



5 Day Devotional

This five-day devotional will be taking a deeper dive into [the sermon from this weekend](#). We will explore the core themes of transformation and the importance of looking beyond external appearances in our relationship with God.

Day 1

Mark 7:1-8

7 The Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him. 2 They observed that some of his disciples were eating bread with unclean—that is, unwashed—hands. 3 (For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they give their hands a ceremonial washing, keeping the tradition of the elders. 4 When they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they have washed. And there are many other customs they have received and keep, like the washing of cups, pitchers, kettles, and dining couches.) 5 So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, “Why don’t your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders, instead of eating bread with ceremonially unclean hands?”

6 He answered them, “Isaiah prophesied correctly about you hypocrites, as it is written:

This people honors me with their lips,

but their heart is far from me.

7 They worship me in vain,

teaching as doctrines human commands.

8 Abandoning the command of God, you hold on to human tradition.”

In Jesus' conversation with the Pharisees about the traditions they upheld, we uncover a crucial aspect of our spiritual walk—authenticity. While traditions can provide structure, they can also obscure the deeper need for heart transformation. Jesus challenges us to look past the surface and examine our motivations. Are we participating in religious routines simply for show, or are we genuinely seeking to know and love Him more deeply?

This day invites us to reflect on our own practices. Do we engage in prayer, worship, and community for the right reasons? Are we allowing external actions to mask internal needs? By

examining our hearts and seeking true connection with God, we embrace the process of renewal that Jesus offers us.

- What traditions or practices have I been holding onto that may not reflect my true relationship with God?
- In what areas of my life do I need to seek deeper authenticity in my relationship with Christ?
- How can I be more intentional about engaging with God beyond external observances?
- Ask God to reveal areas where you may be relying on surface-level spirituality.
- Pray for the courage to seek deeper transformation in your heart.

Notes:

Day 2

Mark 7:9-13

9 He also said to them, “You have a fine way of invalidating God’s command in order to set up[a] your tradition! 10 For Moses said: Honor your father and your mother; [b] and Whoever speaks evil of father or mother must be put to death.[c] 11 But you say, ‘If anyone tells his father or mother: Whatever benefit you might have received from me is corban’” (that is, an offering devoted to God), 12 “you no longer let him do anything for his father or mother. 13 You nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many other similar things.”

Jesus highlights the dangers of hypocrisy in our faith—a warning that calls us to reflect on how we may enable our shortcomings through hollow practices. The challenge remains: are we honoring God with our words while neglecting His commands? This devotional day encourages us to reflect on the integrity of our faith. Genuine faith is not merely about the rules we follow but the love we demonstrate through our actions.

As we seek to live out our faith, we can be tempted to twist God's words for our convenience, much like the Pharisees did. This day, let's surrender our misguided intentions and dependence on ritual, embracing the truth of God's commands as the foundation for our lives.

- Have I ever justified unloving behavior by clinging to religious rules?
- What steps can I take to align my actions more closely with God's commands?
- In what ways can I show love and honor to those around me today?
- Pray for clarity in recognizing areas where you may be hypocritical in your faith.
- Ask God to give you the strength to follow His teachings sincerely.

Notes:

Day 3

Mark 7:14-16

14 Summoning the crowd again, he told them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand: 15 Nothing that goes into a person from outside can defile him but the things that come out of a person are what defile him."

In these verses, Jesus flips the script on traditional beliefs regarding purity and defilement. Rather than focusing on outward cleanliness, He redirects attention to the heart's condition. This day prompts us to understand that our sin and brokenness arise from within, urging us to confront the unhealthy thoughts and desires that reside there. Recognizing this, we realize the importance of looking inward as we seek transformation.

Embracing this truth allows us to engage with Jesus for the healing our hearts require. He offers a new heart, not through our efforts but through His grace. By acknowledging our need for heart change, we begin to experience the joy of true redemption and inner renewal.

- What aspects of my heart do I need to bring before God for healing?
- How can I cultivate a heart that seeks alignment with God's will?
- In what ways can I invite Jesus to transform my internal struggles into testimonies of grace?
- Seek God in prayer, asking Him to clean your heart and help you let go of toxic thoughts.
- Pray that He would reveal the areas of your life that need His touch.

Notes:

Day 4

Mark 7:17-23

17 When he went into the house away from the crowd, his disciples asked him about the parable. 18 He said to them, “Are you also as lacking in understanding? Don’t you realize that nothing going into a person from the outside can defile him? 19 For it doesn’t go into his heart but into the stomach and is eliminated” (thus he declared all foods clean). 20 And he said, “What comes out of a person is what defiles him. 21 For from within, out of people’s hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immoralities, thefts, murders, 22 adulteries, greed, evil actions, deceit, self-indulgence, envy,[a] slander, pride, and foolishness. 23 All these evil things come from within and defile a person.”

As we dive deeper into Mark 7, the distinction between external and internal purity is emphasized. Jesus teaches that our actions stem from our hearts, which means addressing heart issues is vital for genuine change. This day encourages us to confront the attitudes, motivations, and sins that dwell within us. Only by facing these truths can we experience real freedom and transformation.

We’re invited to acknowledge that attempts at self-improvement without inviting Jesus into the process will lead to frustration. Through prayer and honest self-examination, we can release our burdens to Him and allow His love to mold and shape us from within—leading to authentic, outward change.

- What negative patterns do I need to identify and surrender to God?
- How does my relationship with Jesus affect my everyday behavior and attitudes?
- Are there any fears preventing me from allowing God to work on my heart?

- Pray for the wisdom to discern what needs God’s attention in your heart.
- Ask Him to replace your fears with faith in His transformative power.

Notes:

Day 5

Ezekiel 36:26

26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will remove your heart of stone[a] and give you a heart of flesh.

Closing our five-day journey, we reflect on the promise of a new heart as spoken in Ezekiel. This profound assurance reminds us that God desires a personal, heart-centered relationship with us—one where genuine transformation occurs. As we embrace this covenant promise, we can lay every fear, doubt, and regret before Him, trusting in the healing power of His grace.

As we look ahead, let's commit to nurturing our new hearts daily through prayer, Scripture, and fellowship. Recognizing that it is God who changes us enables us to release performance-based living and enter into a relationship founded on love and acceptance. With this knowledge, we can live authentically for Him and reflect His light to the world.

- How can I live out the promise of a new heart in my daily life?
- What steps can I take to foster a deeper relationship with God moving forward?
- In what ways can I share the message of transformation with others?

- Thank God for the new heart you've received and ask Him to help you nurture it.
- Pray for opportunities to share your testimony of transformation with those around you.

Notes:
