

5-Day Bible Reading Plan and Devotional Guide

Based on the Sermon: "Tug of War -- Letting God Lead"

Day 1: Surrendering the Top Position

Reading: Matthew 6:33 -- The call to seek God's kingdom and righteousness above all else, trusting that what we need will follow.

Devotional: There is a constant pull inside every believer -- the desire to follow Christ fully, yet the stubborn habit of pulling our hand out from under his and placing it back on top. Surrender is not a one-time event. It is a daily, sometimes hourly, act of trust. The pastor described it plainly: "I want him to be on top, but I keep pulling my hand out and putting it on top of his." Recognize where you have been reclaiming control. Today, practice the discipline of pausing mid-task and asking honestly -- whose hand is on top right now?

Reflection Questions:

In what areas of your life do you most often reclaim control from God?
What would it look like practically to place him first in your morning before anything else competes for that position?

Day 2: Designed for Community, Not Isolation

Reading: Acts 17:26 -- God has determined the times and places where people would live, intentionally ordering human relationships so that people might seek him.

Devotional: God never designed the Christian life to be lived alone. The pastor reminded us that Jesus never intended for us to be solo Christians. We are placed alongside specific people -- not by accident, but by divine intention -- so that we might both see God in others and reflect him outward. Some people in your life reveal what godliness looks like. Others reveal what you do not want to become. Both are teachers. The community of believers is not a convenience. It is a necessity. Show up. Invest. Allow others to speak

into your life even when it is uncomfortable.

Reflection Questions:

Who has God placed in your life that you may have been overlooking as a source of spiritual growth?

Are you engaging your church community with genuine openness, or are you keeping people at a safe distance?

Day 3: Sent Without Everything You Think You Need

Reading: Mark 6:7-13 -- Jesus sends his disciples out in pairs, granting them authority but instructing them to take nothing extra for the journey, trusting that provision would come.

Devotional: Jesus sent twelve ordinary men out with authority they had never exercised and instructions that made no practical sense -- no extra supplies, no backup plan, no safety net. He was not being careless. He was being intentional. He wanted them to discover that his provision was real and that their dependence on him was not a weakness but the very source of their power. The pastor put it directly: God "cannot believe that you and I will not even give him a chance to do something with us that we cannot do without him." What has God called you toward that you have been postponing because you feel unprepared?

Reflection Questions:

What is the one thing you sense God has been asking of you that you have been waiting to feel ready for?

How might your lack of preparation actually be the very condition God is waiting to work within?

Day 4: The Pride of a Father Who Trusts You

Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:20 -- Believers are described as ambassadors for Christ, as though God himself were making his appeal through them -- a role of genuine trust and responsibility.

Devotional: The pastor recalled the moment his father climbed off the tractor, handed him the controls, walked away, and trusted him to finish the row alone. The tears that followed were not from fear alone -- they were from the weight of being trusted. That same dynamic exists between God and every believer. He has granted authority, spoken a calling, and stepped back -- not because he is absent, but because he trusts you to move. The greatest victories in the Christian life are not the ones you engineer. They are the ones where you looked up afterward and knew without question that you could not have done that without him.

Reflection Questions:

Have you ever experienced a moment where God clearly worked through you in a way you could not take credit for?

What would it mean to you personally to sense that God is proud of something you did in obedience to him?

Day 5: Stop Taking Shortcuts With What Matters Most

Reading: Jude 1:3 -- The author urges believers to earnestly contend for the faith that was once delivered to the saints, because the stakes of faithfulness are real and the cost of passivity is high.

Devotional: Someone, somewhere across the last two thousand years, kept the gospel alive when it cost them something. They did not take shortcuts. They did not get by. They bore down, pressed in, and passed something forward that eventually reached you. The pastor challenged us plainly: "I want to know I didn't drop the ball telling you what the true gospel of Jesus Christ is about." Grace is not a license to coast. It is a launching pad. What you do with what Christ has given you will matter in eternity. Stop waiting for the right moment. Start with one act of obedience today and trust that God will meet you there.

Reflection Questions:

What has God spoken to you -- through Scripture, through a sermon, through another person -- that you have been sitting on without acting?

Who in your life has not yet heard anything about Jesus because you have kept your mouth closed? What is one step you could take this week to change that?