

Finding Your Way to the Cross

Today's Reading: Acts 2:37–39; Romans 5:8 | Audio: Day 5

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

— Acts 2:38 (KJV)

“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

— Romans 5:8 (KJV)

DEVOTIONAL

Before we can love like the cross, we must first find our way to the cross. That is where everything begins.

Romans tells us God showed His love toward us while we were still sinners—not after we cleaned ourselves up, not after we proved we were worthy, not after we fixed every broken place. While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. God acted first. His love moved toward us in our worst condition. He made a way when we could not make one for ourselves. The cross is not proof that we were good enough; the cross is proof that God's love was great enough.

That matters, because many people spend their lives trying to earn what Jesus already gave. They try to become acceptable before coming to God. They try to hide the worst parts of themselves. They try to manage guilt, shame, and regret on their own. But the invitation of the gospel is not, “Fix yourself and then come.” The invitation is, “Come.” Come to the One who already knows. Come to the One who already gave Himself. Come to the One whose blood is able to wash, cleanse, forgive, and make new.

In Acts 2 the people heard the message of Jesus and were pricked in their hearts. They knew they needed to respond, so they asked, “What shall we do?” Peter's answer was clear: repent, be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Repentance is more than feeling sorry—it is a turning. It is choosing a new direction. It is saying, “I cannot keep walking away from God. I am turning toward Him.” From that place of surrender, God begins a new work in us.

This is the foundation of cross-shaped love. We do not produce it by willpower alone. We love because He first loved us. We forgive because we have been forgiven. We show mercy because mercy found us first. If you have been trying to love like Jesus without first receiving the love of Jesus, today is an invitation to come back to the beginning. Come to the cross.

DAY 5 • JOURNAL & RESPONSE

REFLECT

1. *Have you truly received the love Jesus showed at the cross?*

2. *Is there an area of your life where God is calling you to repent, to turn, and to walk in a new direction?*

RESPOND: TODAY'S PRACTICAL STEP

Take a quiet moment before God today. Be honest with Him—no performance, no hiding. Then respond:

- ☐ If I need to repent — I will turn toward Him today.
- ☐ If I need to be baptized in Jesus' name — I will not delay.
- ☐ If I need the gift of the Holy Ghost — I will ask Him in faith.
- ☐ If I have been striving instead of receiving — I will rest in His love.

Lord, I turn toward You — specifically in...

DAY 5 • PRAYER

PRAY

Lord Jesus, thank You for loving us while we were still sinners. Thank You for the cross, where Your mercy met our need. We turn toward You today. Forgive us, cleanse us, and make us new. Fill us with Your Spirit, and let Your love become the source of how we love others. Teach us to live from the cross, not from guilt, fear, or striving. Thank You for making a way for us to come near. In Jesus' name, amen.

My own prayer:

REMEMBER THIS

We love like the cross only after we have been loved at the cross.

Going Deeper: 1 John 4:19 • Titus 3:4–7 • Ephesians 2:4–9

This devotional is a tool for reflection, not a substitute for pastoral care or professional counseling. If what surfaces feels too heavy to carry alone, please reach out to a pastor or a trusted, qualified counselor at New Life Tabernacle Carrollwood.

Looking Back

Love that looks like the cross gives itself, believes in who God is shaping, strengthens the weary, pays a real price, and flows from the love we first received. May the love of Jesus shape your heart, your home, and your witness.

A love that sacrifices	Ephesians 5 — Day 1
A love that sanctifies	Romans 12 — Day 2
A love that nourishes	Ecclesiastes 4 — Day 3
A love that costs	John 13 — Day 4
Finding your way to the cross	Acts 2 — Day 5

FINAL REFLECTION

1. *Which day spoke to me most deeply, and why?*

2. *Where did God challenge the way I love during these five days?*

3. *Who is the one person I will keep loving like the cross after this week?*

Ready to take a next step?

If these five days stirred a desire to repent, be baptized in Jesus' name, receive the Holy Ghost, or simply talk and pray with someone, we would be honored to walk with you. Reach out to a pastor or leader at New Life Tabernacle Carrollwood.