

Here's a 5-day Bible reading plan and devotional guide based on the themes from Pastor Paul Pett's sermon from Sunday, August 30, 2026, the Fourteenth Sunday After Pentecost:

5-Day Bible Reading Plan and Devotional Guide

Theme: Overcome Evil With Good — Living the Love of God

Day 1: What Love Really Is

Reading: [1 John 4:7-12](#)

Devotional: The world offers countless definitions of love, but only God can define it perfectly, because God himself is love. The passage in 1 John reminds us that love does not originate in human emotion or preference — it flows from the very nature of God. When we love others, we are reflecting something of God's own character back into the world. True love is not a feeling that rises and falls with circumstances. It is a commitment rooted in who God is. Ask yourself today: Are the ways I love others shaped more by my feelings or by the character of God?

Day 2: Marks of a True Christian

Reading: [Romans 12:9-16](#)

Devotional: The apostle Paul describes love in action with striking specificity. He calls believers to love without pretense, to despise what is evil, to cling to what is good, and to outdo one another in showing honor. This is not a passive or sentimental love — it is active, discerning, and sacrificial. It shows up in a hug given to the lonely, in a tear shed at a funeral, and in a hand extended to someone struggling in a hallway. Genuine love costs something. Reflect today on one person in your life who needs love expressed through a concrete, deliberate act of kindness.

Day 3: Love That Endures the Cross

Reading: [John 15:12-17](#)

Devotional: Jesus does not merely command love — he defines it by his own example. In John 15, he calls his followers to love one another as he has loved them, and he identifies the greatest expression of that love as laying down one's life for another. Love is what carried Jesus to the cross. Love is what kept him there when every temptation said to come down. He stayed because his people needed him to stay. That same love now lives in every believer through the Holy Spirit. Where in your life is God calling you to stay, to endure, and to love when it is costly?

Day 4: Loving Those Who Are Hard to Love

Reading: [Romans 12:17-21](#)

Devotional: Perhaps the most demanding dimension of Christian love is the call to love enemies — not to repay evil with evil, but to overcome evil with good. This is not weakness. It is a deliberate, Spirit-empowered refusal to let hatred have the last word. Feeding a hungry enemy, offering water to a hostile neighbor — these acts do not surrender truth, but they refuse to surrender love. In a world deeply divided by political and cultural hostility, the Christian is called to think as Christ thinks. Today, identify someone you find difficult to love, and ask God for the grace to act toward them in a way that reflects his character.

Day 5: Love as the Fulfillment of God's Law

Reading: [Romans 13:8-10](#)

Devotional: Paul declares in Romans 13 that love does no wrong to a neighbor and that love is the fulfillment of the law. Every commandment finds its deepest meaning in the call to love. This means that love is not a feeling layered on top of obedience — love is the very heart of obedience. When we love rightly, we are living out everything God has ever asked of his people. This kind of love does not come naturally to sinful human beings. It is a gift of grace, made possible only because Christ first loved us completely. Spend time today in prayer, asking God to make his love the defining motivation of everything you do.