

5-Day Bible Reading Plan and Devotional Guide

Because of What He Did: Remembering the Cross and Living in Response

Day 1: He Loved You in the Middle of Your Mess

Reading: Romans 5:6-8

Devotional: The most staggering truth of the gospel is not simply that Christ died, but when he died. He did not wait for you to clean yourself up, get your priorities straight, or earn his favor. He moved toward you at your worst. Romans 5:8 makes clear that God demonstrated his love not after your repentance but in the middle of your rebellion. This is grace in its purest form. Today, resist the temptation to believe that God's love for you is conditional on your performance. You were loved before you were worthy. Let that truth settle into the deepest part of who you are.

Reflection: In what areas of your life have you been waiting to feel "good enough" before fully receiving God's love?

Practical Application: Write down one area of personal failure or shame. Beneath it, write the words: "He loved me here, too." Keep it somewhere visible this week.

Day 2: The Cost Was Real

Reading: Isaiah 53:3-6

Devotional: Isaiah 53 does not allow us to sentimentalize the cross. The language is visceral and specific. He was pierced. He was crushed. The suffering described was not symbolic. It was chosen, deliberate, and personal. The passage makes clear that the weight he carried was not his own. It belonged to us. Our transgressions, our iniquities, our need for peace and healing were placed upon him. We live in a world that has made the cross a decorative symbol, and in doing so, we risk losing the gravity of what it actually cost. Do not let familiarity rob you of reverence. The cross was brutal because your rescue required it.

Reflection: When you picture the cross, do you feel the weight of what it truly cost, or has familiarity made it feel routine?

Practical Application: Spend five minutes today in silence, asking God to restore a fresh sense of awe and gratitude for the sacrifice of Christ.

Day 3: Not My Will, But Thine

Reading: Luke 22:39-44

Devotional: In the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus did not march toward the cross with cold detachment. He was in anguish. He prayed with such intensity that Scripture describes his sweat as drops of blood. He was fully aware of what was coming, and he asked if there was another way. There was not. And so he surrendered. "Not my will, but thine." This moment reveals something profound: full obedience does not always feel easy, even for the Son of God. Yet surrender was the very thing that made redemption possible. When God calls you to something difficult, you are not failing by feeling the weight of it. You are following in the footsteps of Jesus himself.

Reflection: Is there an area of your life where you are resisting surrender because the cost feels too high?

Practical Application: Pray the same prayer Jesus prayed in the garden. Name the specific thing you are struggling to release, and offer it to God with the words, "Not my will, but yours."

Day 4: Examine Yourself Before You Come

Reading: 1 Corinthians 11:27-32

Devotional: Paul's instruction to the church at Corinth carries a sobering weight. He warns that partaking of communion without genuine self-examination is not a neutral act. The Lord's Supper is not a ritual to be performed casually. It is a declaration of whose you are and who is Lord over your life. There is a significant difference between accepting Jesus as Savior and surrendering to him as

Lord. Many people are grateful for the destination of heaven but are still living as the primary authority over their own choices, schedules, and priorities. Communion is an invitation to close that gap. Come honestly. Come humbly. Come having examined what is truly on the throne of your heart.

Reflection: Is Jesus your Savior only, or is he genuinely the Lord of your daily decisions?

Practical Application: Before your next meal today, pause and ask yourself: "Who is actually in charge of my life right now?" Allow the honesty of that answer to lead you into a moment of prayer and recommitment.

Day 5: Because of What He Did, Here Is What I Will Do

Reading: Romans 12:1-2

Devotional: Romans 12:1 opens with the word "therefore," which points backward to everything Paul has established about the mercy of God. Because of what God has done, here is the appropriate response: offer yourself. Paul calls this your "reasonable service," or in some translations, your "true and proper worship." Worship is not limited to what happens on Sunday morning. It is the posture of a life that has genuinely reckoned with what Christ did and has decided to respond accordingly.

When the cost of the cross becomes real to you, rearranging your schedule, your priorities, and your comfort for the sake of what God is calling you to do stops feeling like sacrifice and starts feeling like the only reasonable thing left to do.

Reflection: If you truly believed, deep in your bones, what Christ did for you, what would you do differently this week?

Practical Application: Identify one specific thing God has been calling you to do that you have been postponing. Take one concrete step toward it today, not out of guilt, but out of gratitude for what he has already done for you.

Reflection Questions:

The sermon states that 'church is something you are, not something you attend' -- in what practical ways does your daily life reflect that you are the church rather than simply a consumer of it?

Romans 5:8 emphasizes that Christ died for us while we were still sinners -- how does the reality that God did not wait for you to get your life together before loving you change the way you view yourself and others who are still in their mess?

Pastor Mickey draws a distinction between accepting Jesus as Savior and making him Lord -- what areas of your life have you accepted his salvation but still retained personal lordship, and what would it look like to surrender those areas?

The sermon describes Jesus sweating drops of blood in the garden and praying for the cup to be taken from him, yet still submitting to the Father's will -- when have you faced something so difficult that you asked God for another way, and what did submission look like in that moment?

Pastor Mickey argues that when we truly understand what Jesus did for us, schedule conflicts and personal priorities naturally realign -- do you believe that is true, and if so, what does your current schedule reveal about your understanding of the cross?

Isaiah 53:5-6 connects Christ's suffering directly to our peace, healing, and forgiveness -- which of those three gifts do you find easiest to receive, and which do you struggle to fully accept as having been purchased for you personally?

The sermon warns against partaking of communion in an unworthy manner by living as though you are the lord of your own life -- how do you personally prepare your heart before taking communion, and has that preparation been genuine or routine?

Pastor Mickey makes the bold claim that a lack of obedience to God's calling has less to do with desire and more to do with a shallow understanding of what Christ actually did -- do you agree with that assessment, and how does it challenge or affirm your own walk with God?

The cross is described not as Jesus's response to how good we were but as a demonstration of how good he is -- how does framing the cross as a revelation of God's character rather than a reward for human goodness reshape the way you think about grace?

The sermon compares the modern church to a restaurant where people attend based on what they can get -- in what ways have you personally approached your faith community with a consumer mindset, and what would it cost you to shift from consumer to contributor?