

Lord, Break My Heart for the Lost
By Brent Barnett
www.relevantbibleteaching.com

A four-week devotional to lead our hearts to brokenness over the eternal state of the lost such that we are moved to share Christ's gospel Biblically and lovingly.

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Introduction

Brokenness is a theme that is carried throughout the Scriptures. It is intricately connected to the principle of God humbling us before using us or exalting us. In Isaiah 66:2 God says, “But to this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word.” God works brokenness into our lives by orchestrating the events of our lives to help us come to see our absolute dependency upon Him. His objective is that we would come to find true freedom and absolute joy in total surrender to His will and purposes for our lives. Given that Jesus commissioned His followers by saying that we are to go and make disciples, evangelism is without a doubt one of the things that is near and dear to God’s heart. Those who are humble and broken before God will therefore have an unquenchable desire to share God’s Word. In so doing, they will find fullness of joy in and through their humbled state.

Sharing the gospel is not something that is necessarily fun, easy, or stress-free. It is extremely uncomfortable, it is challenging, and it requires us to think and study. It takes effort to be able to present the gospel in a way that is right and that makes sense. We need to know various verses in order to be able to rightly communicate the gospel through the power of God’s Word. We will get laughed at, ignored, threatened, persecuted, and stonewalled, but we will be doing what we have been commanded to do. Interestingly, as we evangelize, we will further be humbled and reminded of our surrender to Christ. Yet this will only increase our joy because we will know that we have done what was commanded of us. God doesn’t ask us to do things to bring us misery, but He asks us to do things, even if they are difficult, because He knows that they will bring us more joy than we had before. Joy is always the result of obedience.

Sadly, if you are like me, evangelism hasn’t been something that you have really devoted yourself to. There have been times in my life where I had more time and was more open to evangelizing than at others. There were times that I always had tracts with me to give out, where I knocked on doors with a Bible in my hand, and where I tried to share the gospel with friends and co-workers. But life has a way of distracting us from the seriousness of the call.

The purpose of this four week devotional is to take us back to the Scriptures and look at four truths about evangelism. We must be reminded of just what is at stake and how important our faithfulness is when it comes to the eternity of those who need Jesus. God’s Word is the best way to convict us and break us of our pride, blindness, selfishness, and vanity.

The first week will remind us of the most disturbing aspect of eternity as we will read passage after passage each day of the week about the eternal punishment of the unsaved in hell. It is not a pretty picture, but that is exactly why we need to be reminded of the eternal state of the lost. There is much at stake. Then, lest we dwell only on the bad news, in the second week, we will be reminded of just how much God loves sinners and wants them to repent. God’s kindness leads us to repent, and we need to be reminded just how much He loves us such that He gave His Son for us. The third week will remind us

of the importance of the role that we play, for God has called us to be His witnesses. It is easy to wait for somebody else to do the hard work, but God has called each of us to participate. Finally, week four will remind us of the specifics of the gospel message lest we are tempted to water it down so that the task of evangelism becomes less threatening.

Broken people who are humble and surrendered to God care about the lost and desire to impact their lives for eternity with the gospel. May God break us and teach us how to rightly view our commissioning and calling to evangelize such that we can be those who actively share the gospel no matter what it might mean for us. God will reward us, so let us be faithful. Let us pray that God will break our hearts for the lost.

Week One

The State of the Lost

Main Emphasis: We tend to forget about the severity of God's wrath, of eternal punishment, of the judgment, and of hell, so let's refresh our minds and take in the awful reality.

The story of Jesus isn't so grand if there is no purpose in His coming to earth and dying. The cross bridges the gap between us and God, but let us not forget that there is a gap. This week we will meditate on the reality of this separation and of the painful consequences. It will make God's love all the more special, wonderful, and powerful when we mediate on that next week.

Dear Father,

Thank You that You are a totally just God. Thank You that You are a totally loving God. Remind me this week that You must be separate from sin and unrighteousness. Remind me how serious and real hell is. Break my heart for those in my life who do not know You. Grant me opportunities to share about Your holiness and Your love and the boldness to speak out. Etch this awful truth in my mind so that whenever I am around unbelievers I will recall it to mind. Thank You again that this is not the whole story for me because of Jesus, in whose name I pray, Amen.

Week One

Day 1

Matthew 25:31-46

“But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.’ Then the righteous will answer Him, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink? And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ The King will answer and say to them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.’ Then He will also say to those on His left, ‘Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.’ Then they themselves also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?’ Then He will answer them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’ These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

This passage presents a very vivid picture of what all men and women will one day face. We will either be on the right or on the left, entering into eternal life or eternal punishment. It also presents a chance for self-examination. Are you confident of which side are you on? Are you confident of which side those who you love are on? God is very black and white. It is life or death, punishment or reward, hell or heaven. We need to be sure to think in these terms when it comes to matters of eternal importance.

Possible applications:

1. Examine yourself to be sure you are confident of your eternal destination.
2. Begin to think about the eternal destinations of others. If you already are, keep praying for their salvation and living out Jesus in their presence.
3. As a believer, ask yourself if you do enough to meet the needs of the needy. If there is a lack of obvious need in your immediate area, do something about the needy elsewhere. You won't have to go too far.

