

A STUDY  
FROM JERSEY CHURCH

# *Renewed*

LIVING  
WITH PEACE



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# RENEWED

Living with Peace

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# **DEVOTIONALS**

## **ROLE MODEL**

## DAY 1

### Proverbs 22:6

*Start a youth out on his way; even when he grows old he will not depart from it.*

Think about the people who shaped you before you even knew what was happening. A grandmother who prayed out loud. A parent who kept showing up on hard days. A coach or neighbor who treated you like you mattered. These weren't dramatic moments - just ordinary faithfulness, repeated over time. And yet here you are, shaped by them.

That's what Proverbs 22:6 is getting at. The word "start" carries the idea of dedicating something - setting it on the right path, pointing it in the right direction. It's not about forcing belief on someone. It's about creating a world around them where trust in God is normal, where faith is lived out in the everyday routines of life. God uses ordinary men and women, living faithfully in ordinary moments, to do something that echoes into eternity.

You may not feel like a role model. You may feel like you're barely keeping it together. But the people watching you - your kids, your neighbors, the younger people at work or church - they're being shaped by what they see in you. Not perfection. Just faithfulness. Day after day.

- **Who are the people in your life who are watching how you handle everyday moments? What are they learning about God from what they see in you?**
- **Ask God to help you live in a way that points others toward Him - not because you have it all figured out, but because you trust him. Pray for the people in your sphere of influence by name.**

## DAY 2

Deuteronomy 6:6-7

*These words that I am giving you today are to be in your heart. Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.*

This passage was given to a people who had just experienced something extraordinary - deliverance from slavery, a covenant with God, a whole new identity. And God's instruction for passing that on wasn't a curriculum or a class. It was conversation. It was life lived out loud.

When you're eating together. When you're driving somewhere. When you're tucking in your kids or winding down for the night. In all of those ordinary windows, there's an opportunity to let God into the conversation. Done in a way that says: this is real life, and God is part of it.

What makes this possible is the first part: these words have to be in your heart first. You can't pass on something you don't have. That's why your own daily connection with God matters so much. You don't have to be a Bible teacher to do this. You just have to be honest about what God is doing in your life, and willing to let others see it.

- **What natural opportunities do you have in your daily routine to talk about what God is doing in your life? What gets in the way of those conversations happening?**
- **Ask God to give you a heart that overflows — one that is so shaped by his truth that it naturally comes out in the conversations you have each day. Pray for specific people you spend time with regularly.**

## DAY 3

1 Corinthians 11:1

*Imitate me, as I also imitate Christ.*

That's a bold thing to say. Paul wasn't claiming to be perfect - in fact, he wrote honestly about his failures in many of his letters. What he was saying is: watch how I point toward Christ, and follow that direction.

We live in a world that is deeply suspicious of that kind of claim. We've seen too many people fall, too many leaders disappoint. And those hurts are real. But here's the thing - Paul wasn't saying follow me because I'm flawless. He was saying follow me because I am following someone worth following.

This is how God has always worked. Throughout the Bible - and throughout history - God uses broken, ordinary people as living examples of what it looks like to trust him. That's the whole story of Lois and Eunice in Timothy's life. They weren't seminary professors. They were faithful women who loved God, and that was enough.

You are being watched. Not in a threatening way - but in the way that people have always looked to one another for clues about how to live. When people see how you respond to disappointment, how you treat difficult people, how you talk about God — they're learning something.

- **Is there someone in your life who pointed you toward Christ just by how they lived? What did that look like? Is there someone watching you right now that you could be that kind of example for?**
- **Ask God for the courage to live openly enough that others can see Christ in you. Pray that he would shape you into someone whose life says: Jesus is real, and he is worth following.**

## DAY 4

2 Timothy 1:5

*I recall your sincere faith that first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and now, I am convinced, is in you also.*

Paul mentions three people by name - Lois, Eunice, and Timothy. Three generations. One thread of faith running through all of them. This verse doesn't tell us everything about their story, but it tells us the most important thing: the faith was real. It wasn't performance or tradition for its own sake. It was sincere.

The word sincere here carries the idea of something genuine. Not the kind that looks good at church but disappears at home. Sincere faith is consistent because it's rooted in something real: an actual trust in an actual God.

What's remarkable is that this faith traveled. It moved from a grandmother to a mother to a son. You can live it in front of them until they have reason to believe it's real. That's what Lois and Eunice did. And Paul is writing to tell Timothy: that faith lives in you now. Don't shrink from it.

God is at work across generations. The faith that someone planted in you is part of a story bigger than any one person. And your faithfulness today is planting something in the people around you that may take root long after you're gone.

- **Think about the faith that was passed to you. Who carried it? What did their faithfulness look like? How does it feel to know you are now part of passing it forward?**
- **Thank God for the people whose faithful lives shaped yours. Ask Him to make your own faith sincere — the kind that holds up in the hard moments and that others can see is genuinely real.**

## DAY 5

Psalm 71:17-18

*God, you have taught me from my youth, and I still proclaim your wondrous works. Even when I am old and gray, God, do not abandon me, while I proclaim your power to the next generation, your might to all who are to come.*

This is the prayer of someone at the end of a long life, looking back and then looking forward. They've seen what God has done. They've been through things that tested them and seasons that shaped them. And the cry of their heart isn't: let me coast to the finish line. It's: don't let me go silent before I've told the next generation what I know.

But this isn't just for the older generation. Anyone who has tasted and seen that God is good has something worth passing on. The "next generation" in your life might be your children, or it might be a younger coworker, a neighbor, a friend who is just beginning to ask questions about faith. The point is: what you've experienced with God is not meant to stay inside you.

