

# 5-Day Devotional: Building Real Community in the Church

## Day 1: The Sincere Love That Changes Everything

Reading: Romans 12:9-12

Devotional: "Love must be sincere." These opening words from Romans 12 challenge us to examine the authenticity of our relationships within the church. In a world where we confuse social media connections with genuine community, God calls us to something deeper. Sincere love isn't performed—it's lived. It hates evil, clings to good, and honors others above ourselves. This kind of love requires us to be joyful in hope when circumstances disappoint, patient in affliction when we want to quit, and faithful in prayer when answers seem distant. Today, ask yourself: Is my love for others sincere, or am I simply going through the motions? Real community begins when we stop performing Christianity and start living it authentically, bringing life to those around us.

## Day 2: Devoted to Something Greater

Reading: Acts 2:42-47

Devotional: The early church devoted themselves to teaching, fellowship, breaking bread, and prayer—and the result was awe-inspiring. Notice that the miraculous signs in verse 43 came after the devotion in verse 42. We often want God's power without the commitment, the benefits without the obligations. But devotion precedes demonstration. When we truly devote ourselves to God's purposes and His people, we discover something remarkable: we have all things in common. This isn't about forced unity; it's about shared calling. The question isn't whether your church has the best programs or facilities—it's whether you're devoted to where God has called you. Loyalty to a divine calling creates the foundation for genuine community. Where has God called you to be devoted today?

## Day 3: When Church Feels Like Family

Reading: 1 Thessalonians 2:7-12

Devotional: Paul describes his ministry like a nursing mother caring for her children—gentle, affectionate, and willing to share not just the gospel but his very life. This is what church should feel like in 2026: less like an obligation and more like family. You don't walk out on family. Families may be dysfunctional, but they don't abandon each other. They show up at Christmas, pray through difficulties, and remain committed when things get messy. The church should be the same—a place where someone knows your name, cares if you disappear, and walks with you through your hardest seasons. Real spiritual mothers and fathers aren't just those who birth children; they're life-givers who encourage the defeated, offer wisdom to the lost, and provide strength to the weak. Who needs you to be family to them today?

#### **Day 4: Bringing Life, Not Just Biology**

Reading: Galatians 4:19; 1 Corinthians 4:15

Devotional: Motherhood—and spiritual parenthood—is bigger than biology. It's about bringing life to someone, not just birthing them. Paul spoke of being in labor until Christ was formed in the Galatians. He reminded the Corinthians that though they had countless teachers, they had few fathers. The church desperately needs spiritual mothers and fathers who will mentor, encourage, correct, protect, and stand beside others when life falls apart. Perhaps you've never physically birthed a child, but your legacy can be enormous through the lives you've mentored and shaped. A real mother brings encouragement when someone feels defeated, wisdom when someone feels lost, comfort when someone feels broken, and truth when someone is drifting. Your spiritual children may not share your DNA, but they carry your influence. Who is God calling you to spiritually parent?

#### **Day 5: Faithful When No One Notices**

Reading: Colossians 3:23-24; Hebrews 6:10

Devotional: Mothers embody a remarkable truth: they remain faithful when tired, loving when unappreciated, praying when discouraged, and showing up when nobody notices. This is exactly what the 2026 church should look like. God sees what others overlook. He never forgets your work of love—the meals you prepared, the prayers you whispered, the encouragement you offered, the

burdens you carried. The future of the church isn't determined by politics, technology, or culture—it's determined by whether God's people will truly live like the church, faithfully serving even in the hidden moments. Anyone can build a crowd with the right entertainment, but only the love of Jesus can create a family. Your faithful presence matters more than you know. Keep showing up. Keep loving. Keep praying. God is building something real through your devotion.

### **Reflection Questions:**

How does Romans 12:9-12 challenge you to move from superficial religious activity to authentic, sacrificial love in your daily relationships?

In what ways have you confused social media connection with genuine community, and how might the early church model in Acts 2:42-47 reshape your understanding of real relationship?

Mickey distinguishes between birthing a human and being life-giving. Who has been a spiritual mother or father in your life, and how did they bring life to you beyond biological connection?

What does it mean to be devoted rather than just impressed by spiritual experiences, and where in your life are you seeking benefits without obligation?

How can the church balance welcoming people exactly as they are while also calling them to transformation and deeper commitment?

The sermon suggests the church should feel less like a performance and more like coming home. What would need to change in your church experience or personal approach for this to be true?

When Mickey asks if you are devoted to the right things, what competes for your devotion alongside your calling to be part of God's family?

How does the concept of loyalty to a calling rather than loyalty to an institution change the way you think about church commitment and spiritual community?

In what practical ways can you help carry the burden of raising children in the faith for the families in your church community?

Mickey describes moms as faithful when tired, loving when unappreciated, and praying when discouraged. How can these attributes become defining characteristics of your spiritual life regardless of your role?