My application: (You will have an opportunity to do this each time. If Holy Spirit directs you to a certain issue, write it down. Do not write something down for the sake of writing something down. If nothing speaks to your heart, thank God that you are doing what He has asked of you, and take a moment to do the next part.)

My prayer: (You will be given this space each time as well. Take care to do this part. You can pray without writing anything down if you so choose, but it is sometimes helpful to write things down. For one, it enables us to concentrate without our minds drifting off. Second, in case you work through this booklet again later on in life, it might be interesting to look back and see how God has answered your prayers. If you don't remember what you prayed, it is difficult to acknowledge God for answering your prayers.)

Week One

Day 2

2 Timothy 2:23-26

“But refuse foolish and ignorant speculations, knowing that they produce quarrels. The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.”

This is a reality about the lost that we do not often recall or consider. Any man or woman without Christ is a minion of Satan held captive to do whatever Satan desires. We are not rugged individualists who just make good choices or bad. If you are a child of God, you are to be controlled by the Spirit. If you are not a child of God, you are controlled by the whims and desires of the evil one. This is scary to realize, and that is just the point. Here is one more thing to note. There are times when even believers can be deceived such that they live as if they are under Satan's control. In such cases, we need to pray for these who are deceived and gently and with great patience and forbearance correct them such that they may be restored to faithful service in Christ.

Possible Applications:

1. Do not waste precious time discussing truth with people who are set on meaningless debate.
2. Gently correct a brother or sister who is living in sin, warning them that they might so lose their bearings that they are doing the work of the enemy and not God.
3. Try to be more patient with lost friends and acquaintances because they are captive to do evil. Yet this also ought to create more fervor in us to set them free with the truth of God's Word.

My application:

My prayer:

Week One
Day 3

Ephesians 2:1-2

“And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.”

Those who are without Christ are dead in sin. They walk according to Satan’s design and plan and in a spirit of disobedience to God. We need not be surprised by the lifestyles of the unsaved, for they are sons and daughters of disobedience. We should also recognize that in many instances they think that they are alive, not recognizing or at least acknowledging their own spiritual deadness and transgression against the law of God. This is why it is so important that we take the initiative in calling the attention of the lost to God and His Word such that they can be sensitized to the error of their ways in light of a holy God.

Possible Applications:

1. Thank God for reaching out to you and moving in you to seek Him.
2. Gain a better understanding for why people don’t naturally have an appetite for what you know is so much better in the Lord.
3. Realize that we must inject ourselves into the lives of others and not wait for something to happen spontaneously. We must be willing to help the unsaved see their sin and acknowledge it so that eternal judgment and the cross actually have relevance to their hearts and minds.

My application:

My prayer:

Week One

Day 4

Romans 1:28-32

“And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.”

We have here a long list of the fruit of the devil in the lives of the unsaved. These are characteristics that we should expect to see in a person who is without Christ, which is all the more reason that our lives should shine in bright contrast. The interesting thing is that the Scripture very plainly states that the unsaved know God’s expectations and laws. This can be why we make them feel guilty or why they attack us when we live good lives. They may be pressuring us to see if we are genuine and prodding us to, in effect, test us and motivate us to see if we will speak out for the truth. After all, if they really are going to hell and we as Christians actually believed that about them, it is only reasonable to conclude that we would tell them how to be saved. Sadly, too often we don’t say what the unsaved need to hear, and they continue as they had been. The unsaved typically gang up with others who live like they do, and there is mutual encouragement to do evil. The bottom line is that the penalty for their evil is death, whether they acknowledge it or not and whether we remind them of it or not. This is the painful reality of this verse.

Possible Applications:

1. Remember that the penalty for the wrongdoing of the unsaved is death; this should move us to reach out to them rather than judge them.
2. Recognize the power of reminding a person of God’s law as a means of showing them their sin and their need for a Savior.
3. Ask yourself if you stand out in sharp contrast from the world as you should. Do your co-workers and neighbors know that you are a Christian?

My application:

My prayer:

Week One

Day 5

Revelation 20:15; Revelation 21:8

“And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”

“But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

The point of these verses is straightforward. There is a hell, a lake of fire, an eternal judgment, and eternal suffering and agony. Only while alive on earth can a person’s eternal state be changed. Are you looking for some excitement in your Christian life? Get involved in sharing your faith! I guarantee that you will be challenged and moved.

Possible Applications:

1. Contemplate eternity without God and then picture your unsaved loved ones there. Then weep and pray for their souls.
2. Begin researching ways to learn to be a better evangelist. Perhaps your church has a good program to train you in sharing the gospel. Perhaps you already know the gospel and know who needs to hear it, but you have been quenching the Spirit’s leading in your heart. It is time to begin committing to taking steps of action. The key, however, is to be sure that the action taken is Biblical. That is what the rest of the devotional will help you iron out.

My application:

My prayer:

Week One
Day 6

John 3:18

“He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”

As things stand, those who do evil are judged. This is why we are commanded not to take revenge. God’s wrath is already pooled up and will be carried out at the judgment and in the last days for those who do not yet know Christ. Any man who puts confidence in anything but the name of Jesus had better think again. Trusting in Christ is the only way to avoid God’s judgment and the condemnation and consequences of sin.