The whole story of the Bible is a God who refuses to let his works be forgotten - who establishes his people as a community of memory, constantly telling the next generation what he has done. You are part of that community. Your story - including the hard parts - is worth telling.

- **What has God done in your life that the next generation needs to hear? What is keeping you from telling that story?**
- **Ask God to give you both the courage and the opportunity to speak about what he has done in your life. Pray for the people in the generation behind you — that they would find faith through the testimony of those who have gone before them.**

# ROLE MODEL

2 TIMOTHY 1:3-7

MAY 10, 2026

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## MAIN POINT

A renewed mind is often shaped through the faithful influence and example of those who model sincere faith.

## INTRODUCTION

*As your group time begins, use this section to help get the conversation going.*

Most people can think of someone who helped shape their lives in a lasting way. This may not have been through a big moment or dramatic event, but through the consistent way another lived—how they responded to difficulty or how they loved others. Over time, we see how their example left a lasting mark.

On Mother's Day, we often reflect on the women who have had that kind of influence in our lives. Many of us have been impacted by a mom, grandmother, sister, or spiritual mentor who had a steady and sincere faith. Their lives spoke volumes even when their words were few. Paul reminded Timothy of that kind of influence in his life. Before Timothy ever led or taught others, his faith was formed by seeing it lived out at home.

- **Who has had a spiritual impact in your life by their example?**
- **What stands out about their influence?**

## UNDERSTANDING

*Unpack the biblical text to discover what Scripture says or means about a particular topic.*

**> Have a volunteer read 2 Timothy 1:3-7.**

Paul expressed his gratitude and love for Timothy. The love and longing Paul had for Timothy remind us spiritual leadership is deeply relational. Faith is not just taught through words; it is experienced and shared through the context of real relationships. Sincere faith is not typically developed in isolation. Timothy was nurtured through the faithful devotion of his mom, Eunice, and grandmom, Lois. The everyday rhythms of godly living demonstrated by these women were not to be overlooked or diminished. Their genuine faith was the difference-maker early in Timothy's life.

- **What are some examples of sincere faith in the routines of daily life?**

A renewed mind is often shaped long before we realize it. The thoughts we think, the way we react, how we respond to challenges, and the way we view God are deeply influenced by what we see modeled from an early age. Every person has a circle of influence that we must take seriously. This is both a responsibility and a privilege of those who are the primary influencers. Today's study emphasizes the weight and the challenges to be intentional about the influence we have. God uses ordinary faithfulness for eternal impact.

- **How might your daily faithfulness (or lack thereof) be shaping someone else's view of God?**

Paul urged Timothy to stoke the fires of faith that had begun with the example of his mother and grandmother. Our faith needs to be nurtured and fed to grow. Faith must be cultivated, stirred, strengthened, and intentionally lived out. Just as faith isn't meant to be passive, a renewed mind doesn't occur passively either. Faith grows as we actively engage with the Lord in prayer, study Scripture, and live in obedience to God. Christian community of family and godly friends play a big part in our spiritual development. The influence of Timothy's family was the foundation upon which his strong personal faith grew.

• **How are you seeking to actively strengthen your faith and to battle against spiritual drift?**

Paul reminded Timothy God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and self-discipline. Fear is one of the primary ways that our minds drift away from peace. It distorts our thinking and prevents us from stepping into what God has called us to do. While fear affects us negatively, the spirit of God produces something vastly different. His power gives us courage, His love directs our actions, and His empowerment of self-discipline brings stability to our lives.

• **Which do you need most right now—power, love, or self-discipline?**

The legacy of Lois and Eunice wasn't about perfection, but authentic faith. It can be easy to let fear shape your decisions in relating to those around you. We battle fear of not being enough, fear of failure, and fear of messing up. Paul reminded Timothy that fear does not come from God. We must strive for sincere faith that points toward God no matter what. The goal is not to be a perfect example, but a genuine one through whom others are pointed to Jesus in every circumstance.

- **Where are you tempted to rely on your own strength instead of the power God has given you?**
- **How can you fan into flame your faith in this season of life?**

## **APPLICATION**

*Offer the following action steps for the application of God's Word.*

- **What can you do to model more authentic faith to others?**
- **Who might God be calling you to intentionally strengthen and encourage in their faith journey?**
- **How might living as Paul described give you opportunity to share the gospel with others?**

## **PRAY**

Thank the Lord for those who have modeled authentic faith for you over the years. Ask for wisdom to see what you need to be intentional about, so your own faith continues to grow and not drift.

**2 TIMOTHY 1:3-7**

1:3–5 Paul and Timothy both had a heritage of faith. Timothy had a Greek father (Ac 16:1, 3) but a godly Jewish grandmother and mother (Ac 16:1; 2Tm 1:5). When Paul said he prayed for Timothy constantly night and day, he used a common expression for continual prayer. Timothy was often on his mind and in his prayers throughout each day.

1:6 The phrase rekindle the gift of God did not mean that Timothy had “let the fire go out.” It was a call to action lest sluggishness set in. On “gift of God,” see note at 1Tm 4:14. The laying on of ... hands probably refers to Timothy’s ordination (1Tm 4:14).

This passage focuses on Paul’s part in the event while 1Tm 4:14 focuses on the involvement of the full group of elders.

1:7 Spirit here probably refers to the Holy Spirit. The Greek word translated fear is used in extrabiblical literature to refer to a person who fled from battle. It is a strong term for cowardice. Boldness, not cowardice, is a mark of the Holy Spirit (Pr 28:1; Ac 4:31).



