

5-Day Bible Reading Plan and Devotional Guide

Mercy Behind Us, Glory Before Us: Living as a Sacrifice in the In-Between

Day 1: The End in View

Reading: Revelation 7:9-17

Devotional: Before we can understand how to live, we must understand where history is going. John's vision reveals a destination that should reorient everything: a vast, uncountable multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language standing before the throne of the Lamb. This is not merely a comforting image — it is the declared purpose of God for all of creation. The people gathered around you in your church, your neighborhood, your workplace — some of them belong in that picture. The question is whether your life is oriented toward that reality. When we lose sight of the destination, we begin organizing our lives around lesser things. Let this vision recalibrate your sense of purpose today.

Reflection: What decisions are you currently making that are shaped more by the present age than by the coming kingdom?

Practical Application: Identify one relationship in your life that could be an opportunity to participate in what God is building toward Revelation 7. Pray specifically for that person today.

Day 2: Mercy as the Foundation

Reading: Romans 11:32-36

Devotional: Paul refuses to move into practical instruction until he has first established what God has done. Everyone has been bound over to disobedience so that God may have mercy on all. No one arrives at the throne having earned their place. The response Paul models is not a checklist — it is worship. He breaks into an extended doxology, declaring that God's judgments are unsearchable and his ways are beyond tracing out. The passage closes with a declaration that from God, through God, and to God are all things. This is the soil in which all obedience must grow. Surrender that does not begin with mercy will eventually collapse into performance or pride.

Reflection: Do you approach God primarily as someone you must satisfy, or as someone who has already acted toward you in mercy?

Practical Application: Spend five minutes today simply acknowledging what God has done for you before making any requests. Let gratitude precede petition.

Day 3: The Living Sacrifice

Reading: Romans 12:1-2; Romans 6:6-13; Luke 9:23

Devotional: Paul's appeal in Romans 12 is built on a paradox: a sacrifice that does not die. The offering God calls for is your whole embodied self — your relationships, your ambitions, your money, your time, your reputation, your future — presented continually to the One to whom all things already belong. There is a settled reality here: you were bought at a price and you are not your own. But there is also a daily discipline: you are continually tempted to live as though you still belong to yourself. These two truths must be held together. Ownership is settled. Surrender is practiced. The tension between them is where the Christian life is actually lived.

Reflection: In what area of your life are you most tempted to act as though it still belongs to you rather than to God?

Practical Application: Choose one specific area — finances, a relationship, a career decision — and verbally offer it to God today. Name it plainly. Do not speak in generalities.

Day 4: Worship Beyond the Walls

Reading: Romans 1:21-25; Romans 12:1; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Devotional: The fundamental disorder of humanity, as Paul describes it in Romans 1, is a worship problem. Creation has been taken from the Creator and offered back to itself. Comfort, success, power, and security become the objects of devotion when God is displaced. Romans 12 reverses this entirely. When your body — your whole embodied existence — is offered to God, worship expands far beyond a Sunday gathering. How you treat your spouse is worship. How you work is worship. How you respond to inconvenience is worship. How you use money is worship. What you do privately is worship. The distinction between the sacred and the ordinary collapses when you understand that all of life is offered to God.

Reflection: Where in your daily life have you drawn a line between what belongs to God and what belongs to you?

Practical Application: Choose one ordinary activity this week — a commute, a meal, a work task — and consciously offer it to God before you begin. Practice recognizing it as an act of worship.

Day 5: Between Mercy and Glory

Reading: Romans 8:18-25; Romans 11:36; Revelation 7:9-10

Devotional: You live in between. Behind you is mercy — Christ crucified and risen, God acting decisively before you deserved it or asked for it. Before you is glory — every tribe and tongue and nation gathered before the Lamb, suffering swallowed up in resurrection life. Your present moment

exists between these two realities, and that changes everything. You are not simply managing a past and building toward a future. You are standing in the space where faith and obedience intersect. When you understand that mercy is settled and glory is promised, you can release your grip on the things you have been afraid to lose. Walking with the Spirit daily is not a strategy — it is the only reasonable response to where you stand.

Reflection: What are you most afraid of losing right now? What does that fear reveal about what you are trusting in?

Practical Application: Read Romans 8:18 slowly and let it speak to whatever suffering or uncertainty you are currently carrying. Then ask the Holy Spirit to lead you in one specific act of obedience today — not a grand gesture, but one faithful step in the direction of what God has shown you.