Possible Applications:

1. Meditate on the fact that the unsaved stand guilty before the wrath of God and will be sentenced to death. Though we should take joy in the justice of God being realized, we should not delight in the fact that the lost will suffer an agonizing eternal fate. Even God doesn’t take pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezekiel 18:32), so if we do, we need to repent.
2. Do not take revenge because you know that the end of man is in God’s hand (Romans 12:19). The wicked, though prospering now, will pay, and the righteous man will get his reward (2 Corinthians 5:10).

My application:

My prayer:

Week One
Day 7

Romans 2:5-9

“But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who WILL RENDER TO EACH PERSON ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS: to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation. There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek.”

By now the theme of eternal suffering and hell should have clearly emerged in our hearts to the point where it annoys and nauseates us. There will be tribulation and hell to pay for every man and woman who is without Christ, no matter how little evil or how much evil, no matter their race, no matter their wealth, and no matter their education. All will pay, for God will be sure that justice is served. This will not be a pleasant experience, and it will last forever (see Revelation 20:15, Mark 9:48). This is the truth that this chapter is trying to convey to a point of sounding redundant. I want these truths and the reality of hell to be so etched in our minds that we cannot bear to pass up an open door to witness.

Possible Applications:

1. Pick the verse from this chapter that struck your heart the most intensely and commit it to memory.
2. Make a point of being sensitive to God over the state of the lost. Be conscious of eternal things wherever you are.
3. Get on your knees and starting pleading for specific souls that are in your sphere of influence.

My application:

My prayer:

Week Two

The Heart of God

Main Emphasis: We must learn to place an extremely high value on a lost soul and on the priority of reaching even one person because God does.

I am afraid that despite the great importance of church activities and fellowshiping with believers that we tend to succumb to the “holy huddle” syndrome and never approach the line of scrimmage to face the defense of Satan holding his captive lost souls. This means that we must have our heart break for the lost because of their ultimate destiny and, as we will see, because of how important they are to God.

Dear Father,

Thank you for putting the lostness of my soul as a priority in someone's heart that they shared the gospel with me and taught me Your ways. Please put such a burden and desire in my heart. Break my heart over the dire situation of those who are not Your own. Show me through your Word how important each soul is to You. Take me near to Your heart and grant me Your mind in regard to this matter. I praise You for what You are about to do through Your Holy Spirit applying Your Word to my heart. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

Week Two

Day 1

Romans 5:8

“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

This begins a refreshingly different tone from the first section. Though we were dead in our sins, captive of the devil, storing up wrath, stubborn and hard-hearted, and destined for hell, God moved in our hearts and lives and demonstrated His love to us. God through Christ entered the domain of Satan and the ugliness of mankind and died to save the world. Sadly, some still refuse to respond in faith to His love. Even so, we must follow the example of Christ, being willing to initiate love to sinners who are undeserving, thereby building a relational bridge to them and, more importantly, sharing the gospel with them.

Possible Applications:

1. Look for intentional ways to go on the offensive by manifesting Christlike love in the life of someone who is not saved.
2. Praise God that He made the first move and didn't leave us to our own eternally painful end.

My application:

My prayer:

Week Two

Day 2

Luke 15:1-7

“Now all the tax collectors and the sinners were coming near Him to listen to Him. Both the Pharisees and the scribes began to grumble, saying, ‘This man receives sinners and eats with them.’ So He told them this parable, saying, “What man among you, if he has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open pasture and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!’ I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.”

These verses are loaded with potent truths that we do not do much conscious thinking or meditation on. First, we see all of the sinners and despised people coming to Jesus. Unlike the self-righteous religious leaders of the day, Jesus cared about the sinners and the downtrodden. He was delighted that they were willing to come to Him and learn from Him. Jesus didn’t become like the world to win the world, but He was willing to love those in the world. He always confronted the sinner of his sin, and His purpose was to point people to salvation. Too often, I fear that we celebrate our righteous associations (which are good, right, and healthy in and of themselves) at the expense of reaching out to the lost. Just leading one lost sinner to Christ is reason for great joy to be found in heaven in the presence of God. Jesus wasn’t afraid of getting “dirty” by being around sinners, but too often Christians choose to judge the lost and prefer to not deal with their problems. Yet Christians are to associate with the lost (1 Corinthians 5:9-11), though clearly we must not condone their behavior or compromise our integrity or morality in order to do so. We are to pull them to Christ; it must not happen the other way around. We must seek and find the sheep, rather than expecting them to find us or God. God’s love for lost, evil people like we once were is immense.

Possible Applications:

1. Take some time in your schedule to have an unsaved neighbor or friend over for dinner. Share a meal with them. Love them and reveal Christ to them without preaching at them or judging them. However, do not hold back from kindly and gently, yet boldly, sharing the truth as God gives opportunity.
2. Ask God to give you Jesus’ heart for the lost person. Ask for more of a “leave the ninety-nine” and “go after the one” mindset.