# **DEVOTIONALS**

## **REPENTANCE**

## DAY 1

### Psalm 32:1-5

*How joyful is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered! How joyful is a person whom the Lord does not charge with iniquity and in whose spirit is no deceit! When I kept silent, my bones became brittle from my groaning all day long... Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not conceal my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord," and you forgave the guilt of my sin.*

David wrote this psalm from experience - the exhausting experience of trying to carry something alone that was never meant to be carried that way. He describes what it feels like to go silent before God, to hold the weight of unacknowledged wrong inside yourself. It drains you. It grinds you down.

But then comes the turn. He stopped hiding and started talking. Not to impress God or perform regret - just honest acknowledgment: this is what I did, and I can't fix it myself. And the response? Forgiveness. Not a lecture. Not a waiting period. Forgiveness.

The joy David describes at the start of this psalm isn't the joy of someone who never sinned. It's the joy of someone who was honest about it - and found out that God's forgiveness is bigger than their failure. That joy is available to you today.

- **Is there anything you've been carrying silently — something you haven't brought honestly before God? What would it feel like to stop holding it and just tell Him the truth?**
- **Ask God to help you be honest with Him today — not to perform repentance, but to simply come as you are. Thank Him that His forgiveness doesn't wait for you to clean yourself up first.**

## DAY 2

Isaiah 55:6-7

*Seek the Lord while he may be found; call to him while he is near. Let the wicked one abandon his way and the sinful one his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, so he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will freely forgive.*

*Notice what God is doing in this passage - he's not waiting to be convinced. He's not making you prove you're sorry enough. He is near. He is findable. And his posture toward the person turning back is compassion, not suspicion.*

*The word "return" here is important. It pictures someone who has wandered - maybe gradually, maybe dramatically - and is now choosing to turn around and walk back. Repentance isn't a one-time crisis moment. It's the ongoing choice to keep orienting your life back toward God when you realize you've drifted. This is actually a healthy, normal part of following him.*

*One of the things that can make repentance hard is the false belief that God is reluctant to Forgive. But this passage pushes back hard on that idea. The moment you turn, you find him already close. Turning back to God isn't a walk of shame. It's a homecoming.*

- **Do you think of repentance more like a walk of shame or a homecoming? What experiences or beliefs have shaped the way you picture God when you've messed up?**
- **Thank God that He is near and that His forgiveness is lavish, not reluctant. Ask Him to help you believe — really believe — that turning back to Him is always met with compassion, not condemnation.**

## DAY 3

Luke 15:17-20

*When he came to his senses, he said, "...I'll get up, go to my father, and say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight. I'm no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired workers." So he got up and went to his father. But while the son was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion. He ran, threw his arms around his neck, and kissed him.*

Jesus tells this story to show what repentance actually looks like - and it's not what most people expect. The son doesn't clean himself up first. He doesn't rehearse the perfect apology. He 'comes to his senses' - that phrase alone is worth sitting with. Repentance starts with clarity: seeing your situation for what it actually is.

And before the son even arrives, the father is already running towards him. The father in this story - who Jesus is using to show us what God is like - doesn't wait to evaluate the quality of the repentance. He sees his child coming and runs toward him. That is the God you are turning back to. The turning is enough. God sees it from a long way off and runs to meet you.

- **What does it mean to you that the father ran before the son even finished talking? Does your picture of God match the father in this story — or does it look more like someone who makes you earn your way back?**
- **Ask God to shape your understanding of repentance around the truth of this story. Pray that you would have the courage to simply get up and come back, trusting that He is already running toward you.**

## DAY 4

Romans 12:2

*Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.*

The word translated ‘conformed’ pictures something being pressed into a mold from the outside. The world around us - its values, its fears, its definitions of success and worth - constantly applies that kind of pressure. It’s not always dramatic. It’s often subtle: a gradual drift in how you think about yourself, about others, about what matters.

Transformation happens from the inside out. It happens through the renewing of your mind - which is another way of describing what repentance looks like over time. Repentance isn’t a moment you can put behind you. It’s a lifestyle - a daily practice of letting God shape how you think so that your whole life gradually becomes more aligned with his. And the outcome of that process, Paul says, is the ability to recognize what is truly good. You start to see clearly.

- **What is one area of your thinking that has been more shaped by the world around you than by God’s truth? What would it look like to start renewing your mind in that area?**
  
- **Ask the Holy Spirit to show you where your thinking has drifted — and give you the desire to let God’s truth reshape it. Pray for the discipline to actively engage with Scripture and prayer as the tools of that renewal.**

## DAY 5

Joel 2:12-13

*Even now — this is the Lord's declaration — turn to me with all your heart, with fasting, weeping, and mourning. Tear your hearts, not your garments, and return to the Lord your God. For he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, abounding in faithful love, and he relents from sending disaster.*

In the ancient world, tearing your clothes was how you showed grief or sorrow in public. It was visible, dramatic, unmistakable. But God interrupts the expected ritual here and says: that's not what I'm looking for. What I want is not the performance - it's you. Tear your heart, not your garments.

Real repentance isn't a show. It doesn't need an audience. It doesn't have to look a certain way from the outside. What God is after is internal honesty - a genuine turning of the heart toward him. And this matters because we can be very good at performing repentance without actually experiencing it. Saying the right words, going through the right motions, while the heart stays exactly where it was.

What makes genuine repentance possible is the character of the God you are returning to. Look at how God describes himself here: gracious, compassionate, slow to anger, abounding in faithful love. This is not a God who is waiting to punish you. This is a God who is genuinely glad when you come back.

