

## **Five-Day Devotional: Following Jesus means taking the next faithful step**

Following Jesus rarely comes with a full roadmap. More often, He simply asks us to take the next step. This 5-day devotional based on the sermon “Step by Step,” explores what it means to trust God one step at a time—walking with others, depending on His provision, remaining faithful through rejection, and moving forward in His authority.

### **Day 1: The Next Step Forward**

#### **Devotional**

Have you ever stood at the edge of a diving board, knowing you needed to jump but unable to see exactly where you'd land? Following Jesus often feels similar. We want the complete roadmap before we take our first step, but faith doesn't work that way. Jesus rarely reveals His entire plan upfront. Instead, He invites us into a relationship of trust where we take one faithful step at a time. This can feel uncomfortable because we like control and certainty. We want to know the outcome before we commit to the journey. But consider this: if Jesus showed us everything ahead of time, would we really need faith? The beauty of following Christ lies not in having all the answers, but in trusting the One who does. Each step we take in obedience builds our confidence in His character and deepens our relationship with Him. Today, Jesus isn't asking you to see the entire staircase. He's simply asking you to take the next step He's placed before you. That step might involve a difficult conversation, a change in direction, or stepping out of your comfort zone. Whatever it is, remember that Jesus has already walked this path and knows exactly where it leads.

#### **Bible Verse**

'And he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits.' - Mark 6:7 (English Standard Version (ESV))

#### **Reflection Question**

What is one specific step you sense Jesus asking you to take right now, even though you can't see the complete outcome?

#### **Quote**

Sometimes the hardest part of following Jesus is not knowing the whole plan.

#### **Prayer**

Lord, help me trust You enough to take the next step You've placed before me. Give me courage to move forward even when I can't see the entire path ahead.

## **Day 2: Better Together**

### **Devotional**

Lone wolves make for great movie characters, but terrible disciples. When Jesus sent out His followers, He specifically chose to send them "two by two." This wasn't just a practical decision for safety—it was a profound statement about how faith is meant to be lived. We live in a culture that celebrates independence and self-reliance. We're taught to pull ourselves up by our bootstraps and figure things out on our own. But Jesus designed discipleship to be a community effort. He knew we'd need encouragement when we're discouraged, accountability when we're tempted to quit, and someone to celebrate with when we see God move. Many of us attend church, believe the right things, and even serve, but we do it all in isolation. We keep our struggles private, our doubts hidden, and our victories to ourselves. This isn't the way Jesus intended it to be. True discipleship requires vulnerability—opening our lives to others even when things are messy. It means finding someone to walk alongside you in your faith journey, whether that's a spouse, a close friend, or a small group. When we try to follow Jesus alone, we miss out on the strength, wisdom, and joy that comes from shared faith.

### **Bible Verse**

'And he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits.' - Mark 6:7 (English Standard Version (ESV))

### **Reflection Question**

Who is walking alongside you in your faith journey, and how can you deepen that partnership in following Jesus?

### **Quote**

Jesus never meant for us to do any of this alone.

### **Prayer**

Father, help me resist the temptation to walk alone. Bring people into my life who will encourage me in faith and hold me accountable to follow You faithfully.

## **Day 3: Traveling Light**

### **Devotional**

Picture packing for a cross-country trip with only the clothes on your back. Sounds terrifying, right? Yet this is exactly what Jesus asked His disciples to do. He instructed them to take no bread, no bag, no money—essentially nothing that would provide security or comfort. This wasn't about making their lives difficult; it was about teaching them dependence. When we're fully prepared and self-sufficient, we rarely experience the joy of seeing God provide. We miss the miracle because we've already solved the problem ourselves. Our culture tells us that wisdom means being prepared for every possible scenario. We save for emergencies, plan for contingencies, and try to control outcomes. While practical planning has its place, Jesus is teaching us something deeper: real faith means taking steps where we can't control the outcome. When we try to prepare for everything, we're really seeking control over our circumstances. But Jesus calls us to a different kind of preparation—being prepared through relationship with Him. You're equipped not because you have all the resources, but because Jesus is the One sending you. Sometimes the most faithful thing we can do is step forward with less than we think we need, trusting that God will provide what's necessary along the way.

### **Bible Verse**

'He charged them to take nothing for their journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in their belts.' - Mark 6:8 (English Standard Version (ESV))

### **Reflection Question**

What security blankets or backup plans might be preventing you from fully depending on God's provision?

### **Quote**

You're prepared because Jesus is the One that's sending you.

### **Prayer**

Lord, help me trust in Your provision rather than my own preparations. Teach me to depend on You rather than my own resources and planning.

## **Day 4: When Doors Close**

### **Devotional**

Rejection stings. Whether it's a job application, a relationship, or someone dismissing our faith, being turned away hurts. Jesus knew His disciples would face rejection, and He was honest about it. He didn't promise them universal acceptance or easy success. But here's what Jesus taught them: faithfulness isn't measured by how people respond to us. It's measured by whether we obey Him. When the disciples encountered rejection, they weren't supposed to take it personally or let it derail their mission. They were to shake the dust off their feet and keep moving. This is liberating news for those of us who struggle with people-pleasing or fear of rejection. Our job isn't to control outcomes or guarantee positive responses. Our job is simply to be faithful to what Jesus has asked us to do. Some people will welcome the love of Christ we offer. Others will reject it. Some will be open to our service and kindness. Others will be hostile. But their response doesn't determine our faithfulness—our obedience does. When you face rejection or hostility for following Jesus, remember that you're in good company. Even Jesus Himself was rejected by many. The question isn't whether everyone will accept what you offer, but whether you'll continue to offer it faithfully.

### **Bible Verse**

'And if any place will not receive you and they will not listen to you, when you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.' - Mark 6:11 (English Standard Version (ESV))

### **Reflection Question**

How has fear of rejection or negative responses held you back from taking faithful steps in following Jesus?

### **Quote**

Faithfulness is not measured by how people respond. Faithfulness is measured by whether or not we obey Jesus.

### **Prayer**

God, help me remember that my faithfulness is measured by my obedience to You, not by how others respond. Give me courage to continue serving even when I face rejection.

## **Day 5: Equipped with Authority**

### **Devotional**

The disciples weren't sent out empty-handed. While Jesus told them to travel light in terms of material possessions, He equipped them with something far more valuable: His authority. They carried the power and backing of the Son of God Himself. Sometimes we feel inadequate for what Jesus is calling us to do. We look at our limitations, our past failures, or our current circumstances and think we're not qualified. But here's the truth: you don't follow Jesus in your own strength or authority. You follow Him in His. When Jesus sends you to love a difficult neighbor, comfort a grieving friend, or step into a new area of service, you're not going alone. You carry His authority, His power, and His presence. The same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead lives in you. This doesn't mean following Jesus will always be easy or that you'll never face challenges. But it does mean you're never operating from a position of weakness. You have access to divine resources, supernatural wisdom, and heavenly backing. As you take your next faithful step, remember that you're not just representing yourself. You're carrying the authority of the King of Kings. That's more than enough for whatever He's calling you to do.

### **Bible Verse**

'And he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits.' - Mark 6:7 (English Standard Version (ESV))

### **Reflection Question**

In what areas of your life do you need to remember that you carry Jesus' authority rather than operating in your own strength?

### **Quote**

Following Jesus means taking the next faithful step.

### **Prayer**

Jesus, thank You for equipping me with Your authority and power. Help me step forward confidently, knowing that You are with me and have given me everything I need.