My application:

My prayer:

Week Two Day 3

Luke 15:8-10

“Or what woman, if she has ten silver coins and loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin which I had lost!’ In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

This is a continuation of yesterday’s passage. Christ goes on to emphasize the point to His listeners and to us about how great His love is for the lost and how much of a priority it must be for us to seek to lead just one lost person to Christ. There is tremendous joy in the presence of angels and God’s presence when a sinner repents. The angels were in a cosmic battle against Satan and his fallen angels. They have seen God Himself enter the battle, die, and be raised again. They have seen how important souls are to God, and they rejoice when one comes to Him in repentance. Unfortunately, all too often Christ’s church doesn’t have nearly the love, commitment, or enthusiasm for reaching the lost that our Lord and Savior Himself did. We are not nearly as interested or engaged as the angels in respect to the cosmic battle which we are in. Like the woman in the passage, we get all bent out of shape if we lose a coin, a pen, a sock, or a pill, for example. When the television remote disappears, everything is on hold until it is found. These are insignificant items really when compared to souls of men and women. Why is it so difficult to get as bent out of shape over the state of a lost person? The woman in the passage scoured her entire house until she could find the coin, and then she celebrated. We need to put the same intensity and thoroughness into seeking the lost, and then we can celebrate when one comes to Christ and is found.

Possible Applications:

1. Ask God to bend you out of shape over the state of the lost.
2. Ask yourself how excited you get when a person gets saved. Do you care?

My application:

My prayer:

Week Two

Day 4

Luke 15:11-32

“And He said, ‘A man had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, “Father, give me the share of the estate that falls to me.” So he divided his wealth between them. And not many days later, the younger son gathered everything together and went on a journey into a distant country, and there he squandered his estate with loose living. Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began to be impoverished. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would have gladly filled his stomach with the pods that the swine were eating, and no one was giving anything to him. But when he came to his senses, he said, “How many of my father's hired men have more than enough bread, but I am dying here with hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men.’” So he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.” But the father said to his slaves, “Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.” And they began to celebrate. Now his older son was in the field, and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. And he summoned one of the servants and began inquiring what these things could be. And he said to him, “Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has received him back safe and sound.” But he became angry and was not willing to go in; and his father came out and began pleading with him. But he answered and said to his father, “Look! For so many years I have been serving you and I have never neglected a command of yours; and yet you have never given me a young goat, so that I might celebrate with my friends; but when this son of yours came, who has devoured your wealth with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him.” And he said to him, “Son, you have always been with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, for this brother of yours was dead and has begun to live, and was lost and has been found.””

This is the well-known story of the prodigal son. All of us were made to experience relationship with God. But we have all fallen short of His glory and turned away from Him, aligning ourselves with Satan and the evils of the world. But we are in week 2 now discussing God's love. God stands with arms open ready to receive the lost person who repents and trusts in Jesus' sacrificial death to save him. This is the good news after the very bad news. Even if a person decides to “live it up” for the bulk of his life, heaven still can be found by him if he repents. In fact, heaven will celebrate, and a feast will be had by all. It is never too late to repent until we leave this earth, for then it is too late. Even if we as believers have wandered from holy living, God is ready and willing to

forgive us. Shame on us if we are like the older brother, not delighting to see sinners forgiven simply because God loves them. Shame on us if we think that a sinning believer cannot be restored. We need to cry out to the Lord to save the lost and purify the church of Christ. May we never let jealousy or a spirit of judgment cloud our minds from seeing the heart of God, Who is always ready with arms open wide in forgiveness and acceptance. God's heart needs to be ours as well. Even though the lost sinner has rejected God and lived a life of waste, God still wants to receive him as a son. The question is, are we equally willing?

Possible Applications:

1. Repent of any stubbornness in your heart to love somebody or reach out to them because you are bitter toward them or perhaps even hate them and want them to pay.
2. Be adamant in refuting a person's claim that they have done too much for God to forgive. Show them what God says in His Word.
3. Continue to examine your heart for reflections of God's heart with arms spread wide in readiness to forgive and accept.

My application:

My prayer:

Week Two Day 5

Luke 5:27-32

“After that He went out and noticed a tax collector named Levi sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, ‘Follow Me.’ And he left everything behind, and got up and began to follow Him. And Levi gave a big reception for Him in his house; and there was a great crowd of tax collectors and other people who were reclining at the table with them. The Pharisees and their scribes began grumbling at His disciples, saying, ‘Why do you eat and drink with the tax collectors and sinners?’ And Jesus answered and said to them, ‘It is not those who are well who need a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.’”

Here we find ourselves with Christ intentionally setting up a teaching moment. Levi, a known sinner, probably looking for a break or change of career, intrigued by Jesus, throws a reception for Jesus at his house. Of course all of Levi’s corrupt friends and tax collector associates are there. Jesus walks right into this purposefully. He knew He would be criticized for eating and drinking with sinners. Jesus said that He, the doctor of the soul and heart, needed to be around those sick in their sin. The healthy, righteous person does not need a doctor. We at times focus too much on mending what is unbroken rather than entering the war zone where there are plenty of hurts and needs. Jesus said that He came to save sinners. We are commissioned to do the same.

Possible Applications:

1. Let us not be afraid to be friendly to the unsaved.
2. Jesus didn’t defile Himself by going to Levi’s house. Levi was in a spirit of teachability, and Jesus had the floor and was setting the agenda. He was doing the influencing, not being negatively influenced. Let us concentrate on taking advantage of opportunities where we are doing the influencing rather than being influenced.

My application:

My prayer:

Week Two

Day 6

I John 4:19

“We love, because He first loved us.”

