



5 Day Devotional: [Watch- When God Loves The People I Hate](#)

Day 1: The Mercy We Love to Receive

Devotional

We all love a good comeback story. When someone gets a second chance and turns their life around, we celebrate. But what happens when that second chance goes to someone who hurt us? Suddenly, mercy doesn't feel so beautiful anymore. Jonah experienced the greatest revival in Old Testament history when an entire city repented, yet he was furious about it. Why? Because these were his enemies receiving God's grace. We often mirror Jonah's heart - eager to receive mercy for ourselves but reluctant to see it extended to those who've wronged us. This reveals something uncomfortable about human nature: we can become so consumed by our pain that we begin to view God's compassion as unfair rather than beautiful. Today, consider the mercy you've received. Every breath is grace. Every new day is another chance. God's love for you isn't based on your performance but on His character.

Bible Verse

'The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.' - Exodus 34:6

Reflection Question

When you think about the mercy God has shown you, does it make you more willing to extend that same grace to others who have hurt you?

Prayer

God, thank You for Your incredible mercy toward me. Help me remember Your grace when I'm tempted to withhold it from others.

Notes

Day 2: When Mercy Feels Wrong

Devotional

Have you ever been so hurt by someone that their restoration felt like injustice? Jonah reached a dangerous place where God's mercy felt offensive to him. He had become so consumed by hatred that judgment felt good and grace felt wrong. This is the poison of bitterness - it doesn't just affect how we see others, it distorts how we see God Himself. When we hold onto resentment, we're essentially drinking poison and expecting the other person to suffer. But the person most harmed by a callous, bitter heart is the one carrying it. Bitterness creates a barrier between us and God's heart. It makes us celebrate when others fail and feel disappointed when they succeed. This isn't just unhealthy - it's spiritually dangerous. It keeps us from experiencing the fullness of God's love and prevents us from reflecting His character to the world around us.

Bible Verse

'But to Jonah this seemed very wrong, and he became angry.' - Jonah 4:1

Reflection Question

Is there someone in your life whose restoration or blessing makes you uncomfortable, and what does that reveal about your heart?

Prayer

Lord, reveal any bitterness in my heart that's keeping me from loving what You love. Soften my heart toward those who have hurt me.

Notes

Day 3: Head Knowledge vs. Heart Transformation

Devotional

Jonah could quote Scripture perfectly. He knew God's character by heart and could describe His attributes beautifully. Yet his theology never made the journey from his head to his heart. This is one of the most dangerous places a believer can find themselves - knowing about God without truly knowing God. Knowledge without love creates religious pride. Truth without transformation leads to spiritual callousness. Jonah understood God's mercy theologically but couldn't embrace it practically when it came to his enemies. The test of our faith isn't just what we know about God, but whether our knowledge is changing how we live and love. True theology should make us more like Jesus, not more judgmental. It should soften our hearts, not harden them. When our understanding of God's grace increases our capacity to extend grace to others, we know it's moving from our heads to our hearts.

Bible Verse

'And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.' - 2 Timothy 2:2

Reflection Question

How is your knowledge of God's character actively changing the way you treat people who are difficult to love?

Prayer

God, don't let my knowledge of You stay in my head. Transform my heart so that I love what You love and extend grace as You do.

Notes

Day 4: We Were All Ninevites Once

Devotional

Before we judge Jonah too harshly, we need to remember something humbling: every one of us was once a Ninevite. We were all enemies of God, deserving judgment but receiving mercy instead. The very people we struggle to love are in the same position we once occupied - desperately needing grace. This perspective changes everything. When we remember our own story of redemption, it becomes harder to withhold mercy from others. God didn't wait for us to clean up our act before He loved us. He pursued us while we were still His enemies. He showed us kindness that led to repentance, not the other way around. The person who cut you off in traffic, the coworker who takes credit for your ideas, the family member who always pushes your buttons - they're all people God is pursuing with the same relentless love He showed you. Your story of grace should make you a conduit of grace to others.

Bible Verse

'Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?' - Romans 2:4

Reflection Question

How does remembering your own need for God's mercy change your perspective on extending grace to difficult people in your life?

Prayer

Father, help me never forget that I was once lost and in need of Your grace. Use my story to make me more compassionate toward others.

Notes

Day 5: Jesus: The Better Jonah

Devotional

The story of Jonah points us to someone greater - Jesus Christ. While Jonah sat outside Nineveh hoping for judgment to fall, Jesus stood outside Jerusalem and wept over the city. Jonah ran from God's mission; Jesus embraced it fully, even unto death. Jonah was angry about mercy; Jesus is mercy incarnate. Where Jonah failed, Jesus succeeded perfectly. He didn't just preach about God's love - He became it. He didn't just hope for people's restoration - He died to make it possible. The very people you and I struggle to love are the ones Jesus is actively pursuing. His heart breaks for them just as it broke for you. When we follow Jesus, we're called to have His heart for the lost, the broken, and even our enemies. This doesn't happen overnight, but it happens as we spend time with Him and allow His love to transform us from the inside out. Today, ask Jesus to give you His heart for the people you find hardest to love.

Bible Verse

'I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.' - *Philippians 3:14*

Reflection Question

What would it look like for you to have Jesus' heart toward someone you currently struggle to love?

Prayer

Jesus, give me Your heart for the people I find difficult to love. Help me see them through Your eyes of compassion and grace.

Notes
