18 NKJV

By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?

My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.

Reflection: What would it look like for you to move toward compassion in a specific relationship or situation where you have been keeping your distance?