

More Than A Feeling

5-Day Devotional: Week 1

Love

Day 1: More Than a Label

Read: James 2:19 and Mark 1:23–24

It is possible to know true things about Jesus without actually following Jesus. James gives us a pretty startling reminder of that. Even demons believe there is one God. In Mark, an impure spirit recognizes exactly who Jesus is, calling Him the Holy One of God.

Following Jesus is more than knowing the right answers or carrying the label of Christian. A disciple is someone who learns from Jesus and follows Him. Over time, our lives should increasingly reflect the One we say we follow.

This is not about proving that we are good enough Christians. It is about honestly asking whether our faith is shaping the way we live.

- What is the difference between knowing about Jesus and following Jesus?
- Where can you see evidence in your life that following Jesus is changing you?
- Is there an area where you know what Jesus teaches, but struggle to actually follow Him?

Today: Ask God to show you one area where He is inviting you to move from simply knowing to actually following.

Day 2: Saved by Grace, Changed by Grace

Read: Ephesians 2:8–10

We do not earn salvation. We do not work hard enough, serve enough, give enough, or become good enough for God to save us. Salvation is a gift of grace that we receive through faith.

But Paul does not stop at verse 9. Verse 10 says that we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works. Our works do not save us, but a life that has been changed by Jesus should begin to look different. Grace does more than forgive us. Grace changes us.

- Why is it important to remember that salvation is a gift and not something you earn?
- What is the difference between doing good works for God's approval and doing them because you have already received His grace?
- Where have you seen Jesus change you since you began following Him?

Today: Thank God specifically for His grace. Then look for one opportunity to let that grace shape the way you treat someone else.

Day 3: Love God With Everything

Read: Matthew 22:37–40

When Jesus was asked about the greatest commandment, His answer was love. Love God with all your heart, soul, and mind. Then love your neighbor as yourself. Our love for God is the foundation of discipleship. Before following Jesus becomes a list of things we do, it begins with a relationship with the One we love. But love for God is also more than a feeling. Loving Him affects our priorities, decisions, desires, time, and obedience.

- What does loving God with your heart, soul, and mind look like in everyday life?
- Which area of your life is easiest to surrender to God? Which is hardest?
- Have you been doing things for God without spending much time simply loving and knowing Him?

Today: Spend intentional time with God without asking Him for anything. Simply thank Him, worship Him, and remind yourself who He is.

Day 4: Love Is the Evidence

Read: John 13:34–35

Jesus gives His disciples a very visible marker of what following Him should look like: love.

He does not say people will know we are His disciples because we know the most Scripture, attend the most church services, or always have the right answer. He says they will know by the way we love one another.

That makes our relationships part of our witness. The way we respond when we are frustrated matters. The way we talk about people matters. Forgiveness matters. Patience matters. Serving someone when it is inconvenient matters. Our love for Jesus becomes visible through our love for people.

- If someone watched the way you treated people this week, what would they learn about Jesus?
- Who is easy for you to love? Who is difficult?
- Where might God be asking you to love someone differently?

Today: Choose one person and intentionally show them love. Encourage them, serve them, forgive them, listen to them, or simply make time for them.

Day 5: Do You Love Me?

Read: John 21:15–19

Peter had failed Jesus in one of the biggest ways imaginable. He had promised he would remain faithful, then denied even knowing Jesus three times. After the resurrection, Jesus meets Peter again.

Three times Jesus asks him, “Do you love me?” And each time Peter responds, Jesus gives him something to do: care for His people. Jesus does not pretend Peter's failure did not happen. But He also does not allow Peter's failure to become the end of his story. Peter failed. Jesus restored him. Then Jesus called him to keep following.

Our failures do not disqualify us from discipleship when we bring them to Jesus. He restores us and continues forming us into people who love Him and love others.

- What does Jesus' response to Peter teach you about how He responds to failure?
- Is there a past failure that still affects the way you see yourself or your relationship with God?
- If Jesus asked you today, “Do you love me?” how would that love show up in your life?

Today: Bring an area of failure honestly before Jesus. Receive His grace, then ask Him, “What does following You look like for me today?”

Take It With You

At the end of the week, come back to two simple questions:

- How am I loving Jesus?
- How is my love for Jesus showing up in the way I love people?

Disciples are not people who never fail. They are people who keep coming back to Jesus, keep learning from Him, and keep allowing their love for Him to shape the way they live.