

5-Day Devotional: Take a Step - Taking Steps Toward Jesus

Day 1: Come As You Are

Reading: Matthew 11:28-30

Devotional: Jesus extends an invitation not to the perfect, but to the tired and weary. His words, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden," remind us that our exhaustion qualifies us for His rest. You don't need to clean yourself up before approaching God—He meets you in your weariness. The starting point isn't your strength but your willingness to surrender. Today, identify one area where you're carrying a heavy burden. Jesus isn't asking you to fix it first; He's asking you to bring it to Him. His yoke is easy because He carries the weight with you. What would it look like to stop striving and simply come?

Day 2: Failure Doesn't Disqualify You

Reading: John 21:15-19

Devotional: Peter's story reminds us that failure doesn't remove us from God's story—avoidance does. After denying Jesus three times, Peter could have hidden in shame. Instead, Jesus pursued him with a simple breakfast and a profound question: "Do you love me?" Notice Jesus didn't publicly shame Peter or hold his failure over him. He offered restoration through relationship. Your past mistakes don't define your future with God. What elephant in the room have you been avoiding? God wants to address it not with condemnation, but with grace. The path forward isn't pretending your failures don't exist; it's bringing them into the light of Christ's love and experiencing His mercy.

Day 3: Draw Near

Reading: James 4:1-12

Devotional: "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." Faith isn't a giant leap; it's a series of small, intentional steps toward Jesus. James addresses the double-minded—those who want to pursue God but find themselves pursuing worldly things instead. This tension is real and common.

The solution isn't perfection but proximity. One step toward Jesus changes your perspective, your priorities, and your peace. Today, take one practical step: spend ten minutes in prayer, read Scripture before checking your phone, or confess a struggle to a trusted friend. God doesn't demand you arrive fully transformed; He invites you to simply move closer. What single step can you take today?

Day 4: Willing Over Ready

Reading: Hebrews 4:14-16

Devotional: Jesus calls willing people, not ready people. God responds to surrender, not perfection. Many of us wait until we feel qualified, prepared, or worthy before pursuing God wholeheartedly. But Hebrews reminds us we have a High Priest who sympathizes with our weaknesses. He understands our struggles intimately. You can approach His throne of grace with confidence—not because you've earned it, but because He's extended the invitation. Stop waiting to feel ready. God is looking for availability, not ability. What area of your life have you been holding back from God because you don't feel ready? Surrender your willingness today, and watch God work with what you bring Him.

Day 5: Time, Talent, and Treasure

Reading: Matthew 6:19-21, 33

Devotional: "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Pursuing Jesus in 2026 means intentionally offering Him your time, talent, and treasure. It's not about adding religious activities to an already busy life; it's about reorienting everything around His kingdom. When you give God your time through worship and community, your talent through service, and your treasure through generosity, you're declaring what matters most. Jesus says, "Seek first the kingdom of God, and all these things will be added to you." What one area—time, talent, or treasure—is God asking you to surrender more fully? Choose one practical step this week: join a community group, serve somewhere, or give generously. Your pursuit begins with what you prioritize.

Reflection Question for the Week: What is my next step in pursuing Jesus with my whole life?

Reflection Questions

Jesus invites those who are tired and willing to learn rather than those who feel ready or worthy. What does this tell us about God's priorities in pursuing a relationship with us?

The sermon emphasizes that God responds to surrender, not perfection. In what areas of your life are you still trying to achieve perfection before coming to God?

After Peter denied Jesus three times, Jesus didn't shame him publicly but asked privately, 'Do you love me?' How does this change your understanding of how God approaches our failures?

The message states that failure does not remove you from the story, but avoidance does. What past failures or sins might you be avoiding rather than bringing to Jesus for restoration?

James 4:8 says to draw near to God and He will draw near to you, but also calls us to purify our hearts from being double-minded. What does it mean to be double-minded in your pursuit of Jesus?

The sermon challenges us to view work as worship, doing what we have to do so we can do what God calls us to do. How does this perspective shift your attitude toward your daily responsibilities?

Looking at the three areas of pursuit (time, talent, and treasure), which one feels most challenging for you to surrender to God, and why?

Scripture says to cast our nets on the right side of the boat, trusting Jesus even when our own efforts have failed. What area of your life needs you to stop relying on your own understanding and follow Jesus's direction?

The sermon asks, 'What is my next step?' rather than expecting a complete transformation all at once. What is one specific, small step you can take this week to draw nearer to God?

Jesus calls willing people, not ready people. If you have been waiting to feel ready before pursuing God more deeply, what would change if you simply chose to be willing today?