

Better Relationships

A 5-Day Devotional

Key Scripture: Luke 5:17–26

“When Jesus saw their faith, he said, ‘Friend, your sins are forgiven.’” — Luke 5:20

Day 1: Created for Community

Main Scripture

Genesis 2:18 *“It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”*

From the very beginning, God designed humanity for relationships. Before sin entered the world, before governments existed, before churches were established, God looked at Adam and declared that isolation was not good.

We often live as though independence is the ultimate goal. We pride ourselves on self-sufficiency and convince ourselves we don’t need anyone else. Yet God designed us differently. We were created to worship together, laugh together, cry together, and help carry one another through life’s challenges.

The story of the paralyzed man in Luke 5 reminds us that sometimes we need people to carry us when we cannot move forward ourselves. God often uses relationships as one of His primary tools for growth, healing, encouragement, and sanctification.

In the Wesleyan tradition, we recognize that God’s grace often works through Christian community. The people around us help shape us into the image of Christ.

Supporting Scriptures

- *Ecclesiastes 4:9–10; Hebrews 10:24–25*

Reflect

1. Have you been trying to live the Christ-like life alone?
2. Who has God placed in your life to encourage and strengthen you?
3. How can you become more involved in Christian community?

Prayer

Lord, thank You for creating me for community. Help me value the relationships You have placed in my life and teach me to grow alongside others as we pursue You together. Amen.

Day 2: Choose Your Friends Carefully

Main Scripture

Proverbs 13:20 *“Walk with the wise and become wise, for a companion of fools suffers harm.”*

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The people closest to us often determine the direction of our lives.

The Bible teaches that righteous people choose their friends carefully. That doesn't mean we avoid unbelievers or isolate ourselves from the world. Jesus spent time with sinners and calls us to do the same.

The issue isn't whether we have relationships with unbelievers. The issue is who influences us most.

Who speaks into your life? Who shapes your thinking? Who encourages your faith? Who challenges you spiritually?

The paralytic's friends in Luke 5 helped carry him toward Jesus. Some relationships pull us closer to Christ, while others slowly pull us away. Wise believers intentionally surround themselves with people who encourage holiness, faithfulness, and spiritual growth.

A garden left untended becomes overrun with weeds. Likewise, our lives can drift if we allow unhealthy influences to dominate our relationships.

Supporting Scriptures

- *Proverbs 12:26; 1 Corinthians 15:33*

Reflect

1. Who currently has the greatest influence in your life?
2. Are your closest relationships drawing you closer to Christ?
3. What changes might God be asking you to make regarding your influences?

Prayer

Father, give me wisdom to choose relationships that honor You. Surround me with people who encourage my faith and help me become the person You created me to be. Amen.

Day 3: Godly Character Builds Strong Relationships

Main Scripture

1 Corinthians 13:4–7 *“Love is patient, love is kind...”*

Healthy relationships require more than shared interests—they require godly character.

Paul's description of love provides a blueprint for Christ-centered relationships. Patience, kindness, humility, forgiveness, and perseverance are qualities that strengthen every friendship, marriage, and family relationship.

Many people look for perfect friends while neglecting to become the kind of friend others need.

The paralytic's friends demonstrated sacrificial love. They carried their friend. They persevered through obstacles. They climbed a roof and lowered him through it because they cared more about helping him than protecting their own convenience.

Their actions reflected God's love.

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In Wesleyan theology, sanctification is God's ongoing work of transforming us into Christlikeness. As God develops holy love within us, our relationships become healthier and more life-giving.

Supporting Scriptures

- *Colossians 3:12–14; Ephesians 4:2–3*

Reflect

1. Which quality of biblical love is most challenging for you?
2. How has God used others to demonstrate His love in your life?
3. What characteristic would God like to strengthen in you today?

Prayer

Jesus, shape my heart to reflect Your love. Help me become patient, kind, forgiving, and faithful so that my relationships bring glory to You. Amen.

Day 4: Become the Friend You Wish You Had

Main Scripture

Romans 12:10 *“Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.”*

One of the greatest relationship principles is simple: become the kind of friend you wish you had.

Many of us focus on what others should do for us. We want loyalty, encouragement, understanding, and support. Yet Paul calls us to flip that mindset upside down.

Instead of asking: “What am I getting from this relationship?”

We ask: “How can I serve?” “How can I encourage?” “How can I honor someone else today?”

Jesus modeled this perfectly. He washed feet. He served others. He gave Himself completely for the people He loved.

Christ-centered relationships thrive when we put others before ourselves.

True friendship is not transactional. It is sacrificial.

The more we become like Christ, the more we become the kind of people others can trust, depend upon, and grow alongside.

Supporting Scriptures

- *Philippians 2:3–4; John 15:12–13*

Reflect

1. What kind of friend are you currently?
2. Are there areas where selfishness affects your relationships?
3. How can you intentionally honor someone this week?

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Prayer

Lord, help me become the kind of friend that reflects Your love. Teach me to serve, encourage, and honor others above myself. Amen.

Day 5: Be a Mat-Carrier

Main Scripture

Galatians 6:2 *“Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”*

The miracle in Luke 5 began before Jesus spoke.

It began when friends picked up a mat.

The paralyzed man could not get to Jesus by himself. His friends carried him there.

What a picture of the church.

Every day we encounter people carrying burdens:

- Grief
- Anxiety
- Loneliness
- Shame
- Addiction
- Fear
- Discouragement

Some burdens are visible. Many are hidden.

God calls us to be mat-carriers.

Sometimes that means offering practical help. Sometimes it means praying faithfully. Sometimes it means listening. Sometimes it means refusing to give up on someone who has lost hope.

The church is not a gathering of perfect people. It is a community of people helping one another get to Jesus.

As followers of Christ, we are called to carry others until they can stand again.

Supporting Scriptures

- **Romans 15:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:11**

Reflect

1. Who in your life needs a mat-carrier right now?
2. How can you help carry someone else’s burden this week?
3. Who has carried you during difficult seasons?

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Prayer

Father, show me someone who needs encouragement today. Help me carry burdens, offer hope, and lead people closer to Jesus through my words and actions. Amen.

Weekly Challenge

This week:

1. Evaluate your closest relationships.
2. Choose influences that draw you toward Christ.
3. Cultivate godly character in your friendships.
4. Become the friend you wish you had.
5. Find someone whose mat you can help carry.

Key Verse for the Week

Romans 12:10 *“Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.”*

May God use your relationships to strengthen your faith, deepen your love, and help you become more like Jesus.