

Here's a 5-day Bible reading plan and devotional guide based on the themes from September 15th Sermon by Jody Flowers. Acts 1:7-8.

## **Day 1: Embracing Our Identity as Missionaries**

**Reading:** Acts 1:7-8, Mark 3:14-15

**Devotional:** As followers of Christ, we often struggle with our identity and purpose. Today's readings remind us that Jesus has called us all to be missionaries - sent ones by the Sent One. Just as the Father sent Jesus, He now sends us into the world. This isn't reserved for a select few who travel to foreign lands; it's the calling of every believer.

Reflect on how you view your role in God's kingdom. Have you embraced your identity as a missionary in your daily life? Consider the spaces where you live, work, and play. These are your mission fields. How might your perspective and actions change if you truly saw yourself as sent by God to these places?

**Prayer:** Lord, help me fully embrace my identity as Your missionary. Open my eyes to the opportunities around me to share Your love and truth. Give me courage to live out this calling in my everyday life.

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## **Day 2: Empowered by the Holy Spirit**

**Reading:** Acts 1:4-5, Romans 8:11

**Devotional:** The task of being God's witnesses can feel overwhelming, but we're not left to do it in our own strength. Jesus promised the gift of the Holy Spirit, the same power that raised Christ from the dead. This "dynamite" power dwells within every believer, enabling us to live out our calling.

Too often, we try to navigate the Christian life in our limited human strength, leading to frustration and burnout. Today, take time to acknowledge your

dependence on the Holy Spirit. Where in your life do you need to surrender control and rely more fully on God's power?

Prayer: Holy Spirit, I invite Your power into every area of my life. Help me to stop relying on my own strength and to tap into the limitless resource of Your presence within me.

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### **Day 3: Living with Joyful Purpose**

**Reading:** Luke 24:44-53, John 15:9-11

**Devotional:** When the disciples understood their mission, they set out with great joy. Our calling as Christians isn't meant to be a burden, but a source of deep fulfillment and joy. We have experienced the transformative love of Christ, and now we have the privilege of sharing that love with others.

Reflect on the joy you've found in Christ. How can you cultivate a spirit of joyful obedience in your daily walk? Consider ways you can share the love of Jesus through both your actions and words today.

**Prayer:** Jesus, thank You for the joy of knowing You. Let that joy overflow in my life, making me eager to share Your love with others. Help me find delight in living out my purpose as Your witness.

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### **Day 4: Embracing Risk for Greater Reward**

**Reading:** Matthew 16:24-26, 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

**Devotional:** Following Christ and living as His missionary often involves risk and hardship. Yet, as John Piper reminds us, "If you live gladly to make others glad in God, your life will be hard, your risks will be high, and your joy will be full." The path of discipleship isn't always easy, but it leads to the deepest, most lasting joy.

What risks might God be calling you to take for His kingdom? Are there comfortable areas of your life where you need to step out in faith? Remember that any earthly comfort or security we sacrifice pales in comparison to the eternal reward of following Christ.

**Prayer:** Lord, give me courage to step out of my comfort zone for Your sake. Help me to value eternal rewards over temporary comforts. Increase my faith to take risks for Your kingdom.

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## **Day 5: Giving Our All in Response to God's Love**

**Reading:** Romans 12:1-2, 2 Corinthians 8:1-5

**Devotional:** The story of Robert Donaldson, who rode nine miles on a broken-down bike to bring a gift, beautifully illustrates the heart of a true disciple. When we truly grasp what we've received in Christ, our response is to give generously and sacrificially, even beyond what seems reasonable.

Reflect on what you've received from God. How does His love and grace compel you to live and give differently? Consider an area of your life where you can "get on the bike" - giving or serving in a way that stretches you, in grateful response to God's goodness.

**Prayer:** Father, thank You for Your immeasurable gift in Jesus. Let Your love so fill my heart that I'm compelled to give generously and serve wholeheartedly, no matter the cost. Help me to live in a way that reflects the value I place on what I've received from You.