centralia church of the nazarene

Dive Deeper Devotional 10/25/2026

Day 1 – Jesus Expands Our Circle

Scripture: Mark 1:16-20; Mark 1:29-34

When Jesus met Simon Peter beside the Sea of Galilee, Peter already had a full life. He knew his work, his family, and his community. Then Jesus invited him to follow. That invitation did more than give Peter a new direction; it began widening his world. Jesus called Peter to follow Him and become someone who would reach other people. Soon Jesus was in Peter's home, healing his mother-in-law, and the whole town was gathering at the door.

Following Jesus changes more than our personal beliefs. As His grace forms us, we begin to see people differently. We may not be called to leave our hometown or our work, but we are called to bring Christlike love into the relationships we already have. Think of the people who regularly cross your path. The neighbor you greet, the person who sits nearby at church, the coworker you see every week - any of these relationships can become a place where God's love is shared. Start by being genuinely present.

Reflection: Whose life has already intersected with yours, and how might Jesus be inviting you to know that person better?

Prayer: Jesus, open my eyes to the people You have placed near me. Shape my heart with Your love, and help me respond with kindness, curiosity, and genuine care. **Amen.**

Day 2 – From the Mountain to the Crowd

Scripture: Mark 9:2-29; Mark 6:7-13

Peter witnessed an extraordinary moment when Jesus was transfigured before him on a mountain. Overwhelmed by what he saw, Peter suggested making shelters there. But the story does not remain on the mountain. Jesus and His disciples return to a crowd, where a father is seeking help for his son. The contrast is striking: an unforgettable encounter with God's glory is followed by the needs of people in ordinary, painful circumstances.

We need worship, prayer, and moments of spiritual renewal. But the life God forms in us is not meant to stay confined to those experiences. Jesus sends His disciples among people who need healing, hope, and compassionate attention. The Holy Spirit who draws us near to Christ also shapes us to love those around us. We cannot solve every problem, and we are not responsible for every need. But we can allow the love of Jesus to interrupt our indifference. Sometimes faithful discipleship begins when we notice someone else's burden and choose not to hurry past.

Reflection: Where might God be inviting you to carry what you receive in worship and prayer into a relationship this week?

Prayer: Lord, thank You for meeting me in worship and prayer. Lead me from those moments into a life of compassion. Help me see and respond to the people who need care. **Amen.**

Day 3 – Together and Facing Outward

Scripture: Acts 2:42-47; Matthew 28:18-20

The early church did not grow into a family of disciples by living independently. Believers devoted themselves to teaching, fellowship, shared meals, and prayer. They encouraged one another, met practical needs, and made room for life together. We need that same kind of community. We need people who know us well enough to pray for us, encourage us when we struggle, and remind us of God's grace.

But the circle of Christian community is not meant to turn permanently inward. Imagine believers holding hands in a circle, supporting one another while facing outward toward their neighbors. That is a picture of a disciple-making church: connected to one another and attentive to the world. Our life with Jesus is personal, but it was never meant to remain private. God's Spirit draws us together and sends us in love. The meals we share and the friendships we build can strengthen our faith while making space for people who are not yet part of our church community.

Reflection: Are you making room both for relationships that strengthen your faith and for people beyond your usual circle?

Prayer: Holy Spirit, deepen our love for one another without allowing us to become closed off to others. Make our church a welcoming community, formed together and sent in love. **Amen.**

Day 4 – Grace Across the Doorway

Scripture: Acts 2:44-47; Hebrews 13:1-2

Even after Pentecost, Peter was still becoming more like Jesus. In Acts 10, God challenged Peter's assumptions about who could be welcomed into the community of faith. While Peter received a vision, Cornelius was also being prepared to send for him. Peter entered a Gentile home he once would have kept at a distance, listened to what had happened there, and shared the good news of Jesus. As he spoke, the Holy Spirit came upon the people gathered in that home.

Peter discovered that God's grace was wider than the boundaries he had assumed. Wesleyan Christians speak of prevenient grace: God's gracious work that goes before our response. We do not have to create God's concern for the people around us. God is already at work, and He invites us to join Him with humility and love. We should also remember that people are never projects. Every person deserves dignity, friendship, and care, whether or not they share our beliefs or attend our church. The Spirit may need to change our assumptions before we can fully welcome someone.

Reflection: Is there someone you have kept at a distance because of an assumption you need to surrender?

Prayer: God, forgive me for the people I have dismissed or overlooked. Widen my heart, challenge my assumptions, and help me welcome others with the love of Jesus. **Amen.**

Day 5 – Notice. Listen. Invite.

Scripture: Acts 10:23-33; Colossians 4:2-6

Peter's visit to Cornelius began with a simple but meaningful step: he went into another person's home and heard his story. Real connection often begins in similarly ordinary ways. We notice someone we have overlooked. We learn a name. We ask how life is going and make enough room to hear the answer. A conversation can become a friendship, an opportunity for prayer, or a chance to share how Jesus is shaping our own lives.

This is not another task to pile onto an already crowded schedule. Discipleship begins with learning to see the people who are already part of our days. This week, try three simple movements: Notice someone with intention. Listen without rushing to give advice or fix things. Invite a next step when it feels welcome - perhaps coffee, a shared meal, prayer, or another conversation. We do not control the outcome or need to force a spiritual moment. We trust the Holy Spirit to guide us as we offer genuine presence, patience, and love. Following Jesus means making room for people.

Reflection: Who is one person you can notice, listen to, or invite into a deeper relationship this week?

Prayer: Holy Spirit, open my eyes. Help me listen with patience, love without an agenda, and recognize one faithful step toward someone You have placed in my life. **Amen.**

Weekly Challenge

- Begin each day with this prayer: “Holy Spirit, open my eyes to the people around me.”
- Learn a name or take time to hear the story of someone you usually pass by.
- Read Acts 10 and ask God to show you an assumption that may be limiting your love.
- Make room for an unhurried conversation, a shared meal, or a thoughtful check-in.
- Invite one person into a natural next step of friendship, prayer, or encouragement.

Remember:

Following Jesus widens our hearts toward the people He loves.

The Spirit draws us together for support and sends us outward in love.

God’s grace is already at work before we arrive.

People are not projects; they are neighbors worthy of dignity and care.

Notice. Listen. Invite. Make room for people in your journey of grace.