- **Have you ever gone through the motions of repentance without it really touching your heart? What do you think gets in the way of genuine, internal honesty with God?**
- **Ask God to give you a heart that is open and honest before Him — not performing, but genuine. Thank him that the character He reveals in this passage is the real him: gracious, compassionate, and full of faithful love.**

# REPENTANCE

MARK 1:14-15

MAY 17, 2026

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## MAIN POINT

A renewed mind begins with repentance as a person turns from old ways and patterns of thinking to align the heart and mind with truth from God's Word.

## INTRODUCTION

*As your group time begins, use this section to help get the conversation going.*

Think about the last time you used your GPS to direct you to an unfamiliar destination. What happens when you miss a turn or take the wrong one? The system recalculates and adjusts to give you directions from where you are in reality in order to get you back on the right path.

Repentance works in a similar way on a deeper level. Although many people associate repentance with guilt or shame, that isn't the goal. Repentance is about changing direction and realigning with grace. At the beginning of Mark, Jesus called for people to repent and believe the good news. Repentance is the starting point for receiving grace.

- **What words, thoughts, or emotions do you associate with the word "repentance"?**
- **Why do we often connect guilt and shame with repentance?**
- **Why is it important that we understand repentance more accurately, according to God's intention?**

## UNDERSTANDING

*Unpack the biblical text to discover what Scripture says or means about a particular topic.*

**> Have a volunteer read Mark 1:14-15.**

After John the Baptist was put into prison, Jesus came into the region of Galilee proclaiming the good news that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand. From the beginning, Jesus's message was clear and urgent. He stated that the time had come and the kingdom of God had come near. This was a declaration that everything was changing. God's rule entered the world in a new way through Jesus. In light of this new reality, people couldn't continue thinking and living the same way they always had.

- **What are some ways you've changed since you began following Jesus?**
- **Where might God still be calling you to change to follow Him more closely?**

Jesus said to believe and repent. Repentance is turning away from something while believing is turning toward Someone.

These are not independent actions, but two parts of the same response to the gospel. It is not enough to believe truth intellectually while keeping to old patterns of thinking. Repentance reshapes how we think, respond, and live.

- **Why is it tempting to say we believe the right things but avoid changing how we actually live?**

- **Why does it matter if your thoughts and actions line up with what you say you believe?**

The word “repent” means to change your mind. A renewed mind takes intentionality and doesn’t happen by chance. It requires consciously turning away from lies and toward the truth. Many of the thoughts that disrupt our peace like fear, shame, or anxiety, are rooted in false beliefs that stand in contrast to God’s Word. In repentance, we identify those patterns and “recalculate” to align our lives with the Lord.

- **Where do you need to recalculate to better follow the will of God for your life?**

Though we often see repentance as a one-time event, Jesus presents it as a lifestyle. Following Jesus means continually realigning to be more like Him. Even though we are a new creation in Christ, we must actively pursue that reality daily. Old habits must be replaced over time through repentance and faith. The good news is this change is empowered by the grace of God. We don’t change in our own strength but as we surrender to the Spirit and allow Him to work in and through us. Jesus invites us to experience this transformation through relationship with Him. When repentance and belief work together, the result is a mind and life increasingly rooted in truth and less controlled by fear, shame, or regret.

- **How might your view of repentance change if you saw it as a path to peace instead of a reminder of failure?**

- **Where do you currently need to embrace the truth of the gospel to turn from old patterns of thinking and living?**

## **APPLICATION**

*Offer the following action steps for the application of God's Word.*

- **Why should we pursue repentance as a way of life and not avoid it?**
- **How can we encourage and support one another in living as repentant people?**
- **How does a life of repentance give us opportunity to tell others what Jesus has done for us?**

## **PRAY**

Thank the Lord for inviting you into a new way of thinking and living. Confess the ways you tend to fall back into old, wrong patterns and repent of those, asking again for His grace.

**MARK 1:14-15**

1:14–15 The words after John was arrested indicate an interval between vv. 13 and 14, possibly as long as a year if this parallels Jn 4:3, 43. Mark did not include Jesus’s early Judean ministry (Jn 3:22–36). Further details about John’s arrest and execution appear in Mk 6:17–29. The time is fulfilled points to the fulfillment of the OT promises. In the person of Jesus, the kingdom of God was so near that announcement of its arrival demanded immediate response—repent and believe.



# **DEVOTIONALS**

## **RECONCILED**

## DAY 1

Isaiah 53:4-6

*Yet he himself bore our sicknesses, and he carried our pains; but we in turn regarded him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced because of our rebellions, crushed because of our iniquities; punishment for our peace was on him, and we are healed by his wounds. We all went astray like sheep; we all have turned to our own way; and the LORD has punished him for the iniquity of us all.*

Seven hundred years before the cross, God let the prophet Isaiah see what love was going to cost. We went our own way. Every one of us. We turned from God not once but again and again, and the distance we created was real. But God did not leave us wandering.

Jesus stepped into the gap we made. He took what we deserved - the punishment, the pain, the full weight of everything we had done wrong - and carried it in his own body. That is not a transaction. That is love in its most costly and personal form.

This is where reconciliation begins: not with our effort to close the distance, but with God choosing to cross it. The peace you long for - with God, with yourself, with the story of your life - was purchased at the cross. You did not earn it. You cannot lose it by failing again. It was secured by wounds that were never yours to bear.

- **Where in your life are you still trying to carry weight that Jesus already took? What would it look like to truly set it down today?**
- **Thank Jesus for stepping into the gap you created. Ask Him to make the reality of the cross more than a fact you know - let it become something you feel in the places you carry shame or guilt.**

## DAY 2

Romans 5:8

*But God proves his own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

The world tells you that love is something you earn - that you have to be enough, do enough, become enough before someone will choose you. God operates completely differently.

