

# Fighting Intimidation

## 5 Day Devotional

### *Day 1*

Luke 22:3–6; Matthew 16:21–23; Matthew 27:17–23, 25

### Devotional

Satan failed to tempt Jesus away from the cross, so he shifted to intimidation—and he did it through people.

First, he influenced Peter, one of Jesus' closest friends, to say, "Never, Lord! This shall never happen to you!" Peter wasn't trying to be evil; he was trying to protect someone he loved. But Jesus recognized the voice behind the words: "Get behind me, Satan." When human words try to pull you away from God's will, there's often a spiritual battle underneath. Then Satan went further and "entered Judas," one of the Twelve. Judas sold Jesus for a few coins and worked in secret with the religious leaders "when no crowd was present." Finally, the crowds and religious leaders turned. Many who may have shouted "Hosanna!" now cried "Crucify him!" Ordinary people were swept into a tide of hatred and pressure. Satan used the opinions and passions of the crowd as a tool of intimidation.

If Satan tried to intimidate Jesus through friends, insiders, and crowds, you can be sure he will try similar tactics with you. But notice this: Jesus never let people's voices redefine his mission. He loved people—but he did not allow people to lead him.

### Application

**Reflection:** How many times do you let other people's opinions shape what you are willing to do or not do for Jesus? What kind of voices in your life most often cause you to second-guess what you know God wants from you?

**Action:** Identify one person or group whose opinion intimidates you spiritually (maybe it keeps you from speaking about your faith, serving, or obeying). Write their name(s) down. This week, choose one small act of obedience you know Jesus wants from you that you have hesitated to do because of what they might think—and do it quietly, for him.

**Prayer:** "Lord Jesus, you faced betrayal from a friend, pressure from the crowd, and opposition from leaders, but you never left your mission. Reveal where I am controlled by people's opinions. Give me courage to listen to your voice above every other voice. Help me obey you even when it costs me socially. Amen."

## **Day 2**

### **Matthew 27:27–31**

#### **Devotional**

Before the cross, Jesus endured public humiliation and cruelty from the very people meant to uphold justice—the soldiers. They stripped him, dressed him in a mock robe, twisted a crown of thorns onto his head, shoved a staff in his hand, then knelt and said, “Hail, king of the Jews!” They spit on him. They struck him again and again. This is more than physical violence; it is systematic dehumanizing—an attempt to erase his dignity and identity. This is intimidation at its loudest. The message is: “You are powerless. You are nothing. You have no control. Who do you think you are?” Many of us hear that same spiritual message in quieter forms: through shame from past sin, rejection, bullying, online attacks, or the internal accusation, “You’re a failure; you’ll never change.” But Jesus, even in silence, is not defeated. The soldiers think they are in control, but Jesus has already said, “No one takes my life from me, but I lay it down of my own accord” (John 10:18). He is choosing to endure this. He is not intimidated; he is obedient.

That matters for you. The Savior who let himself be mocked and beaten is not fragile. He is not easily shaken. When you feel crushed by intimidation—by people, circumstances, fear, shame—you belong to the One who stood in the middle of all of that and kept walking toward the cross for you.

#### **Application**

**Reflection:** When you feel mocked, rejected, or looked down on, what kind of lies start forming in your mind about who you are and what you’re worth? How many times do you let shame or fear of embarrassment stop you from doing something you know is right?

**Action:** Write down one lie intimidation has whispered to you (for example: “You’re not good enough,” “You’ll always fail,” “God can’t use you”). Underneath it, write a simple truth about your identity in Christ (for example: “In Christ, I am chosen” – Ephesians 1:4; “I am forgiven” – 1 John 1:9; “I am God’s child” – John 1:12). Read that truth aloud at least once today.

**Prayer:** “Jesus, you were mocked and beaten by those who should have upheld justice. You understand humiliation and shame. When I feel small or attacked, remind me that you are not intimidated and that I am held in your strong hands. Expose the lies I believe and replace them with your truth. Amen.”

## Day 3

Luke 22:39–44; Matthew 26:36–42

### Devotional

In Gethsemane, the intimidation becomes internal. Jesus knows what is coming—betrayal, beating, the cross, and the weight of sin. The gospel writers describe his soul as “overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death.” He falls with his face to the ground. He sweats “like drops of blood.” This is mental, emotional, and spiritual agony. And in that place, Jesus prays a startlingly honest prayer:

“Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.”

He prays it three times. This isn’t a cold, mechanical submission. It is a wrestling: “Are you sure, Father? Is there any other way?” This shows Jesus’ full humanity. He isn’t pretending this is easy.

