

5-Day Devotional: Living the Sermon on the Mount

Day 1: The Power of Integrity

Reading: Matthew 5:33-37; James 5:12

Devotional: In a world where people constantly feel the need to emphasize their truthfulness—"I'm really serious this time"—Jesus calls us to a higher standard. When we have to swear by something greater to be believed, it reveals a character problem. Jesus teaches that our simple "yes" should mean yes, and our "no" should mean no. This isn't about avoiding profanity; it's about building a reputation of unwavering integrity. God has extended immense grace to you—grace you didn't deserve. Now He calls you to live in such truthfulness that oaths become unnecessary. Your character should speak louder than your promises. Today, examine your words. Do people believe you the first time, or do you have to convince them? Let your integrity reflect your Father in heaven, who cannot lie.

Day 2: Grace Extended, Grace Withheld

Reading: Matthew 5:38-42; Romans 12:17-21

Devotional: The "eye for an eye" principle feels fair to our flesh. When someone wrongs us, retaliation seems justified. But Jesus flips this upside down: turn the other cheek, give more than asked, go the extra mile. This feels wrong because it is radical. Here's the convicting truth: God forgave you when you were His enemy. He extended grace when you deserved judgment. Yet how quickly we withhold that same grace from others who hurt us. We'll accept God's mercy but refuse to share it. That's hypocrisy. Revenge is unnecessary for believers because vengeance belongs to God. When you release your right to retaliate, you experience freedom. Today, identify someone who has wronged you. Instead of plotting revenge, pray for the strength to extend the radical grace God showed you. Trust Him to settle accounts.

Day 3: Love Without Limits

Reading: Matthew 5:43-48; Luke 6:27-36

Devotional: "Love your enemies" might be Jesus's most countercultural command. Our society says love those who love you back—that's normal, expected, even rewarded. But Jesus says loving your enemies, blessing those who curse you, praying for those who persecute you—that's what sets you apart as a child of God. Anyone can love people who are nice to them; even unbelievers do that. But kingdom living means breaking the cycle of retaliation with supernatural love. Your enemy isn't that person who hurt you—it's the devil and your own flesh. When you pray for someone who mistreated you, you reflect your Father's indiscriminate love. God makes the sun rise on both the evil and the good. Today, make a list of your "enemies"—those who've hurt, betrayed, or opposed you. Commit to praying for them daily this week, asking God to bless them.

Day 4: The Perfection of Maturity

Reading: Matthew 5:48; Philippians 3:12-16; Hebrews 6:1

Devotional: "Be perfect" sounds impossible, and it is—if we interpret it as sinless. But Jesus isn't calling us to flawless performance; He's calling us to completeness and maturity. The word means whole, mature, lacking nothing. Right now, you're not there. You struggle with forgiveness, retaliation, integrity, and love. But you're being conformed into Christ's image. Spiritual maturity means responding to hurt with grace, to enemies with love, to injustice with trust in God's justice. It means your words carry weight because your character backs them up. Perfection isn't about never falling; it's about consistently choosing God's way over your flesh's way. Today, identify one area where you're spiritually immature—perhaps unforgiveness, gossip, or retaliation. Ask the Holy Spirit to grow you toward completeness in that specific area.

Day 5: Reflecting Your Father

Reading: Ephesians 5:1-2; 1 John 4:7-21; Colossians 3:12-14

Devotional: Everything Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount answers one question: What kind of reflection are you on your Heavenly Father? When you retaliate, you reflect the world. When you hold grudges, you reflect human nature. But when you forgive the unforgivable, love the unlovable, and bless those who curse you, you reflect God Himself. This is hard because it's radical, abnormal, supernatural. Your flesh screams for justice, revenge, and self-protection. But your Father extended radical grace to you when you were His enemy. He thought of the worst sinner

imaginable—and died for them anyway. That's the grace flowing through your veins. Today, you'll encounter someone difficult. In that moment, remember: they're not seeing you; they're seeing your Father through you. Will they see retaliation or radical grace? Choose to be a clear reflection of the One who saved you.