

“Jesus said...” August 4th – 10th, 2026



Reflections from our daily devotional “Jesus said...” (365 days in the words of Jesus).

In Portuguese “Jesus disse...” <https://www.hermeneutica.com/devocional/>

(These devotionals were originally written in Portuguese using typical Portuguese idioms and forms of expression. Though I’m the author, frankly translating them from Portuguese back into English they seem a little “wooden” to me. But, I think you’ll get the general drift.)

Devotional for August 4th, 2026

“Whatever town or village you enter, search there for some worthy person and stay at their house until you leave.” Matthew 10:11

Reflection: The disciples’ goal was neither comfort nor an abundance of food. They were to look for worthy people—that is, people receptive to the Gospel. Although everyone deserves the chance to hear the Good News, God has warned us that only a minority will receive and respond to it. These were the people the disciple were told to seek out.

This has nothing to do with social status or religious appearance. It’s about people who are receptive to Jesus and His servants. Sometimes, the people least receptive to the Gospel are those who have a “stake” to protect. That was the case with the religious leaders of Jesus’ day, who flat out rejected the Gospel.

There’s a valuable lesson here for those of us called a life of ministry. In the great harvest, the disciple always needs people who will support and cooperate with the work. This does not mean turning away from the lost or the unbelieving; rather, it is about being better able to help them. Those of modest means, and even the poor, may in fact be the ones most likely to open their doors to the Good News, and those who bring it. Our fellowship with them honors their faith in Him.

Certain people deserve greater attention precisely because of the attention they give to Jesus and His message. If you are serving Jesus, ask Him to show you such people—at your workplace, in your community, or wherever He has directed you to sow the Good News. Jesus will lead you to them, and them to you!

Prayer: Gracious Father, I thank You because, since entering Your Kingdom, I have never lacked anything. You have always provided everything I need, often through people worthy of the Gospel. I ask that You continue to do the same for my brothers and sisters who leave home, family, or anything else precious for the sake of the Lord. Bless them, Father. In the name of the King, I pray. Amen.

Devotional for August 5th, 2026

“As you enter the house, greet it. And if the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it, but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you.” Matthew 10:12-13

Reflection: “The peace of Christ”! (In Brazil this is a common evangelical greeting.) How often do we hear this phrase? We might even forget that it is more than just a salutation. In the mysterious reality of the Kingdom of Heaven, the peace of Christ is something tangible that the Christian plays a fundamental role in spreading. It is something that, through you, God gives or withholds. As a fruit of receiving the Gospel, the peace of Christ marks the end of enmity between God and man. When accepted, it brings blessing and forgiveness. If rejected, it will one day bring judgment and condemnation.

The peace of Christ is not merely a matter of mutual acceptance or religious courtesy. It is a spiritual reality with eternal consequences. That is why it doesn't remain where it's unwelcome. Sometimes, when our attempts to share the Good News are not well received, we feel resentful, as if people were rejecting us. The reality is far more serious. They are rejecting the one supreme Savior. They are closing the only door through which they could enter eternal life.

Pray earnestly when sharing the Gospel. Ask God to prepare the person to value what He is offering through you. And do everything within your power and conduct yourself in such a way they will accept the peace Christ offers. May God grant that, when you leave, one thing remains in every place you have visited—the eternal life-giving peace of Christ.

Prayer: Father, make me a peacemaker—not only among people but between You and Your estranged children. Give me the perseverance I need to continue sharing this peace, of which Jesus has made me an emissary. Thank You for the great honor You have bestowed upon me. In the name of the King, I pray. Amen.

Devotional for August 6th, 2026

“And if anyone will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet when you leave that house or town. Truly, I say to you, it will be more bearable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town.” Matthew 10:14-15

Reflection: Have you ever felt frustrated, or even guilty, when you failed to persuade someone of the truth of the Gospel? Have you ever wished for a better argument, more compelling proof, or a more persuasive answer? Here, we see the disciple's attitude when someone refuses the peace offered by Jesus through His disciples (Matt. 10:12-13).

There is no need for persistence, eloquence, or a show of “proofs” to persuade. God is not looking for fans, but disciples who recognize and heed His voice. What convinces people is not your knowledge or debating skill; it’s the Gospel. That is where the power of God lies (Rom. 1:16). May it ever be in that power that we place our trust.

