

5-DAY *Devotional Guide*



THE COST OF SURRENDER

Day 1: When Caring Costs You Something

Devotional

Most of us are willing to care for others when it is easy. When it fits our schedule, when it does not cost us anything, and when it feels good. But real care, the kind Jesus modeled, looks very different. Philipians 2 paints a stunning picture. Jesus, fully God, chose to empty Himself. He did not hold onto comfort or status. He took on the form of a servant and gave everything, not because it was convenient, but because people mattered more than His own preferences.

That is the standard He sets for us.

Think about the things you guard most carefully. Your time, your comfort, your reputation. These are not bad things on their own. But when they become walls that keep you from caring for others, they become obstacles to the life God is calling you toward.

Here is the encouraging truth: God does not ask you to do this in your own strength. He simply asks you to be willing. Willing to pause. Willing to notice. Willing to let someone else's need matter more than your own comfort in that moment.

Caring for others is not a burden. It is an invitation into something far greater than yourself. And when you say yes to that invitation, even when it costs you something, you step into the very heart of what it means to follow Jesus.

Bible Verse

"Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross." - Philipians 2:5-8 (English Standard Version (ESV))

Reflection Question

What is one comfort, preference, or habit you are holding onto that might be keeping you from fully caring for the people around you?

Quote

"When care costs us something, it can change everything."

Prayer

Lord, thank You for the example of Jesus, who gave everything so that we could be loved. Soften my heart today and make me willing to let go of what I am holding onto so I can truly care for others. Amen.

to live each day with eyes open and hands ready, so that the people around me feel seen, valued, and loved. Amen.

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Day 2: People Are Not the Interruption

Devotional

You have probably had a moment where someone showed up at the wrong time. A phone call when you were rushing out the door. A coworker stopping by when you had a deadline. A stranger needing help when you were already running late.

In Matthew 15, a Canaanite woman cried out to Jesus in desperation. His disciples wanted her sent away. She was loud, she was persistent, and she was inconvenient. But Jesus stopped. He gave her His full attention. He saw her faith, and He healed her daughter.

Jesus did not treat her as an interruption. He treated her as the point.

This is a shift in perspective that changes everything. When you are stuck in traffic behind someone driving slowly, that is a person with a story. When a coworker vents to you for the third time this week, that is someone who is hurting. When a stranger at the coffee shop looks lonely, that is someone God sees.

God is not asking you to fix every problem you encounter. He is asking you to stay open. To notice. To be present enough to recognize when a so-called interruption is actually a divine invitation.

You are not too busy for people. And people are not too much for you, because God equips you for exactly this.

Bible Verse

"But the woman came and knelt before him, saying, 'Lord, help me.'" - Matthew 15:25 (English Standard Version (ESV))

Reflection Question

Think about the last time someone interrupted your plans. Looking back, could that moment have been an invitation from God rather than just an inconvenience?

Quote

"When you see a lonely person at the coffee shop, God sees someone for me to talk to."

Prayer

Father, help me to see people the way You see them. Give me eyes that notice and a heart that is willing to pause, even when it is not convenient. Amen.

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Day 3: One Person at a Time

Devotional

We live in a world that celebrates scale. The bigger the platform, the more impressive the reach, the more likes and shares, the more it seems to matter. But Jesus operated by a completely different measure. In Matthew 15, He did not stop to count the crowd. He did not announce how many people He had healed. He simply moved from one person to the next. The lame, those struggling to walk through daily life. The crippled, those so crushed by pain they could not function alone. The blind, those who had never seen the light of who God truly is. The mute, those whose voices had been silenced or ignored.

He saw each one. He cared for each one.

This is your calling too. Not to build an impressive record of good deeds, but to genuinely care for the person right in front of you. The neighbor who seems fine but is not. The friend who stopped reaching out. The family member who is quietly struggling.

You do not need a platform to make a difference. You need a willing heart and open eyes. When you start caring for people one at a time, something shifts inside you. They stop feeling like obligations and start feeling like purpose.

