



5 DAY DEVOTIONAL

Sermon: Plants In The House Of God

SPEAKER: REV. CHRIS STEVERSON | 12/28/2025 | PAGE 1 OF 5

Day 1: Close But Not Connected

Devotional: Have you ever been in a crowded room yet felt completely alone? Sometimes our spiritual lives can feel the same way. We can attend church regularly, know all the right words, and even serve in ministry, yet still feel distant from God. This isn't uncommon - in fact, it's more prevalent than we might think. Jesus used the imagery of a vineyard to help us understand this reality. In a vineyard, you might see branches that appear healthy from a distance, but upon closer inspection, you discover they're not actually connected to the vine. They may be close to the source of life, but they're not drawing from it. This proximity without connection is a dangerous place to be spiritually. It's possible to know about God without truly knowing Him. We can be familiar with His house without being part of His family. We can even do good works in His name while our hearts remain far from Him. The beautiful truth is that God desires genuine relationship with each of us. He's not interested in religious performance or spiritual appearances. He wants our hearts, our authentic selves, our real struggles and victories. Today, take a moment to honestly assess your spiritual condition. Are you truly connected to the vine, or are you simply close to it?

Bible Verse: 'I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.' - John 15:1-4

Reflection Question: When you examine your relationship with God honestly, are you drawing life from Him daily, or are you simply going through the motions of religious activity?

Quote: You can be in close proximity to God without being in him.

Prayer: Father, help me to be honest about my spiritual condition. If I've been close to You without being truly connected, draw me into genuine relationship with You. I don't want to just know about You - I want to know You personally and intimately. Amen.

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Day 2: When Truth Becomes Uncomfortable

Devotional: There's something unsettling about truth that challenges our comfortable patterns. When God's Word shines light on areas of our lives that need change, our natural response is often resistance rather than receptivity. This resistance reveals something important about our spiritual condition. Some people in God's house are like plants that were never truly planted by the Father. They may be religious, active, and even influential, but when biblical truth confronts their behavior, traditions, or pride, they become offended. Instead of allowing God's Word to transform them, they resist it, defending their position rather than surrendering to His. This ownership mentality - believing we have a right to determine how things should be in God's house - always conflicts with God's voice. When we think we know better than God's Word, when we pick and choose which truths to accept, we reveal that we're not truly rooted in Him. The difference between those who are genuinely planted by God and those who aren't is their response to His Word. True believers welcome correction, even when it's uncomfortable. They understand that God's truth is meant to set them free, not make them feel condemned. Today, ask yourself: How do you respond when God's Word challenges you?

Bible Verse: 'Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be pulled up by the roots.' - Matthew 15:13

Reflection Question: When God's Word challenges your current lifestyle, traditions, or beliefs, do you find yourself becoming defensive, or do you humbly receive it as an opportunity for growth?

Quote: Lives that are not planted by God are marked by one clear trait identified in the previous verse. They are offended by the word of God when it exposes sinful behavior, unbiblical traditions and a heart level pride.

Prayer: Lord, soften my heart to receive Your truth, even when it's difficult to hear. Help me to respond with humility rather than defensiveness when Your Word challenges me. I want to be planted by You, not by my own understanding. Amen.

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Day 3: The Slow Drift Away

Devotional: Backsliding rarely happens overnight. It's not usually a dramatic rebellion where someone suddenly decides to abandon their faith. Instead, it's often a slow, almost imperceptible drift - like a boat that gradually moves away from shore when the anchor isn't properly set. Many believers find themselves in this condition: still attending church, still serving, still going through the motions, but their hearts have grown cold toward Jesus. They're like the church at Ephesus - commended for their works and perseverance, yet criticized for leaving their first love. This drift typically begins with divided affection. We start loving the things of this world alongside our love for Jesus, thinking we can maintain both. But our hearts aren't designed to love Jesus and the world simultaneously. Gradually, worldly affections grow stronger while our love for Christ grows weaker. The tragedy is that these believers are still moving, still active, but they're not moving closer to Jesus. They're working without loving, serving without passion, attending without truly connecting. If this describes you today, know that it's not too late. God is calling you back to your first love. He's waiting with open arms for you to return to the intimacy you once knew with Him.