Paul's point in this verse is almost offensive if you slow down and let it land. God did not wait for you to clean yourself up. He did not wait until you were making good decisions or showing potential. He acted when you were at your worst - when you were still running in the wrong direction - and sent his Son to die in your place.

The proof of God's love is not how you feel on a good day. It is what He did on the worst day in human history, which also turned out to be the best. When shame tells you that you have gone too far, when regret whispers that you are beyond reach, remember this: God saw the full picture of who you were and moved toward you anyway. That has not changed.

- **Do you tend to believe God's love is conditional on how well you are doing? What lie about yourself does this verse directly challenge?**
- **Ask God to let the truth of Romans 5:8 go deeper than your head and reach the places where you still feel like you have to earn His love. Thank Him for moving toward you first.**

## DAY 3

Colossians 1:21-22

*Once you were alienated and hostile in your minds as expressed in your evil actions. But now he has reconciled you by his physical body through his death, to present you holy, faultless, and blameless before him.*

There is a “once” and a “now” in your story, and God is the one who moved you from one to the other.

The “once” is uncomfortable to sit with. Paul does not soften it - there was real hostility, real distance, real separation between you and God. It was not just that you made some mistakes. Your thinking itself was pointed away from Him.

But then there is the “now.” God reconciled you - through the actual, physical death of Jesus. This is not a spiritual metaphor. It cost something real. And the result is stunning: you are presented before God as holy, faultless, and blameless. Not because of what you have done but because of what He did.

You do not have to wait until you feel worthy to come to God. That feeling may never come on your own. But worthiness was never the point - Jesus is the point, and He has already made the way.

- **Are you living more in the “once” than the “now”? What old story about yourself are you still treating as current when God says it is finished?**
- **Ask God to help you believe the “now” - that you are reconciled, that the hostility is over, that you are welcome. Pray that your daily posture toward Him would reflect what is actually true.**

## DAY 4

2 Corinthians 5:18-19

*Everything is from God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation. That is, in Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and he has committed the message of reconciliation to us.*

Reconciliation is not just something that happened to you. It is something God is doing in the world - and He has invited you into the work.

When Paul says God is “not counting their trespasses against them,” that is not a small thing. Every charge, every failure, every moment of rebellion - God in Christ chose not to hold those against the people He loves. That is what Jesus absorbed at the cross. And the result is not just your own peace with God. It is a message you now carry.

You have been reconciled, which means you know what reconciliation feels like. You know what it is to be reached when you were far away. That story makes you someone who can speak genuinely to others who feel far from God. Your life - not just your words — is part of how God extends this invitation to the world around you.

- **Who in your life might need to hear that God is not counting things against them? How might your own experience of reconciliation give you language to share that with someone?**
- **Thank God for not holding your sin against you. Ask Him to open your eyes to people around you who feel far from Him, and give you the courage to carry the message of reconciliation into those relationships.**

## DAY 5

Romans 5:10-11

*For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, then how much more, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. And not only that, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received this reconciliation.*

Paul's logic here builds to something that should take your breath away. If God reconciled you to Himself when you were still His enemy - at the hardest possible starting point - how much more secure are you now that you are His child?

The reconciliation you have received through Jesus is not fragile. It did not begin with your effort and it is not sustained by your performance. It began with God's love and it is held together by the risen life of Jesus, who is not dead but alive and interceding for you right now.

This is the foundation of real peace - not the absence of hard things in your life, but the settled knowledge that nothing can undo what God has done. You are not just forgiven. You are reconciled. You are close. You belong to Him. And that is not something you can lose on a bad day. It is something worth celebrating - not as a doctrine but as the truest thing about your life.

- **How does the resurrection of Jesus change the way you think about your security with God? What would it look like to live today from a place of settled peace rather than anxious striving?**
- **Thank Jesus that His life - not just His death - holds your reconciliation in place. Ask the Holy Spirit to help the peace of God settle deep in you today, below the noise of worry and performance.**

# RECONCILED

ROMANS 5:6-11

MAY 24, 2026

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## MAIN POINT

The death and resurrection of Jesus provide the salvation we desperately need but could never earn.

## INTRODUCTION

*As your group time begins, use this section to help get the conversation going.*

Physical pain affects daily life. Often, this is a sign something is wrong in your body, and your body reacts to that pain. But there is another kind of pain that strongly affects our lives even when there is no outward evidence to be seen. Emotional pain causes a myriad of physical and psychological responses in our bodies and minds. Unfortunately, emotional pain can be dismissed as less important, but the effects are real and should be taken seriously. In these moments, it is helpful to know what Paul had to say about dealing with the inevitable difficulties we will all experience. We can refuse to let the enemy keep us trapped in defeated thinking and seek to have our minds filled with God's peace.

- **What are some ways a person's emotional pain can affect their lives and even their physical responses?**
  
- **How might these things be used by the enemy to make us feel isolated from God and others?**

## UNDERSTANDING

*Unpack the biblical text to discover what Scripture says or means about a particular topic.*

**> Have a volunteer read Romans 5:6-11.**

Paul was clear. We were helpless to save ourselves from our sins, but while we were at our worst, Christ died for us. Jesus died for us while we were spiritually dead and in our greatest need. The world continually focuses on self and promotes that you can earn what you need and you will be judged on what you can accomplish. But that it isn't true. Jesus flipped the script from the world's approach. Instead of waiting for us to work, perform, or buy our way into the right position to be saved (which were all impossible), God acted when we were at our lowest

- **How does it impact you to remember God acted to save you when you were His enemy?**
  
- **What are some ways people try to earn what Christ has freely given?**

Jesus died for sinners, rebels, and outcasts, like us. We have received shockingly unconditional love. If you ever wonder whether your past can be forgiven, the cross answered with a resounding and definitive yes. The proof of God's love is found in what He did, never in how we feel. When we base our choices on our feelings or emotions, we lose sight of the gospel and miss out on the peace of God.