We must remember that the only reason we as Christians are able to love is because Jesus showed us how and now indwells us to help us love others. It is silly to expect the unsaved to love with true selfless love. In fact, I believe that it is impossible (1 John 4:7-8). Without Christ we do things to advance ourselves, for we are self-consumed. Thus, the world isn't used to experiencing freely-given, self-sacrificing love from a Christian who views himself as the servant of all. Selfless love manifested in the life of the Christian can go a long way, for it goes directly against the flow. It is unmerited, unexpected, and undeserved. It doesn't even need to be paid back, for it is free. Jesus loved us while we were still ugly, dirty, sick sinners. Let us be the ones who initiate Christlike love with all people, but especially with those who are as of yet unacquainted with the One who taught us how to love.

Possible Applications:

1. Be the first to break the ice by a kind word or action. Focus on things that you know will not and cannot be repaid to you.
2. Think through your church's ministries. Ask yourself if you were an unsaved member of the community if you think the church does enough in the community to manifest selfless love.

My application:

My prayer:

Week Two

Day 7

John 3:16-17

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.”

This chapter has been intended to hammer away at our hearts with truth about how God initiated love with us while as yet we did not deserve it. We rejected and ridiculed His Son, and yet He died in our place. Fortunately for us God did not judge us and give us what was due us. He put that burden on Christ and reached out to us in love, desiring to save us. We, too, must not judge and condemn others, busily counting and tracking their sins, but rather with intentionality and initiative we must show Christ’s love to others. God made the first move, and so must we. Naturally, the lost will not have a taste or appetite for God. We must show them some unconditional love, and the appetite may begin to develop (John 3:21). But the key is that God moved first in love, and so must we.

Possible Applications:

1. Pick a verse or two from week 2 and memorize them.
2. Pray that God will etch the truths about God’s love for the lost into your heart and mind such that you will begin to care for them to the same extent and degree that God does.

My application:

My prayer:

Week Three

The Commissioning of the Saints

Main Emphasis: God has chosen to accomplish His purpose of spreading the gospel throughout the world through us.

We must assume the role of ambassador, missionary, and evangelist because that is what God says we are.

Dear Father,

Thank You that, although You have power to do all things, You choose to work through us so that we can be participants in sharing the gospel of Your Son. Help us this week to assume the roles that You have called us to. Forgive us if we have run from these roles for whatever reason: fear, lack of confidence, not making them a priority, etc. We ask that you would raise up more and more equipped and wholehearted disciples to go and reap a harvest of souls. Let me be a part of this laboring. Show me what you want me to do and where. Allow me to see opportunities created by You just for me. Transform my heart, mind, and will, and conform it to Yours, O Lord. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Week Three Day 1

Matthew 28:18-20

“And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’”

Jesus at the cross conquered sin and death once and for all. Satan is still allowed to roam about, which God sovereignly allows for purposes only He fully understands. Yet Satan, just as sin and death, will be abolished in the lake of fire forever. However, Jesus is the supreme power and king of the universe. He soon will come back to claim His kingdom. Right now He delays until the fullness of time in order that more men and women can be His to be with Him for eternity. But He has left the work to us. Of course He will be with us the entire way, enabling, leading, guiding, and empowering us. Yet the work is ours: to preach the gospel, baptize the converts, and teach them to do all that Christ has commanded and instructed us to do. Evangelism and discipleship are the calling of every believer because every believer has been commissioned to do so. We cannot shirk our responsibility and make the pastor do all of the work. God will never abandon us as we seek to accomplish His will on earth.

Possible Applications:

1. Assume the role of an evangelist and disciplemaker if you have not already seen yourself as such. Be sure that you purify your heart before the Lord and study His Word laboriously so that you are prepared for the task ahead.
2. Emphasize the importance and significance of baptism for converts.
3. Don't be satisfied with sharing the gospel only; seek to teach all men and women the full counsel of God.
4. Thank God that we do this task by His authority; thus the supreme power is in us with Christ and not with the enemy or with the lost.

My application:

My prayer:

Week Three

Day 2

Acts 1:8

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”

Not only do we have the sanctioning of Christ and His authority and the power of His name but we have the Holy Spirit to help us and empower us in our evangelism efforts. He may move in our hearts to pray for somebody or to share with somebody or to do something loving for somebody. He can help us to be patient. He will help us to recall at just the right time the Scriptures that we have studied and put to memory. The call for the church as a whole is to take the gospel to the ends of the earth. As individuals, our calling is to take it wherever God calls and enables us to take it, starting right in our own “Jerusalems.” No man or woman or nation is exempt from needing to hear the gospel message.

Possible Applications:

1. Pray for the Holy Spirit to lead you to evangelistic opportunities, to open doors, and to empower you in your testimony and witness.
2. Pray for missionaries worldwide who are taking the gospel to areas that have never ever heard it before.

My application:

My prayer:

Week Three Day 3

2 Corinthians 5:18-20

“Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.”

We are commissioned, we are witnesses commanded to testify, and we are ambassadors for Christ. Ambassadors work on behalf of their own country to promote peaceful and harmonious relations between their country and other countries. We are ambassadors for Christ. We represent the kingdom of heaven, and we are to appeal to mankind who is of Satan’s kingdom to have peace with God. We are seeking reconciliation between them and God. We know from week one of this booklet that the unsaved are at enmity with God. It is our job to speak on behalf of God to them to be reconciled with God. All of us are in full-time ministry in that sense.

Possible Applications:

1. Make sure you know the word of reconciliation (God’s Word and especially the gospel) well enough to be able to speak on behalf of God.
2. As an ambassador, examine your heart to see if you reflect your King as you ought.

