

The Investment of a Lifetime

A 5-Day Devotional Guide

Day 1: The Second Invitation

Scripture

Matthew 4:18-20

Thought for the Day

Many of us are familiar with Jesus' first call: repent, turn back, come home to God. That is good news for tired, guilty, wounded people. But in Matthew 4, Jesus gives a second invitation as well: "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people."

This is not an invitation only for the especially gifted, confident or impressive. Jesus does not begin with ability, platform or polish. He begins with relationship: *follow me*. Then He promises to do the deeper work of formation: *I will make you*. The pressure is not to become somebody extraordinary in your own strength. The invitation is to stay close to Jesus and let Him shape your life so that others are helped, strengthened and drawn toward Him.

Following Jesus is never only about our own private faith. He calls us to Himself, and then He starts to turn our lives outward. In His hands, ordinary people become people through whom grace flows to others.

Reflection

- Have you responded to Jesus' first invitation to turn back to God, but held back from His second invitation to follow Him more deeply?
- What feels exciting, unsettling or costly about Jesus saying, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people"?
- Where do you most need to trust that Jesus can form you, even if you do not feel ready?

Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank you that you call ordinary people to follow you. Thank you that the weight does not rest on my ability, but on your power to shape and form my life. Help me not to stop at forgiveness alone, but to step into the deeper invitation of walking with you in a way that blesses others. Give me a willing heart today. Amen.

Day 2: Priority and Availability

Scripture

Matthew 4:21-22

Thought for the Day

Matthew tells us that James and John left the boat and their father immediately. Peter and

Andrew left their nets at once. There is something deeply challenging about the speed of their response. They did not first demand a five-year plan, a detailed explanation or perfect clarity. They made Jesus the priority.

What did they really bring to the table? Not status. Not proven spiritual expertise. Not a polished track record. What they offered was availability. They put Jesus first and made room for Him to redirect their lives.

That is still the heart of discipleship now. Jesus does not ask for a dazzling CV. He asks for surrendered priority. In a distracted world, availability is a powerful act of worship. The people Jesus often uses most are simply those who are willing to say, "Here I am. Rearrange my life as you wish."

Reflection

- What are the "nets" or "boats" in your life that make it hard to respond freely to Jesus?
- Where is Jesus asking you to become more available to Him this season?
- What would it look like in practical terms to put Jesus first this week?

Prayer

Jesus, you are worthy of first place in my life. Forgive me for the ways I keep you fitted around everything else. Teach me the obedience of those first disciples, who responded quickly and trusted you with what came next. Make me available to you, and free me to follow wherever you lead. Amen.

Day 3: Share Life, Open the Bible, Pray

Scripture

1 Thessalonians 2:8

Thought for the Day

Paul describes ministry in warm, relational language: "We were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well." That is such a needed picture for us. Real spiritual investment is not cold, mechanical or merely instructional. It is personal. It is relational. It is life shared with others in the grace of God.

The sermon offered a wonderfully simple pattern: share life, open the Bible and pray. There is no complicated formula here. We do not need to be impressive. We need to be present. We make space for honest conversation, we let Scripture speak, and we bring people before God in prayer.

This kind of investment often feels small while we are doing it. A conversation over coffee. A walk. A lift home. A passage read together. A prayer at the end. But in Jesus' hands, those ordinary moments can help another person put down roots in faith. That is never a small thing.

Reflection

- Who has shared not only the gospel but also their life with you?

- Which part comes most naturally to you: sharing life, opening the Bible or praying? Which part do you tend to avoid?
- Is there one person you could begin to come alongside in a simple, natural way?

Prayer

Father, thank you for the people who have invested in me with patience, honesty and love. Help me to be that kind of person for someone else. Keep me simple, faithful and real. Show me how to share life well, open your word naturally and pray with expectation. Use ordinary moments for eternal good. Amen.

Day 4: Grace, Not Pretence

Scripture

2 Corinthians 12:9

Thought for the Day

One of the biggest barriers to helping others follow Jesus is the quiet voice of imposter syndrome: who am I to come alongside anyone else? If people really knew me, they would never ask me for help. That fear can keep us stuck, hidden and self-protective.

But the gospel does not call us to pretend. Grace means we do not have to wear a mask. We are not pointing people to our perfection; we are pointing them to Jesus. His power is made perfect in weakness, and His grace is enough for us.

In fact, grace creates the kind of environment where people can actually grow. Not performative, but honest. Not polished, but real. Not driven by "I must do better so that God will love me," but anchored in the undeserved love we have already received. The same grace that welcomed us is the grace we extend to others.

Reflection

- Where does imposter syndrome tend to show up in your life?
- What mask or persona do you most often feel pressure to wear?
- How would your relationships change if grace, rather than performance, shaped the atmosphere around you?

Prayer

Lord, thank you that your grace is enough for me. Thank you that I do not need to prove myself before you. Free me from pretence and from the fear of being found out. Help me to live honestly, receive your grace deeply and extend that same grace to others. Make my life a place where people can breathe, be real and grow in you. Amen.

Day 5: The Investment That Lasts

Scripture

1 Thessalonians 2:19-20

Thought for the Day

The sermon closes with a striking question: what if we looked back not just on years spent, but

on years invested? That gets to the heart of what Jesus is inviting us into. So much in life disappears quickly: applause, recognition, productivity, even achievements that once looked so significant. But investing your life in people for Jesus carries eternal weight.

Paul speaks about people themselves as his joy and crown in the presence of Jesus. That is remarkable. The prize is not found in being impressive, but in having been part of what Jesus has done in other lives. For a few miles of their swim, when they looked to the left, they saw someone there.

This is the investment of a lifetime: to walk with people, point them to Jesus, and trust that He will do more than we can see. It may not always be noticed. It may not feel dramatic. But there is no more precious legacy than a life poured out in love for the sake of others.

Reflection

- When you think about your life, what does "years invested" mean to you?
- Who are the people Jesus may be asking you to notice, encourage or walk with more intentionally?
- What is one practical step you can take this week to invest in someone spiritually?

Prayer

Jesus, thank you for the people you have used to steady, encourage and shape my life. Teach me to value what you value. Keep me from living only for recognition, comfort or activity that fades. Help me to invest my life in people with patience, love and hope. Use even small acts of faithfulness for your eternal purposes. Amen.

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