

5 Day Devotional

Day 1: Good News You Did Not Earn

Devotional

Most of us grow up learning that rewards come to those who work for them. Study hard, get good grades. Put in the hours, earn the promotion. That mindset is not wrong in everyday life, but it becomes dangerous when we quietly carry it into our relationship with God.

Here is the truth that changes everything: the gospel is not a self-improvement plan. It is not a ladder you climb by being good enough. It is news. Specifically, it is the best news ever announced. Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose on the third day. That is the foundation. That is the gift.

You did not earn it. You cannot earn it. And that is exactly the point.

Paul writes in Ephesians 2 that we were dead in our sins before God reached us. Dead people do not contribute to their own rescue. God acted first, fully, and freely. He gave what we could never deserve.

If you have been quietly trying to earn God's approval through your behavior, today is an invitation to exhale. You do not have to perform your way into His love. You are invited to receive it. Open hands, open heart. That is where grace meets you.

Bible Verse

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no one can boast." - Ephesians 2:8-9

Reflection Question

In what areas of your life are you still quietly trying to earn God's approval rather than simply receiving His grace?

Quote

"The gospel is received. The gospel is not achieved. You do not accomplish the gospel. You do not earn the gospel. You receive what God has done for you."

Prayer

Father, forgive me for the times I have treated Your love like something I could earn. Teach me to receive Your grace with open hands today. Amen.

Day 2: Grace Finds the Unlikely

Devotional

If you have ever felt like your past disqualifies you from God's grace, consider Paul.

Before his encounter with Christ, Paul was not simply someone who made a few mistakes. He actively hunted down Christians. He approved of their deaths. He tried to destroy the very church that Jesus bled and died for. By any measure, he was the last person you would expect God to pursue.

And yet grace found him anyway.

What is remarkable is what Paul did with that reality. He did not pretend his past never happened. He named it clearly and honestly. But he refused to be imprisoned by it. In 1 Corinthians 15, he writes with both honesty and wonder: he was the least of the apostles, not even deserving to be called one. And then, in the very next breath, he says, "But by the grace of God, I am what I am."

That is not shame talking. That is freedom.

Your story may include things you are not proud of. Choices that still sting when you think about them. But those moments do not get the final word over who you are. Grace does. The same grace that transformed Paul is extended to you, not because of who you have been, but because of who Christ is.

Bible Verse

"For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures."
- 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

Reflection Question

Is there something in your past that you have allowed to define your identity more than the grace of God?

Quote

"Paul never forgot who he had been. He opposed Christ. He persecuted Christians. He tried to destroy the very church that Jesus died for. It doesn't get much worse than that, friends. But what's he say in verse 10? But by the grace of God, I am what I am."

Prayer

Lord, thank You that my worst moments do not have the final word. Help me to receive the freedom that Your grace offers and to walk in the identity You have given me. Amen.

Day 3: Enough

Devotional

There is a question that haunts a lot of people who are trying to live faithfully: Have I done enough?

Enough prayer. Enough service. Enough obedience. Enough sacrifice. If your sense of standing before God depends on your performance, that question will follow you everywhere and never give you a satisfying answer.

But here is the shift that grace makes. The question is not whether you have done enough. The question is whether Christ has done enough. And the answer, resounding and final, is yes.

Ephesians 2 reminds us that we were not people who needed a little help getting over the finish line. We were spiritually dead. God did not meet us halfway. He raised us to life entirely through what Christ accomplished. The cross was not a partial payment. It was complete.

This does not mean your choices do not matter. It means your choices no longer carry the weight of earning what Christ has already secured. You are free to obey, serve, and love from a place of rest rather than anxiety.

If you have been exhausted by the pressure of performing for God's approval, let this truth settle into your heart today. Christ has done enough. You are held not by your effort, but by His grace.

Bible Verse

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no one can boast." - Ephesians 2:8-9

Reflection Question

How would your daily life look different if you truly believed that Christ has already done enough on your behalf?

Quote

"If acceptance depends on how deserving I am, I will never know whether I have done enough. You realize that the question is not have I done enough? The question is, has Christ done enough? And the resounding answer is, yes, Christ has done enough."

Prayer

Jesus, thank You that the cross was enough. Help me to stop striving for what You have already freely given, and to live from a place of rest in Your finished work. Amen.

Day 4: Grace That Changes You

Devotional

Sometimes people hear the word grace and assume it means God simply looks the other way at sin. A kind of divine shrug. But that is not grace at all.

Real grace does not leave you where it found you. Look at Paul again. Grace did not just forgive his past; it redirected his entire life. It changed his heart, his values, his purpose, and his future. The man who once destroyed the church became one of its greatest builders. That is not a small edit. That is a complete transformation.

Grace produces change. It leads to repentance, obedience, generosity, and service. But here is what makes it different from mere rule-following: the motivation is completely different. You are not obeying so that God will love you. You are obeying because in Christ, God has already loved you. That shift changes everything about how obedience feels.

When you serve out of gratitude rather than guilt, when you give out of joy rather than obligation, when you pursue holiness because you are loved rather than to become lovable, you are living from grace.

If your faith has started to feel like a checklist, today is a good day to reconnect with the grace underneath it all. Let that grace be the engine, not the reward at the end of the road.

Bible Verse

"For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." - Ephesians 2:10

Reflection Question

Are you currently obeying God out of love and gratitude, or out of a fear that you need to earn His approval?

Quote

"Our work is the fruit of grace, never the price of grace. We do not obey so that God will love us. We obey because in Christ God has loved us."

Prayer

Father, let my obedience flow from a heart that is grateful, not a heart that is striving. Remind me today that Your grace is the reason I live differently, not the reward I am working toward. Amen.

Day 5: Open Hands, Every Day

Devotional

Grace is not a one-time transaction you completed years ago and then moved on from. It is the daily rhythm of the Christian life.

Every day, we are tempted to close our hands again. To take back control. To quietly return to the belief that our standing before God depends on how well we are doing. It is a subtle drift, and most of us do not even notice it happening.

But grace calls us back. Again and again, it invites us to lay down what we are gripping so tightly and receive what God is freely offering. Forgiveness for today's failures. Strength for today's challenges. Hope that is not tied to our performance but anchored in Christ.

There is no spiritual pride at the foot of the cross. When you stand there, you are not standing as someone who figured it out or earned their place. You are standing as someone who was loved before you deserved it, and who is still being loved now.

That is the grace that changes hearts. It changed Paul. It can change you. It can change the people you love and have given up on.

Today, come with open hands. Lay it all down. Receive what only God can give. And then go live like someone who has been set free, because you have.

Bible Verse

"But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions. It is by grace you have been saved." - Ephesians 2:4-5

Reflection Question

What is one thing you are still holding tightly that you need to lay down in order to receive God's grace more fully today?

Quote

"We have to lay our entire life on the cross so that we can have open hands to receive the grace of God. And that just doesn't happen one time when you were 9 years old at VBS. That's an everyday activity, to have open hands, to lay it all down on the cross and to receive God's grace."

Prayer

Lord, I come to You with open hands. Take what I have been holding onto and replace it with the grace that only You can give. Thank You that Your mercies are new every morning. Amen.