My application:

My prayer:

Week Three Day 4

Matthew 5:13-15

“You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men. You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.”

Salt enhances the taste of a food by providing additional flavor. It also preserves. Jesus tells us that we are the salt of the earth. We add flavor and help people to truly experience pleasure and joy in God by leading them to Him. We are also to act as those who preserve and uphold truth and justice in the earth. If we neither stand for righteousness nor speak the truth of the gospel, we may as well be thrown into the dumpster. We do not fulfill our purpose. We are also the light of the world. Light penetrates the darkness, showing what is really there. Light also is a beacon which leads us to our Creator. We are supposed to be those who by our righteous deeds and love reveal to others how dark their hearts are. We are to point the way to salvation in our God. If we do not expose our light to the world, or if we in fact have grown dim or dark, then we are useless. May this not be the case for you or me.

Possible Applications:

1. Evaluate yourself in terms of your saltiness and brightness.
2. Identify and confess the ways in which you have been hiding your light.
3. Give specific ways of how you can shine your light brighter this very day.

My application:

My prayer:

Week Three Day 5

Romans 10:13-15

“For ‘WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.’ How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, ‘HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS!’”

If we know the gospel message, but if we do not share it, what good is it? How can a person get saved and believe in Christ without ever having heard the good news? How can a person hear the good news if there is no one to tell them? God delights in those who share of His love. We are all sent in the sense that we are commissioned by God to spread the gospel. As a church, we need to be conscious of actively sending equipped believers out to preach the good news. Otherwise, how will those who are without God hear of God?

Possible Applications:

1. Download the [free witnessing tools](#) on the Relevant Bible Teaching website to learn how to better share the gospel.
2. Ask yourself if you do a good job communicating the gospel in both word and life and if you do that consistently. How can you improve?

My application:

My prayer:

Week Three Day 6

I Timothy 3:15

“But in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.”

The amazing thing about the church is that Christ says that He will build it, and hell will not prevail against it. Christians have been killed for their faith throughout history, and it is no different across the world today. Persecution will continue to increase as will deceptions and those doing the deceiving, but the true church will keep growing and increasing because God will do it. The church is the pillar and support of the truth, and thus God entrusts the people of God to uphold, defend, and personify the truth of Christ Who is in us and Who is Himself the truth. A pillar is only as strong as how it is constructed in its component parts. We as a church are as strong or weak as our integrity and the substance of our belief, which is what ultimately defines a person of God. Thus we must take sin seriously, and we must defend the truth vigorously, yet with grace. It is a great privilege that God would use us to uphold and advance the truth, which is His and Him.

Possible Applications:

1. Identify areas in your integrity which have been breached, and close the gap through repentance.
2. Make great efforts to study the Word of God so that you can be equipped and adequate to defend the truth (1 Peter 3:15) and contend for it (Jude 1:3).
3. Ask the Lord to make you into a person who stands strong for the Lord and His church. Is there a specific way you need to do this today?

My application:

My prayer:

Week Three
Day 7

Luke 10:2

“And He was saying to them, ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.’”

Jesus looks out over the landscape of mankind and sees with divine insight and vision that there are many who could be saved. Certainly, there are those out there today who could come to Christ. The issue which was of a greater concern to Christ was that those who would labor for Him and spread the good news were few and far between. We need to be praying that the Lord would raise up more and more godly men and women who will stand for Christ wherever they are. Every believer is responsible for standing and speaking for Christ. We need more Christians who are true laborers who will share the gospel with potential converts, and we need more converts who will be trained and equipped such that they can become effective laborers themselves, harvesting many souls. This is the bottom line of week 3.

Possible Applications:

1. Memorize and mediate on a key verse from this section.
2. Pray that God will continue to create in you a heart that accepts His calling to be a laborer for His kingdom purposes.
3. Pray that God will prepare more laborers for the harvest.

My application:

My prayer:

Week Four

God-given Strategies for Reaching the Lost

Main Emphasis: A do-whatever-it-takes approach to getting people through the doors and into the pews is a far cry from the fundamental principles that God lays forth of assembling together as one and sharing our faith in word and deed.

The main church growth method taught to pastors today is to gear the church service, its activities, and its advertising to the one exploring God and religion. The essence of church (fellowship, in-depth teaching, sharing burdens with one another, breaking bread together, praying together, and helping one another as needs arise) in many of these types of churches is lost. Church becomes a mall/corporation/smorgasbord. God's principles are obvious and simple; the difficulty lies in following through upon them and committing ourselves to them. Lasting individual growth and growth in number with individuals growing to places of maturity in Christ is not easy and has no shortcuts. It has much more to do with living a godly life, relating in love to one another and to the unsaved, and communicating a simple message of good news through word and life.

Dear Father,

After Nehemiah built the wall of Your city, the surrounding peoples looked upon it and fell in their confidence in themselves and in their gods. They realized that the Jews had built the wall with the help of their God who is mighty and powerful and eminently involved in their lives (Nehemiah 6:16). I pray that my life and my church as a whole can be looked at by others, and You can be seen. I pray against clever manmade strategies that hurt your people and generate a loss of the meaning of fellowship and community and family. I pray that I am faithful to declare your gospel message and that I do not disqualify myself in the process by altering it or watering it down. I want You to be glorified in my life and in Your church. I praise You right now for Your power and Your principles. Now grant me understanding and help me to align all the areas of my life to Your truth, and particularly in this area of evangelism. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Week Four

Day 1

Romans 10:17

“So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.”

