

5-Day Devotional: Living as Disciples of Jesus

Day 1: Drawing Near with Confidence

Reading: Hebrews 10:19-22

Devotional: The Old Testament priests entered God's presence with fear, uncertain if they would survive. But Jesus changed everything. Through His perfect sacrifice, the veil has been torn open, and you now have direct access to the Father at any moment. This isn't about duty—it's about relationship. Just as you wouldn't buy flowers for your spouse out of obligation, don't approach God's presence as a checkbox. He invites you to draw near with confidence, not because of your performance, but because of Christ's finished work. Today, pause throughout your day and simply enter His presence. No ritual required—just come. Your relationship with God is the most important thing. Where are you in relation to Him right now?

Day 2: Anchored in Faithful Hope

Reading: Hebrews 10:23; Romans 8:24-25

Devotional: Man-made hope is only as good as man—and we're notoriously unreliable with our New Year's resolutions. But biblical hope is different. It's not wishful thinking; it's confident expectation anchored in God's faithfulness. When anxiety creeps in about your circumstances, remember: hope isn't a strategy in military terms, but with God, you don't just hope it works out—you know it does because He who promised is faithful. Reflect on where God showed up for you this past year. Write down those moments. Too often we fixate on fifteen negative things while overlooking hundreds of times God proved faithful. Your hope isn't based on favorable outcomes; it's rooted in the unchanging character of God. Hold fast without wavering today.

Day 3: The Gospel Changes Everything

Reading: John 14:6; Matthew 11:28-30

Devotional: "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." These aren't the words of a good teacher—they're the exclusive claims of God Himself. Jesus didn't come to give you tips for better living; He came to give you life itself. If you're weary and heavy laden, trying to earn God's approval through your own efforts, Jesus offers you rest. The gospel is simple: repent and believe. Turn 180 degrees from your own way and walk toward Jesus. Stop living like the veil is still closed. Maybe you've been attending church but never truly surrendered your life to Christ. Today is your day. Place your life in His hands. Your closeness to God isn't based on your performance—it's based on His accomplished work.

Day 4: Linking Shields in Community

Reading: Ephesians 6:16; Hebrews 10:24-25

Devotional: Roman soldiers didn't carry tiny shields—they carried large rectangular ones designed to lock together, creating an impenetrable defense called the testudo (turtle formation). Abandoning your shield was considered ultimate disgrace. Your faith isn't meant to be carried alone. You need brothers and sisters in Christ to lock arms with, to withstand attacks together, and to push forward in mission. The church isn't a performance you attend; it's a family you belong to. Discipleship happens in community—in life groups where you confess struggles, celebrate victories, serve together, and spur one another toward love and good deeds. Who are you calling at 3 AM when life gets tough? Who knows your real struggles? Don't carry your shield alone. Find your people and link up today.

Day 5: Spurring One Another On

Reading: Matthew 22:37-39; 1 John 4:19

Devotional: A spur on a boot irritates a horse into motion—or keeps it at the right pace. That's your role in other believers' lives. This isn't comfortable Christianity; it's active discipleship. When someone is stagnant in their faith, come alongside them. When they're moving but at the wrong pace, run with them like a marathon pacer. "We love because He first loved us." Your love for Jesus naturally overflows into love for His people. This isn't optional. Consider: who are you encouraging? Who have you invited into your faith journey? Discipleship isn't waiting for people to figure it out—it's inviting them in. As you see the day of Christ's return drawing near, increase your intentionality. Don't just gain from community; contribute to it. Who needs you to spur them on today?