Some think a disciple doesn’t not judge. But a disciple *does* judge. Shaking the dust off one’s feet is a small preview—commanded by Jesus—of the Day of Judgment. The inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah will be judged for their sins and condemned because of them. Yet, a far greater offense against God is rejecting the Gospel, for it represents the very offer of forgiveness and eternal life.

There is forgiveness for the worst of sins. But no matter how “minor” one’s sins may be, there is no forgiveness for those who reject the only One who can forgive—the One who purchased that forgiveness at such a high price. The decision of whether or not to listen to the Gospel has eternal consequences.

Pray for the people to whom God will send you to proclaim the Gospel—whether through your words or your life. Pray that they may receive Jesus, whose representative you are. Pray.

Prayer: Help me, Father, to take seriously this mission to which You have called me. Eternal lives are at stake, and You do not wish to lose a single soul. I thank You for saving my life and hope to be useful in Your mission to save others. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I pray and give thanks. Amen.

Devotional for August 7th, 2026

“I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore, be shrewd as snakes and innocent as doves.” Matthew 10:16

Reflection: Jesus never sugarcoats the reality. He wants the disciple to know they will face attacks and hostility of all kinds and from all sides. When we avoid confrontation, we are labeled cowards or simpletons. If we react, we are branded as extremists. The solution? The disciple needs balance.

We should avoid conflict and confrontation whenever possible. But we cannot become fearful, running away out of fear. We have a mission. Souls are at stake. We cannot be intimidated, yet we must act and speak with prudence. This is what Jesus means when He calls us to be “shrewd as snakes and innocent as doves.”

Being shrewd as a snake does not mean being cunning or deceitful. It means being alert and prudent. As a Christian seeking to live honestly and rightly, there will be no shortage of occasions where others try to take advantage of your honesty and sincerity. Being a Christian does not mean being a fool. Although Jesus submitted to the authorities, He was under no illusion regarding their malice (Matt 16:6; Luke 13:32). Yet, the disciple’s shrewdness must be coupled with innocence. In other words, while aware of the wickedness and traps of opponents, we cannot resort to such practices ourselves. Nothing the enemy does justifies the disciple adopting the same tactics.

Paul reminded the Christians in Corinth that the way a disciple fights differs from the way of the world: “For though we live as men, we do not fight according to human standards.” (2 Cor 10:3; see also 1 Peter 2:12). When we try to retaliate, or sometimes even simply defend ourselves, there is a danger of falling into sin. That is why we must take care to act and speak with innocence. Ask God for the Spirit’s self control and insight in situations of confrontation or attack. When Jesus was dragged before the High Priest and accused of all kinds of falsehood, his words were few and carefully chosen. Did he convince them? Of course not. But later no one could accuse him of stooping to their sinful level.

Prayer: Father, I need this counsel so much. Our enemy is so cunning. I ask You for the blessing of Jesus’s balance. Grant me the discernment to know when to speak and when to remain silent, when to act and when to wait or withdraw. May I care only about the approval of One—Your Son, Jesus—amidst it all. In His name, I pray. Amen.

Devotional for August 8th, 2026

“Beware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues...” Matthew 10:17

Reflection: This warning from Jesus wasn’t meant only for the Twelve. Some Christians will face similar consequences even today. There are malicious people. There are those who will use human “justice” to commit acts of injustice. Most shocking of all, some will even use the Lord’s name to commit abominations. As C.S. Lewis said, “Of all bad men, religious bad men are the worst.”

In the church, men lead, teach, and are followed by many. Followed by many. Men. Sometimes, we can become so impressed by certain leaders that, without realizing it, we begin to transfer as much faith to them as we had in Jesus. Then, when they fall or betray our trust, our faith is shaken - because it was built not on the rock of Jesus, but on the shifting sand of a human life. That is why we must look ever more steadfastly to the Author and Perfecter of our faith (Hebrews 12:2).

With our eyes fixed on Jesus and guided by His words (such as these), we will remember that, although the actions of some may shock us, none of it comes as a surprise to Jesus. What did He say? “Be on your guard...” He warned of persecution coming even from “religious” leaders. The enemy knows this can shake a disciple’s faith. But the one who remembers that Jesus is in control—and that the Lord has already warned us of these dangers – he/she will be well prepared.

One day, everyone will answer for what they have done, both outside and inside the Church. Since Jesus knew what you would go through, He is also capable of giving you the strength to remain faithful - not to men, but to Him, your Lord and Savior. Look to Jesus and trust in Him. Don’t forget what He said - be on your guard!

Prayer: Eternal Father, have mercy on me. And have mercy also on those who, thinking they are serving the Lord, persecute His true servants. We pray for them just as Jesus prayed for us while we were still sinners. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

Devotional for August 9th, 2026

“On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles.” Matthew 10:18

Reflection: Note the instructions Jesus gave the disciples: be shrewd but innocent (v. 16) and be on your guard (v. 17). What is the mission? To proclaim the Gospel. If you keep quiet - neither calling out to others nor inviting them, nor sharing your personal testimony with anyone - you'll have a much more peaceful life. If, on the other hand, you speak up and speak out about Jesus, to tell what He has done for you, and to call people to follow Him - be prepared - attacks will come.

Our word “martyr” comes from the Greek word *marturion*, translated here as “witness.” It is not that we must suffer in order to bear witness to Christ. But if you are going to influence people for Jesus, you will trouble the enemy. You'll pop up on his radar. The rest is inevitable. The important thing is to remember the cause of the suffering. When a true Christian suffers, it's not because they started an argument about religion, broke the law, or provoked non believers. If they suffer it's because of Jesus.

Our union with Christ isn't figurative. It is *real*. When we suffer, Jesus is right there with us - suffering. We suffer because Christ is in us, and *He* is the one being attacked. That is why, after Paul persecuted the early Christians, Jesus asked him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” (Acts 9:4, 5).

Amidst persecution and opposition, let us remember that our behavior, our reactions, and our words will bear powerful witness to the full presence of Jesus. This may be one of the most opportune moments for Jesus to reveal Himself to those furthest from Him - those who persecute Him. If you have this opportunity, be a worthy witness for your Lord.

Prayer: Holy and merciful Father, I know that Jesus truly loves even His enemies. This is so difficult for me, even though I was once one of them myself. Thank you for reminding me that I am not alone in these moments. Jesus is with me. It is an honor for me to be able to bear witness to Jesus' great love for everyone, including me. I thank you in the name of the King. Amen.

Devotional for August 10th, 2026

“But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time, you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.”
Matthew 10:19-20

Reflection: The context is persecution and hostility. At such times it's natural for a disciple to feel afraid - both of the reaction of those in power and of the consequences of saying the wrong thing or speaking in the wrong way, thereby giving a poor testimony. But Jesus promises the help of the Spirit. He will help us. We note that Jesus said the Holy Spirit would assist us with both *what* to say and *how* to say it. It's not enough just to have the facts, the right answers; we also need the sensitivity to communicate in a way that helps people to heed Jesus' message.

To that end, we *must* keep the Spirit's perspective in our minds. He is the One who must guide us. We facilitate this by preparing our minds daily with the Word of God - the sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17 - which penetrates the heart and reveals thoughts (Hebrews 4:12). Isn't it incredible that God would use us to speak the *very words* that someone - even a complete stranger - needs to hear. God wants to do that through us. Shouldn't we do everything we can to prepare our minds and hearts for that momentous encounter?

We must remember that our struggle is not against other people, no matter how much they may have hurt us. Our struggle is against a greater enemy who seeks to destroy both us and them. Yet, Jesus is committed to saving everyone. Just like He was to saving us, when our attitudes and reactions were so thoughtless. Weren't they?

This promise does not mean that everything a Christian thinks or says is divinely inspired. The Lord's servant still needs to study and prepare in order to teach others (1 Timothy 4:6, 12–16; 2 Timothy 2:15). You might think that your daily Bible reading, or your attentiveness during a Bible class or sermon, is solely for your own edification. But God has other plans. If you make yourself available to Him, He will show you the immense blessing of being used by Him in the great harvest.

A Bible verse, a thought, an insight will suddenly come to mind that you heard or read months, maybe years back. And suddenly it's there ready for just the right person at the right moment that Jesus, God the Father, and the Holy Spirit brought together. What an incredible privilege He has bestowed upon us!

Prayer: Father, thank You for this precious promise. I need to remember that, by submitting to You and making Your purposes my own, I will be used to bear witness to many - including enemies. Not my enemies, your enemies oh Father. Whom you still love and yearn to set free. Help me to hear the voice of the Spirit and prepare for Him to speak through me. May everyone see Jesus Christ alive in me, hear Him in my every word, see him in my every action. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.