Hebrews 4:12

“For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”

Romans 1:16

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”

This is the only devotional with three separate verses. That should say something about the importance of this point. The Word of God must be used in witnessing. Even if no conversion happens, which happens more than all of us would like, we have the assurance that God’s Word has done something, and that thing is the very thing which God purposed for it to do. It never returns void (Isaiah 55:11). There is power in the very Word of God. Faith comes by no other way. We are both saved and sanctified through God’s Word. It pierces the listener to the heart, revealing whatever sore spots there are toward God or religion. There is power in the very words. This bodes well for those of us who don’t feel that we speak very well. The gospel is simple, and since it is the very Word of God, it is powerful. The power does not lie in cleverness of speech (1 Corinthians 1:17) or in high and lofty words; the power lies in the Word simply, graciously, faithfully, and boldly shared and proclaimed.

Possible applications:

1. Make sure that you are able to communicate the gospel clearly and succinctly.
2. Learn basic verses that will help you in sharing the gospel message.
3. Place Scripture on all church publications and mailings whenever possible.
4. Do not underestimate the power of a tract that contains God’s Word and the true and full gospel message.
5. Never water down the plain truth of the Scripture to draw in a potential convert.

My application:

My prayer:

Week Four Day 2

I Corinthians 9:22b

“I have become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some.”

The principle that Paul is describing here is one of flexibility and accommodation, not compromise. For example, when he was around his Jewish brothers and sisters, he chose to live as a Jew, keeping some of the commands and rituals, perhaps eating the same foods, wearing the same kind of garb, etc. But when he was ministering to the Gentiles, he didn't keep the Jewish customs that a Christian need not keep anyway, for his purpose was to reach those without the Law. He was not changing who he was, for he was always under the law of Christ (1 Corinthians 9:21). His purpose was simply not to create a needless offense and compromise his ability to share the gospel (2 Corinthians 6:3). He was being a “slave to all” by seeking their interests ahead of his own so that he could “win more” (1 Corinthians 9:19). Paul's strategy evangelistically was to keep the main issue the main issue, and where common ground could be found, he found it (Acts 17:28). He was sensitive to the needs of the lost, relating well to them, being culturally relevant at the right time and place, and still being dogmatic and uncompromising on the gospel. The gospel is offensive as it is, confronting men of their error (Romans 9:33), so we must do all that we can to be loving, hospital, kind, gracious, and compassionate. We should lead people to face the reality of their sinful state in a context of love and acceptance. Such is the delicate balance Paul walked, and the one which we must endeavor to walk as well.

Possible Applications:

1. When appropriate, be willing to accept and even adapt to the customs of the culture you are in, whether foreign or domestic, as long as they do not violate the law of God.
2. Seek a genuine change of heart through belief in the gospel above correcting mere external behaviors that are symptoms of the real cause.
3. Study people. Be a constant learner of personality types and a wide variety of interests so that you can relate to people better and open up ways to express love and share the gospel.

My application:

My prayer:

Week Four Day 3

I Peter 3:15

“But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence.”

If our lifestyle matches our beliefs and we are filled with hope, we will be challenged and questioned about our faith. We must be ready to defend its truth and clearly articulate the gospel with a spirit of gentleness and respect for the listener or inquirer. This verse is used to justify the study of apologetics and how to defend our faith, which is perfectly correct. We need to be consistently learning about the validity and reliability of our faith. More fundamentally, however, we need to be able to communicate the gospel message. This is why we must keep studying the gospel and verses which can help us share the reality of Christ in us. Ideally, we will learn more and more how to defend our faith against the attacks of critics so that we will remain anchored and so that our hope can only increase, which, in turn, will lead to more evangelistic opportunities.

Possible Applications:

1. Read a book or take a class on apologetics for the Christian faith. [A good start can be found on the RBT website.](#)
2. If you find that you are never being asked about your faith, ask yourself if there is something you are doing or not doing to promote that occurrence?
3. Seek to have a proactive mindset that is always looking for opportunities so that you are not taken off guard when one does come.

My application:

My prayer:

Week Four

Day 4

Hebrews 12:14

“Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.”

This Scripture teaches us that we are to be peacemakers with both those inside and outside of the faith. Additionally, it teaches that we are to be people who are working out our salvation with fear and trembling and that we are to be rendering our bodies as living sacrifices to the Lord. We are to be people who are pursuing a continual renewal and growth process resulting in an increased likeness of Christ. Personal holiness is a major way for the unsaved to “see the Lord” in our lives. Our character and how we conduct ourselves is a huge testimony that God is indeed living inside of us. The scary thing is that a neglect of personal holiness and a slipping into sin will blind those around us of God. By our sinning and poor lifestyles we can actually keep people from finding God. Next time we think that our sin is personal and that it doesn’t impact others, we need to think again. Our sin can be enough to keep people from seeing and finding God.

Possible Applications:

1. Recommit yourself before the Lord to a lifestyle of holiness, confessing any present sins. Ask Him to prune you and purify your life.
2. Ask the Lord to convict you of areas of sin and carnal thinking that you are presently unaware of.
3. Meditate on why God states that how we live can actually blind people or open their eyes to see God.

