



5 Day Devotional

This five-day devotional will be taking a deeper dive into [the sermon from this weekend](#). Through this journey, we will explore themes of belonging, compassion, and the transformative love of Jesus in our lives.

Day 1

Mark 7:24-30

24 He got up and departed from there to the region of Tyre.[a] He entered a house and did not want anyone to know it, but he could not escape notice. 25 Instead, immediately after hearing about him, a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit came and fell at his feet. 26 The woman was a Gentile,[b] a Syrophoenician by birth, and she was asking him to cast the demon out of her daughter. 27 He said to her, "Let the children be fed first, because it isn't right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs."

28 But she replied to him, "Lord, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs."

29 Then he told her, "Because of this reply, you may go. The demon has left your daughter." 30 When she went back to her home, she found her child lying on the bed, and the demon was gone.

In our first reflection, we dive into the story of the Gentile mother who approaches Jesus with a desperate plea for her daughter's healing. This interaction not only reveals the desperation of a mother's love but also the faith that transcends cultural barriers. Jesus' initial response seems harsh, yet it opens the door for a profound display of faith. The woman's reply shows her understanding of God's grace, reminding us that no one is beyond Jesus' reach. This story invites us to confront our own barriers and to recognize that God's compassion is for everyone, regardless of background or belief.

As we reflect on this passage, we are reminded that we are called to embrace those who feel like outsiders. Like the Gentile mother, we are encouraged to bring our requests to Jesus with persistence and faith. Moreover, we can take comfort in knowing that Jesus sees us and cares for our deepest needs, revealing his heart for the marginalized and lost.

- In what ways do you identify with the Gentile mother in this passage?
- Are there barriers in your life that keep you from approaching Jesus freely?
- How do you view those who may be considered outsiders in your community?
- Pray for those in your life who may feel excluded or overlooked.
- Ask God to help you see others through His eyes and embrace those who are different.

Notes:

Day 2

Mark 7:31-37

31 Again, leaving the region of Tyre, he went by way of Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, through[a] the region of the Decapolis. 32 They brought to him a deaf man who had difficulty speaking and begged Jesus to lay his hand on him. 33 So he took him away from the crowd in private. After putting his fingers in the man's ears and spitting, he touched his tongue. 34 Looking up to heaven, he sighed deeply and said to him, "Ephphatha!"[b] (that is, "Be opened!"). 35 Immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was loosened, and he began to speak clearly. 36 He ordered them to tell no one, but the more he ordered them, the more they proclaimed it. 37 They were extremely astonished and said, "He has done everything well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak."

Today, we reflect on the healing of the deaf man in the Decapolis. This account highlights Jesus' intimate way of restoring individuals, not only physically but spiritually. In a culture where disabilities often led to exclusion, Jesus steps in with a powerful act of compassion. He takes the man aside, away from the crowd, showing that restoration often occurs in personal moments of encounter with Christ. This serves as a reminder that Jesus is not only concerned with public displays but deeply values the individual relationships we have with Him.

The phrase "He does everything well" encapsulates the essence of Jesus' mission. His work is complete and perfect, reminding us that we can trust Him to restore aspects of our lives that we think are beyond hope. Jesus reveals that He opens ears and loosens tongues, both literally and metaphorically, encouraging us to listen for His voice and speak His truth in a world that desperately needs His healing touch.

- What aspects of your life do you desire Jesus to restore?
- How have you experienced Jesus' unique care in your own life?
- In what ways can you share the story of God's goodness with others?
- Pray for the courage to share your story of restoration with someone who needs to hear it.
- Ask God to open your ears to hear His voice and your mouth to speak His truth.

Notes:

Day 3

Isaiah 35:5-6

*5 Then the eyes of the blind will be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped.*

*6 Then the lame will leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the mute will sing for joy,
for water will gush in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;*

In our third devotional, we reflect on the prophetic words from Isaiah, which echo the ministry of Jesus. The prophecy speaks of a time when the blind will see, the deaf will hear, and the mute will sing for joy. This promise encapsulates God's plan for restoration – not just at a physical level, but in every aspect of our lives. Jesus fulfills this prophecy as he brings healing to those who society often overlooks, emphasizing His commitment to restoration for all.

As we meditate on this promise, consider the joy that comes with restoration. The act of healing is not merely about fixing what is broken; it is about making all things new and sending forth a powerful message of hope. During this season, let's embrace the truth that Jesus' compassion is active in our lives and that His desire is for us to engage with Him in our pain, bringing our brokenness for His healing touch.

- How does the promise of restoration in Isaiah encourage you today?
- What areas of your life need the transformative touch of Jesus?
- How can you be a vessel for God's message of hope to others?

- Pray for any areas of your life that feel broken and ask for Jesus' restoration.
- Consider how you can share the hope of Jesus with someone who is struggling.

Notes:

Day 4

Romans 5:8

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

In today's reading, we look at the incredible truth that God demonstrated His love for us while we were still sinners. This scripture reminds us of the radical nature of God's grace, which is extended to us even when we feel unworthy. Jesus' compassion transcends our understanding of who deserves love and mercy; it is available to all. This reality should shape how we view others and ourselves, inviting us into a deeper appreciation for the grace that we receive daily.

Understanding the depth of God's love invites us to care for others in the same way. If God loves us unconditionally, we are called to reflect that love towards everyone around us, especially those who are different or marginalized. It challenges us to look beyond our preferences and prejudices and embrace the diverse nature of God's family.

- In what ways have you experienced God's unconditional love?
- How can you reflect this love towards those who might feel like outsiders?
- What steps can you take to cultivate a heart of compassion in your daily life?
- Pray for the ability to see and love others through God's eyes.
- Ask God to help you overcome any biases and embrace those whom you struggle to accept.

Notes:

Day 5

2 Corinthians 5:17

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has[a] come!

As we conclude our devotional, we turn to the promise in 2 Corinthians that anyone who is in Christ is a new creation. This transformative truth signifies a fresh start, not just for us individually, but also in how we are called to interact with others. It reminds us that, although we were once outsiders, we are now included in God's family and given a mission to welcome others into that same love and grace.

Today, as we reflect on our journey through these devotionals, let's consider how we can actively participate in God's restorative work in our communities. Every interaction provides an opportunity to share the hope of Jesus. Let us be ambassadors of His love, bringing light into dark places and welcoming those who feel like outsiders with open arms.

- How has your understanding of your identity in Christ changed through this devotional?
- Who in your life needs to hear the message of hope and restoration?
- How can you use your transformation story to lead others to Christ?

- Pray for opportunities to share the message of Jesus with those around you.
- Ask God to give you the strength to be an ambassador of His love and grace.

Notes:
