



## EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Session 9: Loyalty Tested  
Suggested Week of Use: February 1, 2026  
Core Passage: Matthew 10:16-20, 26-34

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### News Story Summary

Melissa Pinner, 47, has been diagnosed with Younger-Onset Alzheimer's disease. Since the South Carolina resident lost her mother to the same disease when she was a college student, she understands what her future holds. Her situation is complicated by the fact that she can no longer work. She also has two teenagers at home and one in college, but no other immediate family in her area.

In this bleak situation, Melissa's best friend, Heather Bowers, decided to help. Heather now serves as Melissa's caregiver because she did not want her friend to be alone as she coped with this disease. Heather said she never questioned stepping up and that she has learned patience and grace that she didn't even know she had.

For more about this story, search "Melissa Pinner."

### Engage

To supplement the Engage activities, ask: *If you were to create a loyalty test for friends, family, and/or colleagues, what would it include?* Record responses on the board or a large sheet of paper. Point out that loyalty really can't be measured by any kind of test. Say: *It's demonstrated through the circumstances of life, especially the negative circumstances.* Share the story of Melissa Pinner and Heather Bowers. Ask: *How is Heather showing loyalty to her friend? What makes a person worthy of that kind of loyalty?* Share that

today's session focuses on loyalty to Jesus and why He is worthy of all the loyalty we can muster.

## Challenge

To supplement the Challenge activities, encourage the group to list the loyalty tests that Jesus warned His disciples about. Remind them of the loyalty Heather Bowers is showing her friend, Melissa Pinner. Ask: *What things might come along that would test that loyalty? What is Heather sacrificing for her friend?* Direct adults to reflect on things that challenge their loyalty to Christ. Ask: *What comfort can we get from today's verses? Why should we be faithful to Jesus despite the sacrifices required?* Close the session in prayer, thanking God for His unfailing loyalty to us and asking Him to help each adult grow in their loyalty toward Him this week.