My application:

My prayer:

Week Four **Day 5**

Matthew 5:16

“Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”

This is a verse that many of us know, and the danger is in its familiarity because we miss the real application. We focus on the shining our light part and miss the result. Our light is to be shone in such a way that the unsaved can see our good works. Doing good works in private to not get recognition is a good and Biblical principle. Here, however, we are talking about acts of kindness that are to be recognized, not as a means of impressing men or other Christians but as a demonstration of Christ’s incarnate love. Our community and society, coworkers and neighbors, need to see love in action. Doing good for them when they know that we get nothing out of it is the Biblical mandate of doing good works. The important point is that our good works are visible to the community. They need to see love in action. The promised result is remarkable: they will glorify God. This we ought to want to be a part of.

Possible Applications:

1. Begin praying for good works that you can do in your family, at work, in your neighborhood, and in your community.
2. Get a sense of the needs in the community and work with other Christians to find a way to meet those needs. Remember, recognition is good as long as our motive is not to do it for men’s approval.
3. Get young people involved in these types of social service activities because they will benefit extremely, and their service is particularly encouraging to others.

My application:

My prayer:

Week Four
Day 6

John 13:34-35

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

This verse is fundamental to all Christian living and especially evangelism. We know we are to love one another. We may even know that we need to love as Christ, with a selfless love that seeks nothing in return. But we need to also know that by our love the world is able to identify us as Christians. A person who does all good things but doesn't love will not be identified by the world as having God. They will be able to discern self-righteousness and performance-based living. But the fact that a person could truly love somebody is something that requires God. This is the mark that God has given to the world through which we can be identified. Thus, it is all-important that we learn and practice Christlike love, which is selfless, sacrificial, servant-hearted, and free.

Possible Applications:

1. Ask yourself if you are able to love somebody and demonstrate that without quickly judging them in return based upon their response?
2. Do you realize that how you love your spouse and children is a huge testimony to Christ's authenticity? Ask God to help you identify areas where you can improve in loving your family and to then help you carry the adjustments out.
3. Reflect on why you think God chose love as the mark of the Christian.

My application:

My prayer:

Week Four

Day 7

John 17:21

“That they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me.”

This final verse emphasizes the importance of unity. Love is an individual choice. Unity is that which results from loving one another. It can be manifested and seen by the world only when believers are interacting with one another. It can be seen in a small group, a marriage, a family lunch out after Sunday worship, a church body, a prayer meeting, or any other corporate setting. The promise here is that if we are one and the world sees that then the world will be able to believe that the Father sent the Son to earth. Through our love, we are identified as Christians and by how we act when assembled together, we either legitimize or illegitimize the message of Christ and the cross. Again, how we live is so important in evangelism. As week 4 closes, we see that the strategies that God provides for us in His Word are so incredibly basic and simple. All of them have to do with revealing Himself, either through His Word, through our mouths, or through our lives. How we live is of the utmost importance. Who is going to listen to Christians tell them about God when they know that their lives are not worthy of Christ’s name?

Possible Applications:

1. Reflect on what kind of message your family preaches about Christ when you are out in public. Ask God to help you to be a part of the improvement process and thank God for what is good.
2. Reflect on how unified your church is. How do you suppose unity can increase among any group of Christians, including your church?
3. Get on your knees and pray for unity in your family and church.
4. Select some verses from this section to commit to memory. Ask God to help you believe in His promises in the verses and show you how to act on them.

My application:

My prayer:

Closing Thoughts

The goal of this devotional was that the Lord would break our hearts to be concerned about the state of the lost such that we would be motivated to do what we can to affect their eternal destination. I want us to be cognizant and conscious of the reality and imminence of hell for the unsaved. I want us to see that we must make the first move as Christ did with us. I want us to take ownership of the calling, purpose, and mission that God has given each and every believer to make disciples and share the gospel. Finally, I want us to rely upon God's power and principles rather than trying to manipulate fish into the net. God's power is in His Word and in incarnating His Word through love, good works, personal holiness, pursuing peace with others, and unity among brothers and sisters in Christ. Without these characteristics, our message will lack power. Since the world in general believes that Christians are hypocrites, divided, selfish, and self-righteous, we have a lot of work to do to turn the tide. I guarantee that evangelism will be much more successful if our churches have found a way to make Christ's love visible to our communities. I guarantee that we will be much more effective if we have our lives in order in regard to holiness and love, and hopefully the same is true for our families, at least as much as depends upon us.

Even though there was not a specific devotional dedicated to the importance of prayer in the work of evangelism, I hope that the mere fact that prayer was encouraged each day testifies to its necessity. The effective prayer of a righteous man accomplishes much (James 5:16). With faith, we can move mountains of stubbornness and spiritual blindness. It is ridiculous and foolish to evangelize without first casting our burdens and requests upon the Lord and relying on His power alone to do the work (Zechariah 4:6). We must take time to pray for the lost and for our churches, both individually and corporately. A spirit pressed by the Holy Spirit to pray is a sure sign of brokenness.

I hope the Lord has spoken to you through His Word and that this study has helped to prompt some changes in heart and in thought. Please continue to pray for the lost in your sphere of influence. Please pray that God will send laborers into His harvest. May God make each of us effective laborers for building His kingdom! God bless you and may God multiply His kingdom through you!