- **When have you experienced God's love despite your weakness or failure?**

Justification is a legal word that means to be declared righteous. Imagine you are standing before a judge in a court room, guilty as charged. Then suddenly the judge steps down, takes your place and accepts your punishment as he declares you free. That's effectively what happened at the cross.

- **How has the blood of Jesus paid for our sin against God?**

We are not justified by our actions, performance, or even potential. The only way to be justified is by the blood of Jesus. His death fully satisfied God's justice and removed our guilt by covering us in righteousness. When the blood of Christ covers your life, there is no more condemnation. The charges against you are dropped and the verdict is forgiven. This allows you to refuse shame and condemnation that threatens your peace.

- **How would you explain justification to someone who thinks salvation is about being a good person?**

We aren't just forgiven sinners, we are adopted children who have been reconciled to God. Jesus endured the cross to pay for our sin and He gives us His righteousness. Through His living presence, we have continual access to the Father who gives us strength for today and hope for eternity.

- **How does the reconciling work of Jesus give us hope for today and the future?**

True joy flows through from a reconciled relationship with God. Christians live from a place of acceptance, love, and forgiveness with a future secure in Christ.

- **What is one step you will take this week to deepen your relationship with God as a believer, child, and friend?**

## **APPLICATION**

*Offer the following action steps for the application of God's Word.*

- **What would you change if you truly believed you were secure in Jesus?**
  
- **How can you be proactive about worshipping and exalting Him daily?**
  
- **How can you share with someone who struggles to believe they can be loved by God?**

## **PRAY**

Thank the Lord for sending Jesus to save you at your worst. Thank Jesus for loving you enough to go to the cross on your behalf. Seek to focus on the truth of His Word over anything else.

**ROMANS 5:6-11**

5:6–8 We can be sure of God’s love since he did so much for us when we were helpless. We were ungodly, we were still sinners, and we were his enemies (v. 10). Jesus died for that kind of person. The word translated “for” is the Greek preposition *hyper* used in substitution contexts. Jesus died in our place. God freely chooses to love us and by doing so confers worth on us through our faith in him.

5:9 No debt of wrath remains for those who have now been declared righteous through faith in Christ.

5:10–11 If by the death of Christ we were reconciled to God, how much surer must the good news of salvation be now that he has risen and lives forevermore!



# **DEVOTIONALS**

**READY**

## DAY 1

Philippians 1:6

*I am sure of this, that he who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.*

Notice that Paul does not say, “I hope you finish what you’ve started.” He says God started it, and God will finish it. The good work in you was never your project to begin with. It was His initiative, His design, His gift. And because He began it, He will carry it through.

This matters on the days when progress feels invisible. You look at your own heart and see the same patterns, the same struggles, the same failures as last year. A deceptive voice whispers, “Nothing is really changing.” But Paul invites you to see with different eyes. The One who spoke galaxies into being has taken up residence in you, and He is not in a hurry, and He is not going to stop.

Rest in that today. You do not have to manufacture your own progress. You simply have to keep showing up, keep surrendering, keep trusting. He started this. He will finish it.

- **Where are you measuring your worth by visible progress rather than by God’s faithfulness to complete what He began?**
- **Thank the Father for beginning a good work you could never have begun on your own. Ask Him to quiet the anxious voices that demand visible results, and help you rest in His faithful, unhurried work.**

## DAY 2

Philippians 2:13

*For it is God who is working in you both to will and to work according to his good purpose.*

Read that verse again slowly. God is working in you not only to do His will, but to want it. He is not waiting for you to drum up the motivation so He can bless your effort. He is the One stirring the motivation itself. The desire to pray, the nudge to forgive, the longing to obey - these are not proof of how spiritual you are. They are evidence that God is already at work.

This is good news for anyone who has ever thought, “I just don’t feel like doing the right thing.” You were never meant to generate spiritual life on your own. From the inside out, God is shaping your wants, reworking the deep currents of your heart so what you desire lines up with what He has designed you for.

So when obedience feels costly today, remember: you are not white-knuckling your way toward holiness. The God who calls you is also the God who is rewiring you to respond. Your “yes” to Him is itself His gift to you.

- **Where have you been relying on willpower alone? How might it change your approach to invite God to shape the desires beneath the action?**
- **Thank God that He is at work in you, not only in what you do, but in what you want. Ask Him to align your desires with His good purpose, and give you the humility to receive even your “yes” as a gift.**

## DAY 3

Ephesians 2:10

*For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do.*

The word Paul uses for “workmanship” carries the sense of a crafted work - something designed with intention, made by a skilled hand for a purpose. You are not an accident. You are not filler in someone else’s story. You are God’s handiwork, shaped in Christ for a life that was mapped out before you ever drew breath.

Notice the order here. First, you are His. Then, you are given good works to do. The works do not earn your place - they flow from it. And those works are not something you have to invent or scramble to discover. They are already prepared, waiting like stepping stones laid across a river.

