

DAILY DEVOTIONAL

It's Personal / Week 1

"When Jesus came by, he looked up at Zacchaeus and called him by name. "Zacchaeus!" he said. "Quick, come down! I must be a guest in your home today."

Luke 19:5 NLT

DAY 1

Your best friends, your parents, your family—of course they know your name. They're the closest people in your life! But when someone not in your circle knows your name? Someone you look up to, someone you see as popular, someone you respect—when those people know who you are and call you by name, it makes you feel seen. Just like that, you feel important! What's amazing is that with Jesus, you can feel this way all the time. Just like He knew Zacchaeus, Jesus knows your name. That's a pretty big deal! He wants a relationship with you because to Him, you are loved, important, and seen. Set aside five minutes today to write out how it feels to know that Jesus knows your name.

"Later, as Jesus left the town, he saw a tax collector named Levi sitting at his tax collector's booth. "Follow me and be my disciple," Jesus said to him. So Levi got up, left everything, and followed him."

Luke 5:27-28 NLT

DAY 2

Levi was a tax collector. That meant he wasn't so popular. But that reputation didn't stop Jesus. He didn't just know Levi's name; He invited him into a relationship. He didn't just want to know who Levi was; He wanted to spend time with him. And that's exactly how He feels about you, too. Jesus sees you, He knows your name, and He's inviting you to follow Him. All you need to do is go! This week, schedule a few minutes to spend by yourself. Put on headphones, listen to worship music, take a walk, or do whatever it is that helps you focus. As you do, thank God for inviting you into a relationship with Him. Think about what the next step might be for you to follow Him with your life.

"I am the good shepherd; I know my own sheep, and they know me."

John 10:14 NLT

DAY 3

Chances are you may not know a ton about shepherds, but the people listening to Jesus at the time certainly did. They knew that a good shepherd was one who knew everything about each one of his sheep—their names, their needs, their concerns. Knowing his sheep helped a shepherd give unique care to each one of his sheep. So, if Jesus is your good shepherd, that means the kind of love and care He gives to you is just like that. It's unique to you. It's personal because He knows you better than anyone, and He wants to take care of you. Read a bit more from John 10 (focusing on verses 7-17) to learn more about how much God loves and cares for you as a good shepherd.

<p><i>“I have given them the glory you gave me, so they may be one as we are one. I am in them and you are in me. May they experience such perfect unity that the world will know that you sent me and that you love them as much as you love me.”</i></p> <p>John 17:22-23 NLT</p>	<p>DAY 4</p> <p>These verses are from Jesus’ final prayer with His disciples. This is the prayer He prayed just before being taken to the cross. The last thing He prayed for His followers? That they would have unity. Why? Because He knew that people would be drawn to Him by the way that His followers treated one another. How we treat each other matters because it’s a reflection to those who don’t know Jesus. When we make it personal with each other, we’re showing how Jesus makes it personal with us. Reach out to your Small Group Leader to come up with some ideas of how your Small Group can grow in unity. What can you do to show others that you care about each other the way Jesus cares about you?</p>
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<p><i>“We know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters.”</i></p> <p>1 John 3:16 NLT</p>	<p>DAY 5</p> <p>Stepping outside of your circle of friends to get to know someone new can be a bit scary. It means stepping out of your comfort zone and into the potential awkwardness you might feel when trying to get to know someone new. But giving up some of our own comfort for the potential good of someone else is exactly what Jesus did for us. In fact, that’s what real love is! It’s being willing to sacrifice what is comfortable to us for the sake of what is good for someone else. So, can you practice that kind of love this week? Maybe you can simply step outside your comfort zone to get to know someone new in a personal way. Take that first step this week!</p>
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<p><i>“Our God is in the heavens, and he does as he wishes.”</i></p> <p>Psalms 115:3 NLT</p>	<p>DAY 6</p> <p>Who is the most powerful person in the world? Maybe to you it’s a political figure, or a CEO of a major tech company, or a super talented athlete. What’s amazing to think about is that no matter who you thought of or what abilities that person has, their power is nothing compared to God’s. Yet as big and powerful as God is, He still knows your name. He knows you in a real, personal way. And because of that, He cares about you in a personal way. Does that feel hard for you to believe? That our big and powerful God loves you personally? Have a conversation with your Small Group Leader this week about how you can experience God’s love in a personal way.</p>
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<p><i>“For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost.”</i></p> <p>Luke 19:10 NLT</p>	<p>DAY 7</p> <p>Jesus knows us in a personal way. He wants to have a relationship with us. And one of the ways He communicates to us is through Scripture. When we memorize verses like this one, it keeps His words close to our hearts. It’s like He’s speaking right to us! So this week, type out this verse in your phone. Take a screen shot of it and make it your lock screen. That way, you’ll see it every time you pick up your phone and can work to commit it to memory.</p>
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