

5-Day Devotional: Love and Grace in Action
Pastor Jay Hassman
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Day 1: When Words Need Hands and Feet

Reading: 1 John 3:16-18

Devotional: Love is never meant to remain theoretical. John reminds us that genuine love must move beyond words into tangible action. Just as Christ laid down His life for us, we are called to lay down our preferences, comfort, and time for others. Today, reflect on the gap between what you say you value and what your actions demonstrate. Is there someone you've told "I care about you" but haven't shown it lately? Grace received from God naturally flows outward through our hands and feet. Faith that stays invisible eventually becomes unrecognizable. Ask God to reveal one specific way you can translate your love into action today with such things like a phone call, a visit, a practical act of service that costs you something but blesses another.

Day 2: The Lens of Grace

Reading: Luke 19:1-10 (The Story of Zacchaeus)

Devotional: Jesus saw Zacchaeus differently than everyone else did. While the crowd saw a traitor and a thief, Jesus saw a man longing for restoration. Grace changes our prescription and it should give us a clearer vision to see people as God sees them. Today, consider someone in your life you've been viewing through a lens of frustration, disappointment, or judgment. What would it look like to see them through grace instead? Grace doesn't deny brokenness or excuse sin, but it refuses to define people solely by their failures. It holds truth and compassion together without sacrificing either. Ask God to renew your perspective today. Before you can love someone well, you must first see them rightly and not as problems to manage, but as souls deeply loved by God.

Day 3: The Identifying Mark

Reading: John 13:31-35

Devotional: Jesus stakes the credibility of our witness on one thing: how we love one another. Not our theological knowledge, not our worship style, not our programs but our love. This is both sobering and clarifying. The world is watching how Christians treat each other, especially in moments of disagreement and tension. Our love is most tested not when relationships are easy, but when they're complicated. Today, honestly assess your relationships within the body of Christ. Are there places where your witness is compromised by unresolved conflict, cold shoulders, or unspoken bitterness? Grace doesn't demand instant reconciliation, but it does require a posture of kindness over contempt. Let this truth settle in you: people will know you belong to Jesus by how you love, not just by what you believe.

Day 4: The Cost of Compassion

Reading: Luke 10:25-37 (The Good Samaritan)

Devotional: The Samaritan didn't stop because it was convenient. He stopped because grace demanded action. Loving others well will always cost us something: time when we're busy, comfort when we'd rather stay distant, resources when we'd rather save them. Notice that the Samaritan crossed the road, interrupted his plans, and used his own provisions. He didn't ask whether the wounded man deserved help or whether stopping fit his schedule. Grace moves us from observation to involvement. Today, ask God to make you alert to the needs around you that you typically walk past. Who has God placed in your path that requires you to cross a line of comfort? Loving others through grace doesn't mean abandoning wisdom or healthy boundaries, but it does mean choosing presence over avoidance and compassion over convenience.

Day 5: Building a Community of Healing

Reading: Ephesians 4:29-32

Devotional: Paul writes to real people in a real church with real wounds and real disagreements. His call to kindness, tenderheartedness, and forgiveness isn't given because relationships are easy as most of the time it's a given that they're difficult. When grace is practiced consistently over time, it shapes the entire culture of a community. The church becomes a place where people can be honest about struggles without fear of rejection, where growth is encouraged rather than forced, where restoration is genuinely possible. Today, consider your role in creating this kind of environment. Are you contributing to a culture of grace or a culture of judgment? Do your words build up or tear down? Remember: forgiveness doesn't deny pain, and grace doesn't pretend wounds didn't happen. But love refuses to let bitterness rule. Choose today to be someone who helps make your community a place marked by healing rather than harm.