

Back to Basics: A 5-Day Bible Reading Plan and Devotional Guide

Based on the sermon series "Back to Basics," this guide walks you through five foundational themes of the Christian faith: the reliability of God's Word, grace, justification, sanctification, and the Holy Spirit. Each day is designed to anchor you more deeply in the essentials of what you believe and why you believe it.

Day 1: The Word That Cannot Be Broken

Reading: 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Psalm 119:89-96; Matthew 5:17-18

Devotional:

The Bible is not a collection of ancient opinions. It is the living, preserved, and unbreakable Word of the living God. Across 1,500 years, through 40 authors, writing on three continents in three languages, one unified message emerged. No other book in human history comes close to the manuscript evidence, archaeological confirmation, and prophetic accuracy that the Scriptures possess. Scholars have tried to disprove it. Governments have tried to destroy it. Skeptics have tried to outlast it. None have succeeded. The question is not whether the Bible can be trusted. The question is whether you trust it enough to open it daily, read it carefully, and allow it to correct, instruct, and mature you. God wrote this book for you. Are you reading it?

Personal Reflection: When did you last sit with your Bible not out of obligation but out of genuine hunger? What would change in your daily routine if you treated Scripture as the most valuable resource in your home?

Practical Application: Choose a consistent time each morning this week to read at least one chapter of Scripture before you look at your phone. Write down one thing God says to you through the reading each day.

Day 2: Grace That Finds the Beggar

Reading: Ephesians 2:1-10; Romans 5:6-11; Titus 3:4-7

Devotional:

Grace is not a reward for effort. It is a gift extended to those who have nothing to offer. The song sung in worship described it plainly: we were the beggars, He was royalty. We were the prisoners, He ran free. And yet He came for us. Grace does not wait for you to get your life together before it moves toward you. It moves toward you in the middle of your mess, your failure, your exhaustion, and your surrender. The pastor in this sermon described a young man who walked forward and said he was ready to quit trying. That moment of surrender was not defeat. It was the beginning of grace. Grace starts where striving ends.

Personal Reflection: Is there an area of your life where you are still trying to earn what God has already freely given? What would it look like to stop striving and simply receive?

Practical Application: Write down one area where you have been performing for God rather than resting in His grace. Pray over it specifically today and ask God to replace your striving with trust.

Day 3: Justified -- Declared Not Guilty

Reading: Romans 3:21-26; Romans 5:1-2; Galatians 2:16

Devotional:

Justification is a legal term with eternal consequences. It means that because of what Christ accomplished on the cross, God looks at the believer and declares that person righteous -- not because of anything they have done, but because of everything Christ has done. You are not justified by your church attendance, your good deeds, your family heritage, or your moral effort. You are justified by faith in Jesus Christ alone. This is not a small theological detail. It is the hinge on which your entire standing before God turns. Just as being in a garage does not make you a car, sitting in a church does not make you saved. Justification requires personal faith.

Personal Reflection: Have you ever confused religious activity with a genuine standing before God? On what basis do you believe you are right with Him today?

Practical Application: Share the concept of justification with one person in your life this week. Use simple language. Explain that it means God declares us not guilty through faith in Christ, not through our own goodness.

Day 4: Sanctification -- Set Apart and Growing

Reading: 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7; Hebrews 12:14; Philippians 1:6

Devotional:

Salvation is a moment. Sanctification is a journey. When you come to Christ, you are declared righteous in an instant. But the process of becoming more like Christ unfolds over a lifetime. Sanctification is the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit within the believer, shaping desires, redirecting habits, renewing the mind, and producing the fruit of a transformed life. It is not about achieving sinless perfection. It is about consistent, Spirit-empowered growth in the direction of holiness. God is not finished with you. The One who began a good work in you is faithful to complete it. Your stumbles do not end the process. They are part of it.

Personal Reflection: In what specific area of your character or behavior have you seen God working most noticeably over the past year? What area do you sense He is working on right now?

Practical Application: Identify one habit or pattern in your life that you know is inconsistent with who God is calling you to be. Bring it before Him in prayer today and ask for the Spirit's power to address it practically this week.

Day 5: The Holy Spirit -- Present, Powerful, and Personal

Reading: John 14:16-17, 26; Acts 1:8; Romans 8:26-27

Devotional:

The Holy Spirit is not a force, a feeling, or a theological footnote. He is the third Person of the Trinity, and He lives within every believer. Jesus promised that the Spirit would teach you all things, remind you of His words, and lead you into truth. He is the presence of God within you when the fire feels cold, when the road feels long, and when the words for prayer will not come. He intercedes for you when you do not know what to say. He convicts you when you drift. He empowers you when you feel empty. The honey in the rock, the water in the stone, the manna on the ground -- all of it is a picture of a God who provides through His Spirit exactly what you need, exactly when you need it.

Personal Reflection: Do you live with a daily awareness of the Holy Spirit's presence within you? What would change about how you make decisions, speak to others, and face difficulty if you remained conscious of His presence throughout the day?

Practical Application: Before you begin each morning this week, pause for two minutes in silence and ask the Holy Spirit to lead you, speak through you, and make you aware of His presence in every conversation and circumstance you encounter that day.

A Final Word

These five doctrines are not abstract theology. They are the foundation beneath your feet. The Bible is reliable. Grace is real. Justification is yours through faith. Sanctification is ongoing. And the Holy Spirit is with you. Go back to the basics. Build on them. And do not stop.