The world runs on anxious striving, on carving out significance with bare hands. But your purpose is not something you produce; it is something you receive. Today, you will step into opportunities the Father has already arranged - a conversation, a choice, an act of kindness, a quiet faithfulness no one else sees. Walk into them with confidence.

- **Where have you been trying to manufacture purpose instead of trusting that God has already prepared good works for you?**
- **Thank God for crafting you with intention and preparing a path of good works for you to walk in. Ask Him for eyes to see the opportunities He has already set in place today.**

## DAY 4

Philippians 4:12-13

*I know how to make do with little, and I know how to make do with a lot...I am able to do all things through him who strengthens me.*

Philippians 4:13 is one of the most loved - and most misunderstood - verses in Scripture. Paul is not promising you a championship, a promotion, or a life where everything you attempt succeeds. He wrote these words from a prison cell. The “all things” he had in mind were not dreams of greatness, but the quiet, daily strength to be content whether life was full or empty.

That is a harder promise than the bumper-sticker version - and a better one. Contentment in plenty is not automatic, and contentment in want is not heroic. Both require a strength that does not come from circumstances. Paul’s secret was not a technique; it was a Person. Christ dwelling in him, steadying him, filling him with what the moment required.

Wherever you are today - abundance or scarcity, clarity or confusion - the same Person is available to you. You are not called to summon strength from inside yourself. You are called to draw from the well of His presence within you. He is enough for this day.

- **Where are you trying to find strength in your circumstances instead of Christ?**
- **Thank Jesus that He is your strength in both plenty and want. Ask Him to teach you the secret Paul learned - contentment not dependent on what you have, but on Who holds you.**

## DAY 5

Romans 12:2

*Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.*

All week we have traced the ways God is at work in you - beginning a good work, shaping your desires, preparing good deeds, supplying strength. Today Paul brings it home to where transformation takes root: your mind.

The world has a way of quietly shaping how you think. Its assumptions about success, worth, fear, and the future seep in so gradually you barely notice. Paul's antidote is the renewal of the mind - an ongoing exchange, the patterns of this age traded for God's truth, one thought at a time.

As your mind is renewed, something remarkable happens: you start to discern God's will. You do not have to chase it down in anxiety. You recognize it. A renewed mind sees clearly.

Step into today with confidence. God is finishing what He started, shaping your wants, preparing your path, supplying your strength, and renewing your mind. You are ready - not because you are strong, but because He is at work in you.

- **What pattern of thinking from “this age” has been shaping you? What truth from Scripture can you put in its place?**
- **Ask the Holy Spirit to show you the thoughts that need renewing. Thank Him that transformation is not something you manufacture, but something He works in you as you turn your mind toward Him.**

# READY

EPH 2:10; PHIL 1:6; 2:13; 4:13

MAY 31, 2026

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## MAIN POINT

Believers can live with confidence and peace of mind, knowing God is at work in us to strengthen and shape us for His purposes.

## INTRODUCTION

*As your group time begins, use this section to help get the conversation going.*

Name some different contexts you have seen someone use Philippians 4:13: “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” This verse has been widely used for encouragement and motivation in a variety of ways. Interestingly, Paul wrote those words to the church in Philippi as he sat in prison.

Today, we will see the powerful truth that our readiness is not based on our own abilities or strength but on Christ’s work in us.

- **When was a time you were encouraged by Philippians 4:13?**
  
- **How difficult is it to depend on God’s strength over your own?**

## UNDERSTANDING

*Unpack the biblical text to discover what Scripture says or means about a particular topic.*

**> Have a volunteer read Ephesians 2:10 and Philippians 1:6, 2:13, 4:13.**

Paul expressed his confidence that God will continue working through His people until the work is complete. It is a foundational truth for a renewed mind to remember God isn't finished with you yet. Your growth, transformation, and spiritual maturity are all part of the ongoing work God is committed to completing.

- **How do these verse encourage God's people to stay the course?**
- **How does it shape your perspective to remember God is actively working in and through His people daily?**

Philippians 2:13 says it is God's power in you to will and work to fulfill His good purpose. Not only is God shaping the outcome of your life, but He is also shaping your desires and actions along the way. This is the continual process of sanctification through which we are being transformed. Further, you are not left to generate spiritual strength on your own. Even your willingness to follow God and obey Him is something He cultivates in you.

- **Where have you relied on your own efforts instead of trusting God's work in you?**

There are many things outside of Christ the world pushes our way in pursuit of fulfillment. But the real strength we need for living the Christian life is found only in Jesus. When we place our faith in anything else, it will always let us down.

Paul emphasized the strength found in Jesus as the key to contentment. When we find our strength in Christ, then we can, like Paul, be witnesses of the difference it makes to have a relationship with Jesus.

- **What are some things the world believes give strength?**
  
- **What is one area where you need to depend more on Christ's strength over your own?**

Ephesians 2:10 reminds us we are God's workmanship who are created in Christ Jesus to do good works that He has prepared for us already. In a world struggling to find purpose, this is a major shift in perspective. We don't need to scramble to find our purpose, God has already given it. You are not only being worked on by God, but you are also being sent by God to carry out His perfect plans for your life. Your life has intentional design and direction.

- **How does knowing God already prepared good works for you change the way you approach daily life?**

These verses come together to form a beautiful picture. God is shaping your desires and actions. He is strengthening you for what He has called you to do. He is sending you to do good works which are already prepared. This is what it means to be ready with a renewed mind. In Christ, you know the truth about who you are and what you're designed and called to do.

Renewal is not just about what we think but it is also about how we live. God has given us a new mind, now He is calling us to step out in faith, trusting that He will continue the work He has started. You can live with peace as you move forward with confidence in Him, trusting the One who is working in you.

