



5 Day Devotional

This week's devotional invites you to move beyond a Sunday-only faith into the everyday, relational life Jesus calls His people to. We'll explore how God meets us in gathered worship and also in shared, honest fellowship—where mercy reshapes our identity and hope becomes lived, not just learned.

Day 1

Acts 2:46-47

The early church didn't treat faith as a once-a-week event. They gathered publicly and they also shared life "from house to house," letting worship spill into ordinary spaces like meals, conversations, and daily needs. The temple mattered, but the table carried faith into Monday, Tuesday, and every moment in between.

Pastor Tom's contrast helps us name a common pattern: we can love big worship yet still remain isolated. At the table, discipleship becomes personal—encouragement has a face, prayers have names, and growth has accountability. God often adds to our joy and our maturity through simple practices like eating together, listening well, and making room for one more seat.

If the evidence of life is the "crumbs and water rings" of shared time, then the question becomes practical: where will your faith leave traces this week? Moving beyond Sunday doesn't require a program; it begins with an open heart and a willing calendar—trusting that Jesus Himself is the One inviting you into deeper community.

- What has your faith rhythm looked like lately—mostly temple, mostly table, or a mixture of both?
- Who is one person or household you could connect with this week outside of Sunday?
- What keeps you hesitant to invite others into your everyday life—privacy, fear, busyness, or something else?
- Choose one simple "table practice" for the week (a meal, coffee, a walk, or a phone call) and schedule it now.
- Pray: "Jesus, help me see community as part of discipleship, not an optional add-on."

Day 2

Hebrews 10:25

Scripture urges believers not to neglect gathering, because encouragement is not merely a bonus—it's a means of grace. When we regularly choose isolation, we often don't notice what's slowly weakening in us: courage, clarity, hope, and resilience. The gathered church can stir our hearts, but ongoing encouragement usually happens in smaller, consistent relationships.

The sermon names a subtle danger: big church without small church can become "a crowd," where it's easy to be present yet remain hidden. At the table, we are known—not to be exposed or shamed, but to be strengthened. Encouragement becomes specific, prayer becomes personal, and burdens become shared.

Choosing the table is a way of stepping out of hiding. It is also a way of obeying love: making space for others, giving and receiving help, and letting God use ordinary friendship to form us. When we show up consistently, we communicate, "You matter, and I'm not walking alone—nor should you."

- Where do you feel most tempted to hide— from God, from others, or even from yourself?
- What is one sign that you've been treating church primarily as a weekly "fix" rather than a way of life?
- Who encourages you spiritually with any regularity? If no one comes to mind, what next step could change that?
- What would "consistent gathering" look like for you in the next month—weekly meal, small group, or a standing check-in?
- Send one message today to someone: a simple encouragement, prayer, or invitation to connect.

Day 3

Hosea 6:6

God's desire for mercy over sacrifice confronts the idea that spiritual life is mainly about religious performance. It's possible to be faithful in attendance, language, and routine while missing the heart of God—who moves toward people with compassion and restoration. Mercy is not weakness; it is love that refuses to leave someone stuck beneath God's true opinion of them.

Pastor Tom's definition of mercy is especially personal: God's love refuses to agree with any view of you that is beneath His view of you. At the table, this becomes tangible. You hear grace spoken in real time, you receive prayer when you're tired, and you discover that God's kindness can reach you through another believer's listening and presence.

Mercy also changes how we treat others. Tables become places where judgment loses its grip and love gains ground. When mercy shapes a community, people can be honest without fear, repent without despair, and heal without pretending. This is one reason the table matters: it is a living classroom for mercy.

- When you think about God's opinion of you, what words come most naturally—beloved, disappointed, patient, distant, proud? Why?
- What "sacrifice without mercy" pattern might show up in your life (performing, people-pleasing, religious busyness, harsh self-talk)?
- Who has shown you mercy in a meaningful way, and what did it change in you?
- How could you practice mercy this week—listening without fixing, forgiving quickly, or offering gentle truth?
- Pray: "God, teach me to receive Your mercy and to extend it at my tables."

Day 4

Matthew 9:13

When Jesus chose to eat with Matthew, He wasn't ignoring sin—He was announcing mercy. The table became the setting where someone labeled as unwanted learned that Jesus was not agreeing with the condemning voices around him. Jesus didn't wait for Matthew to become acceptable; He moved toward him and dignified him with presence.

This matters because tables often reveal what we believe about belonging. If we only gather with people who are easy, similar, or already "put together," we may unintentionally communicate that grace has prerequisites. Jesus' meals disrupted that logic. He formed disciples by drawing them close, speaking truth, and creating space for transformation in relationship.

The sermon's call to "get to the table" is not about forced vulnerability or awkward interrogation; it's about shared life where God corrects distorted self-perceptions. Over time, consistent community helps us stop outsourcing our identity to shame, comparison, or loneliness. Around the table, we learn to hear Jesus more clearly—and to offer others the same welcome we've received.

- Where do you feel like an "outsider" spiritually or socially, even if you rarely say it out loud?
- What voices have shaped your identity the most lately—Jesus, shame, comparison, family scripts, or cultural pressure?
- Who might Jesus be inviting you to welcome—someone new, overlooked, or different from you?
- What is one way to make your home or routine more hospitable (a simple meal, a consistent invitation, a shared activity)?
- Consider inviting one person this week specifically to communicate belonging, not just friendship. What will you say?

Day 5

Romans 12:2

Transformation is not meant to be occasional inspiration; it is a renewed way of thinking and living. Sunday worship can ignite vision, but lasting change usually requires repetition—truth revisited, practiced, and reinforced. The table provides a rhythm where renewal moves from idea to habit, and from habit to character.

Pastor Tom highlighted that a renewed mind must eventually show up as changed behavior. That's one reason relational discipleship matters: people help us notice what we normalize, challenge what we excuse, and strengthen what God is building. At the table, we learn to bring our real selves—fatigue, doubts, temptations, joys—into the light of grace.

As you finish this devotional, the goal is not to feel pressured but to be invited. Beyond Sunday is about a church that becomes flesh-and-blood: a people who worship together and also share life together. If you want a simple next step, make it practical—one table, one time, one shared moment—and trust God to multiply what you offer.

- What is one area where you want genuine transformation—not just new information?
- What practice helps your mind renew most effectively (Scripture reading, prayer, journaling, conversation, silence)?
- How could a table relationship help you take one concrete step of obedience this week?
- Write one sentence describing the kind of person you believe God is forming you to become. What would change if you lived from that identity?
- Choose one action for the next 7 days: attend a small group, host a meal, schedule coffee, or begin a weekly check-in with a friend—and commit to it today.