Bible Verse: 'Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first. Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.' - Revelation 2:4-5

Reflection Question: Can you identify any areas where your affection for worldly things has begun to compete with your love for Jesus, and what steps can you take to realign your heart?

Quote: People who have left their first love are still moving, but they are not moving closer to Jesus. They are moving not in obedience, not into affection towards Christ, but they are still working while not loving him who first loved them.

Prayer: Jesus, I don't want to drift away from You. If I've left my first love, help me to recognize it and return. Restore the passion and intimacy I once had with You. Help me to love You above all else. Amen.

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Day 4: Grace: Freedom, Not License

Devotional: One of the most beautiful yet misunderstood aspects of Christianity is grace. Some people treat God's grace like a license to live however they want, thinking that because they're forgiven, their choices don't matter. But this completely misses the point of what Jesus accomplished on the cross. Jesus didn't die to make us feel free to sin - He died to free us from sin. There's a profound difference. Grace isn't permission to continue in destructive patterns; it's the power to break free from them. When we truly understand grace, it doesn't make us want to sin more - it makes us want to sin less. The difference between those who love God and those who are drifting is their response to sin. True believers don't make peace with sin in their lives. When they fall, they don't shrug it off or make excuses. They grieve over it, repent, and seek God's help to overcome it. Grace is both forgiveness and freedom. It forgives our past and empowers our future. It doesn't just cover our sin; it transforms our hearts. When we truly grasp this, we realize that Christianity isn't about following rules - it's about relationship with Jesus Christ. And in that relationship, we find both the motivation and the power to live differently.

Bible Verse: 'What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?' - Romans 6:1-2

Reflection Question: How has your understanding of God's grace influenced your daily choices, and are you using it as freedom from sin or as permission to sin?

Quote: Jesus died to free us from sin, not make us feel free to sin. The grace of God is not a license to live however you want. Grace is not just forgiveness, but it is also freedom.

Prayer: Father, help me to understand grace correctly. Thank You for forgiving my sins, but also help me to walk in the freedom You've provided. I don't want to abuse Your grace - I want to be transformed by it. Amen.

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Day 5: Positioned for His Love

Devotional: God's love for you is not conditional on your performance, but experiencing that love requires proper positioning. Just as you can't fill a glass with water unless it's positioned under the faucet, you can't experience God's love and transformation unless you position yourself to receive it. This positioning involves three key elements: faith, repentance, and intimate fellowship. Faith opens our hearts to believe that God truly loves us despite our failures. Repentance turns us away from the things that separate us from Him. And intimate fellowship - spending time in His presence through prayer and His Word - allows us to experience His love personally. The beautiful truth is that there's nothing you can do to make God stop loving you. His love is constant and unchanging. But there is something you can do to experience that love more fully: humble yourself and draw near to Him. Stop trying to earn His love and start receiving it. God desires transformation in your life - not just information about Him, but actual change from the inside out. This happens when you remain connected to Jesus, the true vine. In Him, you'll find fruitfulness, purity, answered prayer, abiding love, and lasting joy. Today, position yourself to receive all that He has for you.

Bible Verse: 'I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.' - John 15:5

Reflection Question: What practical steps can you take today to better position yourself to receive and experience God's transforming love in your daily life?

Quote: This is not a question of whether God is willing to speak. It is a question of whether we're willing to humble ourselves enough to let him change our hearts, not just inform our minds.

Prayer: Lord, I want to be properly positioned to receive Your love and experience transformation. Help me to remain connected to You through faith, repentance, and intimate fellowship. Change me from the inside out. Amen.

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