- **What truth from today's passages can you use to answer feelings of inadequacy this week?**

## APPLICATION

*Offer the following action steps for the application of God's Word.*

- **How can you be intentional about finding strength in Jesus?**
  
- **What is one step of faith you will take this week?**
  
- **What would it lookn like for you to step into your calling with trust instead of hesitation or doubt?**

## PRAY

Thank the Lord for starting the good work in you and carrying it out to completion. Prase Him for His good plans for you and for the way that He strengthens you daily to be more like Him.

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**EPHESIANS 2:10**

2:10. One of the goals of salvation for us is the fruit of Christlike character and of good deeds. In eternity past God prepared ahead of time that His redeemed people would do these good works as evidence of His grace. Here is His power not only in giving us new life but also in helping us to walk in good works throughout this life and into eternity. We cannot do anything to earn salvation. Yet God means for us who have received salvation to produce good works. If we have been given new life, raised with Christ, and seated with Him, we will certainly do good works as evidence that we have received this great salvation.

**PHILIPPIANS 1:3-11**

In his conversations with God, Paul remembered his positive, productive experiences with the Philippian Christians. The word praying conveys continuous action and has the idea of asking God to meet a need. In particular, Paul's petitions for the Philippian believers were infused with joy because of their partnership in the gospel. The term partnership translates the Greek word *koinonia*, which comes from a verb meaning "to share," "to associate oneself with," "to be made a partner."

Paul expressed his confidence in the Philippian Christians' continued spiritual growth. His certainty was not based on his ability or on their efforts but on God, who had started a good work in them. The beginning of God's good work occurred when the believers placed their faith in Christ. By His grace, God would carry their salvation on to completion (fully finish it). Paul and the Philippian believers shared in a common enterprise: spreading the gospel. They were joint participants in God's redemptive purpose.

Here the term grace referred to Paul's missionary ministry. With a solemn oath, Paul declared his intense, eager yearning to be reunited with his friends. Christ Jesus was the Source of Paul's deep desire. Through Paul, Christ's love reached out to his friends.

Out of his deep care for his friends, Paul continually prayed for them. He wanted their love to keep on growing. Paul pointed to two areas in which he prayed that the Philippian Christians' love would overflow: knowledge and every kind of discernment. Christian love must be informed and insightful. More than wanting his friends to be able to distinguish right from wrong, Paul wanted them to choose the best over the merely good. The Philippian Christians' ability to distinguish the excellent from the merely good would enable them to be pure and blameless in the day of Christ.

Paul wanted his friends to be filled with the fruit of righteousness—the qualities that righteousness produces in believers. Righteousness is a right relationship with God through faith in Christ. In that relationship, Christ indwells believers and works to cause their lives to reflect His character. Believers are to be filled with the spiritual qualities righteousness produces so that God will be glorified and praised. God's glory is His redemptive character revealed. Behind the Greek word is the Hebrew term that means "heavy in weight." The verb form means "to give weight to" in the sense of recognizing value or importance. We glorify God when our lives give evidence of His redemptive power and draw others to Him. We praise God when we recognize His redemptive character and express our gratitude.

### **PHILIPPIANS 2:12-13**

2:12-13. Obedience is directed to God, not Paul, who hoped his potential death would not dampen Christian enthusiasm. Work out means to apply salvation, not to earn it. Fear and trembling means to have proper respect in response to God's blessing. True obedience comes from reverence, not fright. God... is working provides the deeper incentive: Christians are recipients of God's initiatives of motivation and empowerment.

**PHILIPPIANS 4:10-13**

Verses 10-13 indicate that the church at Philippi had sent Paul a financial contribution to support him. His comment about their having renewed their care for him referred to this contribution. Philippians 4:10 (as do vv. 15-16) indicates the Philippian church sent Paul monetary gifts on other occasions to support his work. Here Paul mentioned that they had sent him a gift once again. The Philippians sent this gift by the hand of Epaphroditus, one of their members (2:25,30; 4:18). Now Paul acknowledged the joy he felt because of the Philippians' concern for him.

Paul said he did not make any of these statements because of financial need on his part. He had come to such spiritual maturity that he could be content in whatever financial circumstances he found himself. The Greek word translated content means "self-sufficient." Paul drew his sufficiency from within himself. We will soon see, however, that Paul had a source of sufficiency that was different from that of unbelievers and that source was Christ in him. Paul learned how to live with a scarcity of money as well as with an abundance of money. He was content both when well-fed and when hungry. He knew how to thrive both when affluent and when poverty-stricken.

To know how to suffer poverty is a sign of true greatness. Similarly, many experience affluence, but to know how to be affluent without being ruined by it is knowledge few possess.

Paul climaxed his statement by saying, I can do all things. The all things Paul referred to were not ambitions or personal goals. Paul referred to living in contentment with either affluence or poverty. Paul's secret of joy lay in developing the attitude of contentment. Paul learned to be content with what he had. As he wrote these words, Paul was under arrest, guarded by Roman soldiers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. He was awaiting trial before one of the most insane, ruthless, and cruel tyrants who ever ruled. Though imprisoned and awaiting trial for his life, Paul was content. He was content having received the gift from his friends at Philippi, but he was content before he received the gift.

His personal sense of well-being did not depend on any financial or comfort considerations.

How could Paul live with such contentment? In verse 13, we see the source of Paul's joy and contentment. He said through him who strengthens me. Paul drew his sufficiency from within, but his inner source was Jesus Christ who dwelt within him. Paul did not depend on outer circumstances but on the inner reality of the indwelling Christ who filled him with strength.



