

5-Day Bible Reading Plan and Devotional Guide

Based on the Themes of Religion vs. Righteousness

Day 1: The Heart God Sees

Reading: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

Devotional: God bypassed every outwardly impressive son of Jesse and chose David, the one tending sheep in a field. No one else thought to call for him. This is how God operates. He is not impressed by the things that impress us. He looks past the polished exterior, past the performance, past the carefully constructed image we present to the world, and He looks directly at the heart. This is both sobering and deeply freeing. You do not have to appear perfect before God. You simply have to be honest with Him. Ask yourself today: what is the true condition of my heart, and am I willing to let God see it?

Day 2: Still Being Worked On

Reading: Philippians 1:3-6

Devotional: The apostle Paul was confident of this: that the good work God began in those He called would not be abandoned halfway through. God is not a builder who lays a foundation and walks away. He is committed to the completion of what He started in you. This means that where you are today is not where you will always be. Your struggles, your failures, your slow progress -- none of these disqualify you from His continued work. The same God who saved you is the same God who is sanctifying you. Be patient with yourself the way He is patient with you. He is still working on you.

Day 3: Clothed in Righteousness, Not Performance

Reading: Isaiah 61:10; Ephesians 6:10-14

Devotional: The breastplate of righteousness is not a reward for those who have earned it through flawless behavior. It is armor given to those who belong to God. When the blacksmith forges armor, he does not see the imperfections of the man who will wear it. He sees the

strength of what he has made. In the same way, God clothes you in His righteousness, and that is what He sees when He looks at you. The church must reflect this same vision. When someone walks through the doors carrying the weight of their past, the first thing they should encounter is not judgment but the grace of being seen as God sees them.

Day 4: Repentance and the Man After God's Own Heart

Reading: 2 Samuel 12:1-13; Psalm 51:1-12

Devotional: David committed serious sin. He abused his power, took another man's wife, and orchestrated that man's death to cover it up. And yet Scripture calls him a man after God's own heart. How is that possible? The answer lies not in the absence of failure but in the response to it. When the prophet Nathan confronted David, he did not deflect, rationalize, or argue. He repented immediately and completely. Psalm 51 is the record of that repentance -- raw, honest, and desperate for restoration. A heart after God is not a perfect heart. It is a heart that runs back to God when it has gone wrong.

Day 5: Authenticity, Acceptance, and the Table God Sets

Reading: Luke 15:1-7; Matthew 9:10-13

Devotional: Jesus consistently drew near to those the religious establishment had written off. Tax collectors, prostitutes, the sick, the outcast -- these were the people filling the space around Him. He did not wait for them to clean themselves up before welcoming them. He sat with them as they were. The church is called to reflect that same posture. When people who are still being shaped by God walk into our gatherings, they should encounter grace before they encounter correction. They should sense that they are wanted before they are instructed. Examine your heart today. Is there someone you have kept at arm's length because of their imperfections? Go toward them the way Christ came toward you.

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