5-Day Devotional: Jesus as Savior and Lord

Day 1: The Golden Rule in Your Home

Scripture: Matthew 7:12 - "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets."

Reflection: Jesus begins His most practical teachings with something revolutionary yet simple: treat others the way you want to be treated. But here's the challenge—this starts at home, not with strangers or acquaintances.

Think about your tone of voice with your spouse, your patience with your children, your respect toward your parents. Would you want to be spoken to the way you speak to them? The Golden Rule isn't just about being nice to people at church or polite to coworkers. It's about transforming the way we interact with the people who see us at our worst.

When Jesus is truly Lord of our lives, it shows first in how we treat our families. This is where surrender begins—in the everyday moments when no one else is watching.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, forgive me for the times I've treated my family with less grace than I show strangers. Help me to speak with kindness, listen with patience, and serve with humility in my own home. Let my family see You in me today. Amen.

Day 2: Loving God With Everything

Scripture: Mark 12:30-31 - "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."

Reflection: Jesus didn't give us a complicated formula for life. He gave us two commands that form the shape of a cross: love God vertically, love people horizontally.

Notice that loving God isn't just an emotional feeling or intellectual agreement. It's with your heart (what you feel), your soul (what you believe), your mind (what you think), and your strength (what you do). Every part of you is called to love God.

But here's something profound: you can only love your neighbor to the extent you love yourself. If you struggle to see your own value as someone made in God's image, you'll struggle to treat others with dignity. The meanest people are often those who hate themselves most. Understanding that God loves you—that you are infinitely valuable to Him—transforms how you see and treat everyone around you.

Prayer: Father, I want to love You with every part of who I am. Show me where I'm holding back. Help me to understand how deeply You love me, so I can love others well. Make my life a reflection of these two great commands. Amen.

Day 3: The Call to Deny Yourself

Scripture: Luke 9:23 - "Then he said to them all: 'Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.'"

Reflection: This is perhaps the most counter-cultural teaching Jesus ever gave. In a world that screams "be yourself," "follow your heart," and "you do you," Jesus says the exact opposite: deny yourself.

Being a disciple isn't about making a decision for Jesus. It's about following Jesus as an apprentice follows a master. It's about daily choosing His way over your way, His desires over your desires, His will over your will.

The American church has created a dangerous third category that doesn't exist in Scripture: "saved but not a disciple." But Jesus never offered that option. There are only two categories in the Bible—those who follow Jesus and those who don't.

If Jesus is truly your Lord, it will cost you something. It will require you to deny yourself, take up your cross daily, and follow Him—even when it's uncomfortable, unpopular, or difficult.

Prayer: Jesus, I confess that I often want You as Savior but resist You as Lord. Forgive me for trying to keep control of my life. Today I choose to deny myself, take up my cross, and follow You. Be the Master of my life. Amen.

Day 4: Love Your Enemies

Scripture: Matthew 5:44-45 - "But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven."

Reflection: This teaching was absolutely radical when Jesus spoke it, and it remains radical today. No one had ever suggested loving your enemies before Jesus.

But here's why He commands it: God loves His enemies. You and I were once enemies of God, living in rebellion against Him. And while we were still His enemies, He died for us. He loved us enough to bridge the gap we created through our sin.

God doesn't ask you to love your enemies because it will necessarily work out well for you. He asks you to love your enemies because He wants you to be like Him. When you love someone who has hurt you, betrayed you, or opposed you, you reflect the very heart of God.

This might be the hardest teaching to live out. But it's also one of the most powerful witnesses to a watching world that Jesus is truly your Lord.

Prayer: Father, You loved me when I was Your enemy. Give me the strength to love those who have hurt me. Help me to pray for those who oppose me. Let my love for my enemies be a testimony of Your transforming power in my life. Amen.

Day 5: Reject Materialism

Scripture: Matthew 19:21 - "Jesus answered, 'If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.'"

Reflection: Materialism is the belief that material things can satisfy spiritual needs. It whispers lies: "If I just had this, I'd be happy." "A new car will make me feel successful." "More possessions will give me security."

But Jesus calls us to hold our possessions lightly. He wants us to love people and use things—not the other way around. Far too many of us love things and use people.

The truth is, no amount of stuff will ever satisfy the spiritual hunger in your soul. Only God can do that. When you're lonely, a purchase won't fix it. When you're insecure, hoarding possessions won't help. When you need approval, keeping up with the Joneses will only lead to emptiness.

Jesus as Lord means He satisfies your deepest needs. It means you're content with what you have because you have Him. It means your identity isn't found in what you own but in whose you are.

Prayer: Lord, forgive me for trying to fill spiritual needs with material things. Help me to hold my possessions lightly and to find my satisfaction in You alone. Teach me to be content and generous, using what I have for Your kingdom. Amen.