But each time, he ends in the same place: surrender. “Not my will, but yours.” True courage isn’t the absence of fear; it is obedience in the presence of fear. Jesus models how to face the things that intimidate you:

- He goes to the Father, not away from him.
- He is honest about what he feels and wants.
- He surrenders his will to God’s will.

You may face situations that feel too heavy—painful conversations, hard obedience, chronic suffering, big decisions, or calling that scares you. Gethsemane tells you this: it is okay to say, “God, I don’t want this.” But it is life-giving to add, “Yet not my will, but yours be done.”

### Application

**Reflection:** What situation right now feels like “a cup” you wish God would take away—something you would rather avoid than walk through with him? How many times do you pray to escape hard things, compared to how often you pray to obey God fully in the middle of them?

**Action:** Take 5 quiet minutes today. Name one specific intimidating situation before God in honest words (even if those words are messy). Then consciously pray Jesus’ words over it: “Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.” Say it slowly. Mean it as best you can, even if you feel conflicted.

**Prayer:** “Father, you saw your Son agonize in the garden, and you see my struggles, too. This situation feels heavy and intimidating. If it is your will, please change it. But above all, let your will, not mine, be done. Give me the courage, strength, and trust to walk the path you choose for me. Amen.”

## Day 4

Matthew 26:45–46; Philippians 1:6; 2 Timothy 1:7

### Devotional

After repeated agonizing prayer, Jesus returns to his disciples and says, "Look, the hour has come... Rise, let us go! Here comes my betrayer." There is a noticeable shift. The internal battle has been fought. The decision is settled. Jesus stands up with a renewed, calm determination.

This is "Godly confidence." It isn't arrogance. It is the settled assurance that you are doing what God wants. Fear is still real, pain is still real, but the direction is not up for negotiation anymore. Paul reflects this kind of confidence when he says, "He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion" (Phil. 1:6). God is not intimidated by your weakness, your past, or what lies ahead. And Paul reminds Timothy, "God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control" (2 Tim. 1:7).

When you know your mission from God—love him, love others, share Christ, live holy, obey in your specific calling—you don't have to live paralyzed by intimidation. You can rise like Jesus did and say, "Let's go. It's time."

Your life may not feel movie-worthy, but in God's eyes, simple, faithful obedience is powerful. You can walk into your day—work, school, family, neighborhood—with a quiet, godly confidence: "I am here on purpose. I am here for Jesus."

### Application

**Reflection:** What kind of mindset do you usually carry into your day—a fearful, reactive mindset, or a clear sense of purpose and calling from God? How many of your daily decisions are shaped by convenience and comfort rather than by the question, "What does Jesus want here?"

**Action:** Choose one normal environment you are in often (work, school, a team, a friend group). Today, before entering that environment, pause for 30 seconds and say: "Lord, I am here on mission for you. Give me power, love, and self-control." Then look for one small way to reflect Christ there (a word of encouragement, an act of service, a refusal to join in gossip, etc.).

**Prayer:** "Jesus, after praying, you rose with focus and walked toward your mission. Replace my spirit of fear with your Spirit of power, love, and self-control. Give me clarity about how you want to use me where I am. Help me live today with godly confidence, focused on your mission, not on my comfort. Amen."

## Day 5

1 Corinthians 10:13; James 4:7–8; Hebrews 12:1–3

### Devotional

Scripture teaches that temptation is real, but not unstoppable:

"No temptation has overtaken you except what is common... And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear...". You are not uniquely hopeless or uniquely weak. Your situation is "common," but your God is faithful. James adds, "Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you."

Consistently submitting to God and resisting the devil doesn't mean you never feel tempted or intimidated; it means you repeatedly turn toward God instead of away from him. Over time, that repeated turning shapes your inner culture into one of trust, not fear; obedience, not compromise.

Your life will be full of potholes, ditches, and intimidating stretches of road.

But repeatedly choosing Jesus in the small moments builds a culture in your heart and home where temptation and intimidation lose their power.

### Application

**Reflection:** What kind of spiritual "culture" are you currently creating in your heart and home? How many of your recurring temptations have become stronger because of small, repeated "yes" responses, instead of small, repeated "no" responses?

**Action:** Identify one specific temptation or intimidating pressure that shows up again and again in your life. Choose one simple, consistent practice you will begin this week to resist it and draw near to God (for example: a 5-minute Scripture reading each morning before your phone, a weekly fast from social media, a quick prayer every time that specific temptation rises). Stick with that one practice for the next 7 days.

**Prayer:** "Lord, you know how easily I fall into patterns—both good and bad. Show me where my daily choices are feeding temptation or fear. Help me to submit to you and resist the devil. As I take small, consistent steps, create in me a godly culture of trust, obedience, and courage. Fix my eyes on Jesus, who endured the cross for me. Amen."