



Starts With Us: A 5-Day Bible Reading Plan and Devotional Guide

Day 1: What Are You Passing Down?

Reading: Psalm 78:4-7

Devotional: Every generation inherits something. The question is never whether you are passing something down to those watching you -- it is what you are passing down. Your priorities, your habits, your reactions, your relationship with God -- all of it is being observed and absorbed by someone behind you. Faith is not transmitted through words alone. It travels through the way you live Monday through Saturday, not just Sunday morning. Before you can teach the next generation about the glorious deeds of God, you must be living in the reality of those deeds yourself. Ask yourself honestly today: what is your life teaching?

Reflection: What habits or attitudes have you been modeling, intentionally or unintentionally, for those who are watching your life?

Application: Take five minutes today to write down three things your daily life is currently communicating to the next generation. Pray over each one and ask God to align what you show with what you say you believe.

Day 2: Love Him First, Then Lead

Reading: Deuteronomy 6:5-7

Devotional: God gives the command to teach the next generation, but notice what comes before it -- love the Lord your God with everything you have. The order is not accidental. You cannot pass down a faith you are not personally living. Spiritual leadership in your home, your church, and your community begins with your own surrender and devotion. When your love for God is genuine and daily, it naturally overflows into conversation, correction, and example. Faith discussed in the car, at the dinner table, and at bedtime is not performance -- it is the overflow of a heart that is truly centered on Him.

Reflection: Is your love for God something you feel on Sunday mornings only, or does it shape the rhythm of your everyday life?

Application: Choose one ordinary moment today -- a drive, a meal, a quiet minute before bed -- and intentionally bring God into it. Speak His name, offer a prayer, or read one verse aloud. Begin making faith a daily conversation, not a weekly appointment.

Day 3: Do Not Just Amen It -- Live It

Reading: James 1:22; 1 John 4:4

Devotional: It is far easier to celebrate God's promises than it is to obey His instructions. We shout amen over provision and protection, but grow quiet when Scripture calls us to forgive, serve, control our tongues, and love our enemies. Agreement with truth is not the same as obedience to it. The Spirit who lives inside every believer is greater than anything the world throws at you -- but that truth must change how you actually live. Your home, your marriage, your parenting, and your attitude should look different because of what you claim to believe. Faith is not proven by what you agree with. It is proven by what you obey.

Reflection: Where in your life are you agreeing with Scripture but not yet obeying it? What is the cost of that gap to those who are watching you?

Application: Identify one area where you have been saying amen but not yet living it out. Make one concrete decision today to move from agreement to action in that area, and ask a trusted believer to hold you accountable.

Day 4: Pray Before the Battle Begins

Reading: Ephesians 6:18; 1 Peter 5:8; Joshua 24:15

Devotional: Too often, prayer becomes a spiritual emergency call rather than a daily conversation. We reach out to God when the marriage is crumbling, when the child is struggling, when the diagnosis comes -- but we rarely pray before the storm arrives. The enemy is not waiting for your children to grow up before he begins his work. Influence, confusion, and temptation arrive early and without warning. The greatest defense you can build around your family is a consistent, persistent prayer life that does not wait for crisis. Cover your children, your home, and your relationships in prayer before there is ever a reason to panic.

Reflection: Are you treating God like a daily Lord or an emergency contact? What would change in your family if you prayed consistently before problems arose?

Application: Begin a simple daily prayer list that includes the children in your life -- your own, those in your church, those in your neighborhood. Pray specifically over their identity, their future, their friendships, and every voice that is allowed to influence them. Do this for all five days of this reading plan.

Day 5: Move So God Can Move

Reading: John 10:10; Genesis 3:1-5; Joshua 24:15

Devotional: God establishes. The enemy fights what God is building. This pattern begins in the very first chapters of Scripture and has never stopped. A family, a marriage, a church -- when God is at the center, the enemy looks for any foothold he can find. Sometimes that foothold is not outside pressure. Sometimes it is our own fear, our need for control, or our refusal to surrender what we are holding too tightly. When we step aside and release what only God can handle, He is able to move in ways we cannot manufacture. Surrender is not defeat. It is the moment God begins to work most powerfully.

Reflection: What are you holding onto so tightly that you have left no room for God to move in that situation? What would it look like to genuinely release it to Him today?

Application: Write down one person or situation you have been trying to control out of fear. Speak a prayer of surrender over it today -- not a reluctant prayer, but a genuine act of trust. Then choose to return to that prayer every time the urge to take back control returns. Restoration is always possible. It starts with us, and it starts now.

Day 3: Do Not Focus on Your Disadvantages

Reading: Judges 6:11-16

Devotional: When the angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon, he called him a mighty man of valor. Gideon's immediate response was to list his disadvantages. He was the least in his father's house, from the weakest clan in Manasseh. In other words, Gideon's first instinct was to argue with God's assessment of him. This is a pattern many believers fall into. The enemy whispers that you are not educated enough, not talented enough, not experienced enough, and not worthy enough. God's Word declares something entirely different. He does not call you by your limitations. He calls you by your destiny. The question is not whether you feel qualified. The question is whether you will trust the One who called you.

Reflection: What disadvantages has the enemy used most effectively to hold you back from stepping into what God has called you to do? Have you accepted those limitations as permanent?

Practical Application: Read Psalm 139:13-16, which affirms that you were intentionally and carefully formed by God. Identify one area where you have allowed a sense of inadequacy to prevent obedience, and take one concrete step forward in that area this week.

Day 4: Lion Chasers and the Size of Your God

Reading: 2 Samuel 23:20-23

Devotional: Benaiah chased a lion into a pit on a snowy day. He fought two of Moab's mightiest warriors at the same time. He snatched a spear from a giant's hand and killed the giant with his own weapon. None of these outcomes made logical sense. The odds against Benaiah in each situation were staggering. But Benaiah's confidence was not rooted in his own strength. It was rooted in his knowledge of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob — a God who had parted seas, fed multitudes in wilderness places, and led His people with fire and cloud. How you view God determines how you face your giants. A small God produces a fearful life. A great God produces a life of bold, even reckless, trust.

Reflection: A.W. Tozer wrote that the most important thing about a person is what comes to mind when they think about God. When you face your hardest moments, what does your God look like in your imagination? Is He large enough to meet what you are facing?

Practical Application: Spend time today reading Isaiah 55:8-9, which describes the vast distance between God's ways and human understanding. Meditate on the truth that your greatest thought about God on your best day still falls infinitely short of who He actually is. Let that truth expand your confidence in prayer.

Day 5: God Orders Your Steps — Trust the Process

Reading: Proverbs 3:5-6; Psalm 37:23-24

Devotional: The sermon reminds us that God wrote our days in a book before we were ever born. He is not reacting to our circumstances. He is not surprised by our failures, our detours, or our seasons of suffering. He is omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient — outside the limitations of time and dimension, looking in on every moment of every life simultaneously. This means that the hard season you are enduring right now is not outside His awareness or beyond His reach. He is not a God who is boxed in by your circumstances the way you are. He sees the beginning and the end at the same time. Your job is not to understand the whole plan. Your job is to trust the One who wrote it.

Reflection: Is there a season in your past where you can now look back and see God's hand at work, even though it felt like abandonment at the time? How does that history strengthen your faith for what you are currently facing?

Practical Application: Write out Proverbs 3:5-6 and place it somewhere you will see it every morning this week. Each day, identify one area where you have been leaning on your own understanding rather than trusting God's direction, and consciously surrender that area to Him in prayer.