

5-Day Bible Reading Plan and Devotional Guide

Based on Romans 9:15-23 | Pastor Josh Smith

Day 1: Mercy Belongs to God Alone

****Reading:**** Romans 9:15-16; Exodus 33:19

****Devotional:****

Mercy is not a right you were born with. It is a gift that belongs entirely to God. In a culture that insists you deserve the best, that you should follow your heart and trust yourself, this truth cuts against everything the world teaches. God declares plainly that He will show mercy on whom He chooses. That is not cruelty. That is sovereignty. The proper response is not outrage but gratitude. You did nothing to earn mercy. You brought nothing to the table. The fact that God extended mercy to you through Jesus Christ is reason enough to spend every remaining day in humble, reverent thanksgiving.

****Reflection:**** Have you been treating God's mercy as something owed to you, or as the undeserved gift it truly is?

****Application:**** Begin each morning this week by verbally thanking God for mercy you did not earn and could never deserve.

[illegible]

Day 2: The Danger of Living for Yourself

****Reading:**** Luke 9:23; Romans 6:23

****Devotional:****

The call of Christ is absolute. Deny yourself. Take up your cross daily. Follow Him. There is no middle ground, no third option, no comfortable place in between. Your flesh will resist this. Your pride will argue against it. Your desires will demand to be heard. But Pastor Josh made it plain: to be alive in Christ, you must be dead to yourself. This is not a suggestion for the spiritually advanced. It is the daily requirement of every believer. The cross is not a one-time event in your walk with God. It is a daily discipline, a daily surrender, a daily death that produces daily life.

****Reflection:**** What specific desire, habit, or attitude do you need to place on the cross today?

****Application:**** Identify one area where your will has been competing with God's will and consciously surrender it to Him in prayer today.

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Day 3: God Knows the Heart Before the Beginning

****Reading:**** 2 Peter 3:9; Jeremiah 1:5

In 2 Peter 3:9, the apostle makes clear that God desires none to perish and that all would come to repentance. In Jeremiah 1:5, God declares that He knew the prophet before he was formed in the womb.

****Devotional:****

God is not scrambling to figure out who will choose Him. He is not anxiously watching history unfold, hoping things work out. He knew the end before He spoke the beginning into existence. He knows who will accept His mercy and who will reject it. This truth should not produce arrogance in the believer or despair in the seeker. It should produce awe. The God who holds all of time in His hands still calls you by name. Still extends mercy. Still waits with patience. His longsuffering is not weakness. It is love on full display.

****Reflection:**** How does knowing that God is fully sovereign over all things change the way you approach your fears and uncertainties?

****Application:**** Write down one fear you have been carrying and surrender it to the God who already knows the outcome.

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Day 4: The Clay Does Not Instruct the Potter

****Reading:**** Isaiah 64:8; Isaiah 45:9; Romans 9:20-21

In Isaiah 64:8, the prophet declares that God is the Father, the potter, and humanity is the clay, the work of His hands. In Isaiah 45:9, God warns against striving with the One who made you.

****Devotional:****

Clay brings nothing of value into the potter's shop. It has no skill, no strength, no design of its own. Whatever beauty or purpose the clay holds comes entirely from the hands of the potter. Yet humanity, in its pride, constantly tells God He made a mistake. The culture around you celebrates striving against your Maker as though it were freedom. It is not freedom. It is bondage to the loudest voice in your own head. True freedom is found in submission to the One who formed you, who knows exactly what He made you for and is working to bring that purpose to completion.

****Reflection:**** In what area of your life are you resisting what God has made you to be or called you to do?

****Application:**** Spend time in prayer today asking God to reveal His intended purpose for your life and commit to submitting to it rather than fighting against it.

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Day 5: Created With Purpose, Called to Surrender

****Reading:**** 2 Timothy 2:20-21; Ephesians 2:10

In 2 Timothy 2:20, Paul describes a great house containing vessels of different materials and purposes. In Ephesians 2:10, Paul declares that believers are God's workmanship, created for good works prepared in advance.

****Devotional:****

Every person was created with a purpose. Every life was designed for a mission. The question is not whether God has a plan for you. He does. The question is whether you will submit to it or spend your days striving against the One who made you. Some reject God outright. Some rebel quietly, living for themselves while calling themselves believers. But the vessel that is cleansed, surrendered, and set apart becomes useful to the Master. You were not made to be your own boss. You were made to reflect the glory of the God who formed you. That is not a burden. That is the greatest honor a human being can receive.

****Reflection:**** Are you living as a vessel set apart for God's purposes, or are you still trying to define your own?

****Application:**** Commit today to one specific, concrete act of obedience to God in an area where you have been holding back. Do not wait for a better time. The deadline is real, and the call is now.

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