

Who is my Neighbor?

6-DAY DEVOTIONAL

Be a Good Neighbor

Day 1 – Knowing and Doing

Scripture: James 1:22–25

It is possible to know what Jesus teaches without allowing His teaching to change the way we live. James warns us not to merely listen to God's Word, but to do what it says. That is an important starting point for this week because most of us already know Christians are supposed to love people. The challenge is not usually knowing the command; it is allowing that command to shape our schedules, relationships, attitudes, and decisions. Following Jesus is more than agreeing with Him. His Word is meant to form us into people who increasingly live the way He lived.

Practice: Think of one thing you already know Jesus has been asking you to do. Take one step of obedience today.

Prayer: Jesus, help me not only to know Your Word, but to live it. Show me where there is a gap between what I believe and how I live, and give me the courage to obey You today. Amen.

Day 2 – Expanding the Circle

Scripture: Leviticus 19:17–18, 33–34

When God first commanded His people to “love your neighbor as yourself,” He did not intend for that love to remain limited to the people who were easiest to love. Later in the same chapter, God tells Israel to love the foreigner living among them as themselves. We naturally create circles around our compassion: our family, our friends, people who think like us, people we understand, or people we believe deserve our help. But God continually challenges His people to widen those circles. Neighborly love begins when we stop asking only, “Who are my people?” and begin noticing the people God has already placed around us.

Practice: Pray specifically for someone today who is outside your normal circle of relationships or someone you might easily overlook.

Prayer: Lord, help me to be faithful even when I cannot see what You are doing. Give me perseverance to keep serving, praying, and obeying, trusting that You are at work. Amen.

Day 3 – What Are You Protecting?

Read: Philippians 2:3–8

Most of us do not intentionally decide to become uncaring people. More often, we become protective people. We protect our time, plans, comfort, energy, and resources until there is very little room left for anyone to interrupt us. Paul tells us to look not only to our own interests but also to the interests of others, and then he points us toward Jesus. Jesus did not cling to His comfort or position; He humbled Himself and moved toward us. Loving our neighbor does not mean abandoning every responsibility or meeting every need, but it does mean allowing God to interrupt us sometimes. A life completely protected from inconvenience may also become a life protected from opportunities to love.

Practice: Leave some margin in your day today. Ask God to help you notice a person or need you might normally be too hurried to see.

Prayer: Father, forgive me for the times I have delayed obedience. Give me courage to trust You and act when You call. Help me be faithful today instead of waiting for perfect circumstances. Amen.

Day 4 – More Than Reciprocal Love

Read: Luke 6:32-36

Jesus says there is nothing especially remarkable about loving people who already love us. That kind of love is natural. The love He calls His followers to goes further. We are called to do good even when kindness is not returned and to show mercy because our Father is merciful. This does not mean ignoring wrongdoing, abandoning wise boundaries, or pretending broken relationships are healthy. It means we refuse to allow someone else's behavior to determine the kind of person we become. Our love is ultimately shaped by the character of God, not by whether another person has earned it.

Practice: Pray for someone who has frustrated, disappointed, or hurt you. Ask God to help you sincerely desire what is good for them.

Prayer: Father, You have been merciful to me. Keep resentment from shaping my heart. Help me love others from the mercy I have received from You. Amen.

Day 5 – Love Becomes Visible

Read: 1 John 3:16–18

John tells us that Jesus shows us what love looks like: He laid down His life for us. Then John immediately brings that truth into ordinary life. If we see someone in need and have the ability to help, love should become more than words. Most acts of neighborly love will never feel dramatic. They may look like a meal, a phone call, a conversation, giving someone a ride, sharing what we have, or simply stopping long enough to listen. Love becomes real when good intentions turn into faithful action. We do not have to solve every problem; we simply need to be willing to do the good that God places in front of us.

Practice: Do one small, tangible act of love for someone today. Keep it simple enough that you actually follow through.

Prayer: Jesus, keep my love from remaining only good intentions. Help me notice an opportunity to serve someone today and give me the willingness to act. Amen.

Day 6 – Mercy Received, Mercy Given

Read: Titus 3:3–8

We can easily turn loving our neighbor into another way of measuring how good we are, but the gospel reminds us where everything begins. Paul says God saved us not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. Before we are people who give mercy, we are people who desperately needed to receive it. Jesus moved toward us when we could not rescue ourselves, and that mercy changes the way we look at everyone else. We do not love our neighbors to earn God's love. We love because we have already been loved. The more deeply we understand the mercy we have received, the more freely we can extend mercy to the people God places around us.

Practice: Spend a few minutes remembering specific ways God has shown you mercy. Then ask Him whom that mercy should move you toward.

Prayer: Father, thank You for loving me and showing me mercy when I could never earn it. Let the mercy I have received from You become mercy that flows through me to others. Make me a faithful neighbor wherever You place me. Amen.
