

5-Day Devotional: Loving Others Well  
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### **Day 1: The Heart of the Mission**

Reading: Luke 19:1-10

Devotional: Jesus didn't accidentally encounter Zacchaeus. He intentionally sought him out. "The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost" isn't a side project; it's the entire mission. Notice Jesus invited Himself to Zacchaeus's home before any transformation occurred. He moved toward the tax collector everyone else despised. This is the heart of our faith: God pursues us while we're still lost. Today, reflect on your own rescue story. Who sought you out? Who showed you grace before you deserved it? Now ask: Who in my life needs that same intentional pursuit? Loving the lost begins when we remember we were once found by a Savior who refused to wait for us to clean ourselves up first.

Application: Write down one person in your life who doesn't know Christ. Commit to praying for them daily this week and look for one opportunity to show them genuine interest.

### **Day 2: Compassion That Moves**

Reading: Matthew 9:35-38

Devotional: Jesus saw the crowds and had compassion. He was moved internally by their brokenness. The Greek word suggests His gut was wrenched with feeling. He didn't see projects or problems; He saw harassed and helpless sheep without a shepherd. This is radically different from pity, which observes from a distance. Compassion closes the gap. It listens before lecturing. It seeks to understand before correcting. When you encounter someone far from God, what do you see first? Their sin or their suffering? Their rebellion or their lostness? Jesus held both truth and grace perfectly, but compassion determined His approach. The lost weren't afraid of Jesus because His compassion was authentic. Ask God today to give you His eyes for people.

Application: Practice compassionate listening today. Have one conversation where your only goal is to understand someone's story without offering advice or correction.

### **Day 3: Ambassadors in Foreign Territory**

Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:14-21

Devotional: You are Christ's ambassador. You are His official representative in a world that doesn't yet know Him. Paul doesn't call us culture warriors or moral police; he calls us ministers of reconciliation. Our message isn't "fix yourself and God might accept you." It's "be reconciled to God through Christ." This changes everything about how we engage the lost. Ambassadors don't wage war on the people they're sent to serve; they build bridges. They represent their King with

dignity, patience, and clarity. Most people rejecting Christianity aren't rejecting Jesus but they're rejecting distorted versions they've witnessed. Your life is a living translation of the gospel. What message are people reading? Consistency, kindness, and joy under pressure preach louder than words.

Application: Identify one relationship where you've built walls instead of bridges. Take one practical step toward reconciliation today—a text, call, or invitation.

#### **Day 4: The Parable of Persistent Love**

**Reading: Luke 15:1-7**

Devotional: The shepherd leaves ninety-nine sheep to pursue one lost lamb. This isn't efficient management—it's extravagant love. Jesus told this parable to religious leaders who criticized Him for eating with sinners. They wanted boundaries; Jesus demonstrated pursuit. Notice the shepherd doesn't wait for the sheep to find its way home. He actively searches, and when he finds it, he carries it back rejoicing. This is the gospel: God doesn't wait for you to stumble back; He comes after you. And here's the challenging part that we all face. If we follow this Shepherd, we must share His heart for the one. We cannot be content with the ninety-nine safely inside while one remains lost. Loving the lost requires initiative, sacrifice, and celebration when they're found.

Application: Who is the "one" God is calling you to pursue? Reach out to someone who has drifted from faith or community. Send an encouraging message or invitation.

#### **Day 5: Remember Your Rescue**

**Reading: Ephesians 2:1-10**

Devotional: "You were dead in your transgressions and sins." This isn't hyperbole. It is your testimony. There was a time you didn't understand, didn't believe, didn't care. Someone prayed. Someone invited. Someone showed patience. Grace pursued you when you were unlovable, and mercy found you when you were lost. Remembering this keeps us humble when engaging others. We don't approach from above with judgment; we approach from beside with empathy. The same grace that saved you is available to everyone. You are not a self-made believer; you're a rescued sinner. Let that reality fuel your compassion for the lost. The cross proves sin is serious and love is stronger. If God was patient with you, you can be patient with others.

Application: Share your testimony with someone this week—how you were lost and how Christ found you. Let your story point others to the Savior who seeks and saves.