

# DAY 6

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. (Hebrews 13:8 NIV)

How do you feel about change? Your answer might depend on the type of change! Upgrading to the newest iPhone? Getting to drive yourself to school? Moving into a bigger room? Those are changes we can get behind! But starting a new school? Having your parents get divorced? Losing a close family member? Those are changes we'd rather not face. The reality is, life is full of change, but change isn't always easy. When we're facing change for better or for worse, one thing we can remember is that Jesus never changes. His character, His love, His grace, His presence in our lives—that will always be the same. His promise to always be with us never changes.

**In the midst of trying to cope with change in your home or family, find hope in the fact that Jesus stays the same. Today, write out this verse to help you focus on the One who never changes.**

# DAY 7

“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” (John 13:35 NIV)

When memorizing Scripture, it is important to also understand how it applies to your life.

**Today, take a few minutes to write down what you think this verse means in your life as it relates to your family, friends, and others around you. Use what you write as a queue to remind you of the words in this verse. Understanding how Scripture applies to your life can serve as a great way to help you memorize verses like this one.**

# DAILY DEVOTIONAL

FOR AN  
everyday faith.

THICKER THAN WATER / WEEK 4

## DAY 1

Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. (James 1:17 NIV)

God is a loving Father who loves to give good gifts to His kids. But, it doesn't always feel that way, does it? Sometimes we look around at our lives, and wonder where those amazing gifts actually are! Maybe that's because sometimes life feels difficult, and good things can be hard to find. Sometimes this can happen because we're so focused on what we don't have, instead of what we do. This is why one of the best things you can practice in your life is gratitude.

**This week, start looking for the good things in your life and thank God for them. Maybe it's your family, a close friend who feels like family, a home you feel safe in, a small group you trust. Whatever it is, write it down! Make a list of three things you are grateful for, and as you write them down, thank God for giving them to you.**

## DAY 2

We love because he first loved us. (1 John 4:19 NIV)

It can feel like loving your family is the most difficult thing on the planet! Siblings can be annoying. Parents seem unfair. Or maybe someone in your family treated you poorly, and you're angry. Here, John tells us the reason we love isn't because we feel like it. It isn't even because someone deserves it. We love because God loved us first and that reality can bring us joy when we remember we didn't have to do anything to earn or deserve that love. We can then find it easier to love other people and give them the same love and grace Jesus gives us. When our love for others is rooted in the fact that God loves us first, our love for others has no limits. Remembering this truth can help us remember the importance of loving other people.

**Today, go out of your way to love someone in your family because Jesus loves you.**

## DAY 3

**He predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will. (Ephesians 1:5 NIV)**

Everybody wants to know they belong somewhere. It's one of the longings all humans share. There seems to be no feeling worse than the feeling that leads us to believe we have no place to belong. But do you know what happens when we put our faith in Jesus? He says you belong and are part of God's family. He brings you into a family made up of all sorts of different people—a place where you will always belong. There is nothing you can ever do to change that. So be encouraged today that God sees you exactly as you are. God loves and invites you to have a place in the family of God.

**In God's family, you have a place to belong. Today, take time to talk to a family member, trusted friend, or small group leader about what it means to be a part of God's family.**

## DAY 4

**He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. (1 Peter 1:3-4a NIV)**

Have you ever hoped for something that never wound up becoming a reality? Maybe you hoped for an "A" on your test, but got a "B" instead. Or you hoped your favorite team would win, but they lost in the last second. Or maybe you even hoped things would change in your family, but things stayed full of drama and conflict. Usually when we hope for something, we are hoping that the situation turns out the exact way we want it. We have no idea if it will actually turn out the way we planned or wanted. The good news about God is that He is worth placing our hope in. We can be confident that what God has promised will come to pass. In fact, God's Son, Jesus proved this when He died and then came back to life. In that moment, Jesus made it clear that our hope is always secure in Him.

**Today, on an index card, write "Hope in Christ" and keep it in your wallet, purse, backpack, or in a pocket. Take it out and read it when you feel like you need a reminder that no matter what is going on around you, you can confidently hope in Jesus and the promises He's made. Promises like full life, that God loves you, and that He is always with you.**

## DAY 5

**Most of all, love one another deeply. Love erases many sins by forgiving them. (1 Peter 4:8 NIV)**

*Written by Hannah, age 17, from Highland Village, Texas, USA*

Loving someone deeply is a struggle. In the media 'true love' is portrayed as something that is full of happiness and never causes any problems or pain. However, this idea of love is so inaccurate. Truly, deeply loving someone is hard work in itself, but loving someone who has wronged you in that same way is an even harder task! Real love does cause lots of happiness, but it also can cause lots of pain. Loving people who aren't nice to you can be quite draining. Peter tells us that when we love someone truly and deeply, many sins will be erased! This means that, by the grace of God and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, we can forgive and love people who we thought were our enemies. Loving the way Peter talks about doesn't come easy, but we can feel safe knowing that, God helps us live out this kind of love. God will give us the strength and courage to love people the way Peter describes in today's verse!

**Today, I encourage you to say a prayer and ask God to help you love someone who gets on your nerves or is mean to you. Ask God to give you an idea of how you can love that person and find the courage to forgive them. Just remember that loving someone like this doesn't mean you allow someone to hurt you, themselves, or others. If that's what's going on, take the step of talking to a trusted adult today!**

Let's be people who choose to love one another like Peter describes.