

Writing Love: *When we disagree*

The Daily Devotional for September 8: When Conflict Finds Us

Reading: Matthew 18:15-20 — In this passage, Jesus gives direct, practical guidance on how to address conflict within a community of faith, beginning with a private, one-on-one conversation, and reminding his followers that he is present wherever they gather in his name.

Devotional: Conflict is not a sign that something has gone wrong with your faith. It is a sign that you are human, living in relationship with other humans. Jesus does not tell his followers to avoid conflict or to pretend it does not exist. He tells them to go — to move toward the person, not away from them. That single step of courage, walking toward someone when every instinct tells you to walk away, is itself an act of love. Notice also that Jesus closes this teaching not with a warning but with a promise: he is present in the gathering. You do not face the hard conversation alone. Before you speak, remember who is with you.

Reflection: Is there a conflict in your life that you have been avoiding? What would it look like to take one faithful step toward that person this week, trusting that God is present with you in that conversation?

The Daily Devotional for September 9: Faithfulness Over Outcomes

Reading: Romans 12:17-21 — The apostle Paul urges believers not to repay harm with harm, to live peaceably with others as far as it depends on them, and to leave ultimate justice in God's hands rather than seeking revenge.

Devotional: One of the most freeing truths in the Christian life is also one of the hardest to accept: you are responsible for your faithfulness, not for controlling someone else's response. Paul's phrase "as far as it depends on you" is a quiet act of mercy toward the person reading it. It acknowledges that peace is not always something you can produce on your own. You can speak honestly, listen carefully, apologize sincerely, and still walk away from a conversation with something unresolved. That is not failure. That is the reality of living among people who are also free. Do what belongs to you, and release what does not.

Reflection: Where have you been carrying the weight of a relationship that you cannot fix on your own? What would it mean to release that weight to God today, trusting that your faithfulness is enough?

The Daily Devotional for September 10: Seeing the Person, Not Just the Problem

Reading: Ephesians 4:1-3, 31-32 — Paul calls believers to walk in humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another in love, and to replace bitterness and anger with kindness, compassion, and forgiveness, in the same way they have received forgiveness from God.

Devotional: When we are hurt, our vision narrows. We begin to see the person who disappointed us through the lens of what they did, and we forget that they are still a person — beloved by God, carrying their own fears and wounds and limitations. This does not excuse harmful behavior. But it does change how we approach the relationship. Compassion is not the same as approval. You can understand why someone is behaving the way they are and still acknowledge the pain it is causing you. Grace is wide enough to hold both truths at the same time. Before you respond to what someone has done, ask yourself what they might be experiencing.

Reflection: Think of someone who has hurt or frustrated you recently. What might they be carrying that you cannot see? How might that awareness shape the way you respond to them?

The Daily Devotional for September 11: Love That Stays in the Room

Reading: 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 — This well-known passage describes love as patient and kind, not easily angered, not keeping a record of wrongs, and as something that bears, believes, hopes, and endures through all things.

Devotional: Love, as Paul describes it, is not a feeling that arrives when everything is going well. It is a practice that holds on when things are hard. It bears difficulty. It endures seasons that seem to have no end. This kind of love is especially visible in the lives of those who care for someone whose mind or memory is changing, who stay present with a person even when that person can no longer fully receive or return what is being offered. That is not weakness. That is one of the most demanding forms of faithfulness a person can live out. And it counts. It is written into the story of who you are, whether anyone else sees it or not.

Reflection: Where in your life is love asking you to stay in the room when leaving would be easier? What do you need from God in order to keep showing up in that place?

The Daily Devotional for September 12: Remembering Who You Are and Whose You Are

Reading: Exodus 12:14 — God instructs the Israelites to observe and remember what he has done for them, establishing a practice of communal memory so that they would not forget their identity or the faithfulness of God across generations.

Devotional: Memory is a spiritual practice. God commanded the Israelites to remember not because he needed them to perform a ritual, but because he knew that people in the middle of struggle forget who they are. When we are in conflict, when relationships are strained, when we feel unseen or misunderstood, we can lose sight of the larger story we belong to. We are people who have been loved at great cost. We are people who have needed grace and received it. We are people who belong to one another and to God. That remembering does not resolve every conflict, but it reorients us. It reminds us what we are writing and why it matters.

Reflection: What is one moment in your life when you clearly experienced God's faithfulness? How might returning to that memory shape the way you approach a current difficulty in a relationship?