That is exactly what God intended.

Bible Verse

"And great crowds came to him, bringing with them the lame, the crippled, the blind, the mute, and many others, and they put them at his feet, and he healed them." - Matthew 15:30 (English Standard Version (ESV))

Reflection Question

Who is one specific person in your life right now who might be lame, crippled, blind, or mute in the way described today, and what is one small step you could take toward them this week?

Quote

"He didn't care about the masses. He didn't write on his social media how many thousands of people he was serving. He was interested in one person at a time. He cared for others. And as he did this, people were not an inconvenience to him. They became a passion."

Prayer

Jesus, thank You for seeing me as an individual and not just part of a crowd. Help me to extend that same personal care to the people You have placed in my life. Amen.

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Day 4: Surrender More Than You Contribute

Devotional

There is a big difference between contributing and surrendering.

A contribution is calculated. It is what you give after you have decided what you can afford to part with. It is the leftovers of your time, your energy, and your attention. Surrender is something else entirely. Surrender says, I am giving you all of it, not just what is comfortable.

Jesus did not contribute to humanity. He surrendered everything for it. He left the comfort of heaven, took on human limitations, and gave His life. That is the model He calls us to follow.

In Matthew 15, after healing crowds of people during what was meant to be His time away, Jesus looked at the crowd again and felt compassion. They had been with Him for three days without food. He could have said He had already done enough. Instead, He kept going. He fed four thousand people with seven loaves and a few fish.

He did not calculate what He could spare. He gave what He had and trusted the Father with the rest.

God is not asking you to be perfect. He is asking you to stop holding back. Stop offering the leftovers of your time and attention to the people around you. Open your hands, surrender what you are gripping tightly, and watch what God does with a life that is fully available to Him.

Bible Verse

"And Jesus called His disciples to Him and said, 'I have compassion on the crowd because they have been with me now three days and have nothing to eat. And I am unwilling to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way.'" - Matthew 15:32 (English Standard Version (ESV))

Reflection Question

In what area of your life are you currently making a contribution to God and others when He might actually be asking for your full surrender?

Quote

"It's not about a contribution when it comes to caring for others. Jesus didn't make a contribution. He surrendered everything."

Prayer

Lord, I confess that I often give You and others what is left over rather than what is best. Teach me what it means to truly surrender, and give me the courage to open my hands today. Amen.

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Day 5: This Is What You Were Made For

Devotional

After four days of reflecting on care, surrender, and seeing people the way God sees them, here is the truth that ties it all together: other people are not a distraction from your purpose. They are your purpose. God did not place you in your neighborhood, your workplace, or your family by accident. Every person you encounter is someone He sees. And He often chooses to reach them through you, through a kind word, a moment of presence, or a willingness to stop when everything in you wants to keep moving.

Paul writes in 1 Thessalonians 5 to encourage one another and build each other up. That is not a suggestion for the especially gifted. It is a call for every follower of Jesus. You are built for this.

The lame need someone to walk alongside them. The crippled need someone to help carry the weight. The blind need someone to point them toward the light. The mute need someone who will listen and give them a voice.

You are that someone for the people around you.

This is not an overwhelming responsibility. It is a freeing one. You do not have to change the whole world. You just have to show up for the person in front of you today, tomorrow, and the day after that. Let that be your legacy. A life that worshiped God and genuinely cared for people.

Bible Verse

"Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing." - 1 Thessalonians 5:11 (English Standard Version (ESV))

Reflection Question

If someone who knew you well were to describe how you treat the people around you on an ordinary day, would they say that people are your passion or your inconvenience?

Quote

"Other people are not a nuisance, they're not an inconvenience, but they're actually God's plan for your life and for my life."

Prayer

Father, thank You for the reminder that caring for others is not a burden but a calling. Help me to live each day with eyes open and hands ready, so that the people around me feel seen, valued, and loved. Amen.