

5 Day Devotional

Day 1: Controlling Our Response

Devotional

Life often feels like a series of unexpected events. Someone cuts us off in traffic. A coworker takes credit for our work. A family member says something hurtful. In these moments, we face a critical choice about how we'll respond.

As followers of Christ living as exiles in this world, we're called to a different standard. While we can't control what happens to us, we absolutely can control how we respond. Our responses reveal the true nature of our faith—they show whether we're just talking about following Jesus or actually doing it.

Think about your interactions yesterday. When someone pushed your buttons, how did you respond? With anger? Defensiveness? Or with the grace and patience that reflects Christ?

The way we respond in difficult moments can be our most powerful testimony. It's easy to be kind when everything's going well. The true test comes when we're challenged, frustrated, or hurt. In those moments, our response can either draw people toward Jesus or push them away.

Bible Verse

"A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." - Proverbs 15:1

Reflection Question

Think about a recent situation where someone upset you. How might your response have been different if you had consciously asked yourself, "Will my reaction bring this person closer to Jesus or push them further away?"

Quote

"You can't control what happens to you, but you can control how you respond. And this world and the people around you will push your buttons."

Prayer

Lord, help me to remember that my responses matter. When my buttons get pushed, give me the strength to respond with gentleness rather than anger. May my reactions reflect Your character and draw others closer to You. Amen.

Day 2: Authentic Faith in Marriage

Devotional

Marriage provides one of our greatest opportunities to display Christ-like responses. In these intimate relationships, our true character is revealed—not just who we pretend to be in public, but who we really are behind closed doors.

Peter addresses both husbands and wives with counter-cultural instructions. For wives, the emphasis isn't on external beauty but on the lasting beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit. For husbands, the call is to understand their wives and honor them as equal heirs of God's grace.

This mutual respect and honor stands in stark contrast to the world's approach to relationships. Rather than seeking to dominate or manipulate, Christian spouses are called to serve one another in love.

One practical way to embody this is surprisingly simple: regularly asking, "How can I love you today?" This question demonstrates attentiveness and care. It shows we're not just saying we love our spouse—we're actively seeking ways to show it.

Bible Verse

"Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers." - 1 Peter 3:7

Reflection Question

How might regularly asking your spouse (or other close family members) "How can I love you today?" transform your relationship and create opportunities to demonstrate Christ's love?

Quote

"If you want to blow them away for the next week or month or year, at the start of each week or even at the start of each day, just send them a text or have a conversation with them. Say, how can I love you today?"

Prayer

Father, help me to honor the people closest to me by serving them with genuine love. Give me the humility to ask how I can meet their needs and the strength to follow through. May my closest relationships reflect Your sacrificial love. Amen.

Day 3: Unity in Diversity

Devotional

One of the most beautiful aspects of the church is how it brings together people who would otherwise have no connection. Different backgrounds, different political views, different life experiences—yet united in Christ.

Peter calls believers to five characteristics that should mark our relationships: unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, compassion, and humility. These qualities don't mean we always agree on everything, but they do mean we approach our differences with respect and love.

Humility is particularly important. When we recognize that God is God and we are not, it puts everything else in perspective. Our opinions, preferences, and desires take their proper place when we remember our position before our Creator.

This unity amid diversity serves as a powerful witness to the world. When people see believers from different backgrounds loving one another despite their differences, they glimpse the transformative power of the gospel. Our relationships within the church should be so counter-cultural that they raise questions and create opportunities to share about Jesus.

Bible Verse

"Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble." - 1 Peter 3:8

Reflection Question

What relationship in your church family challenges you the most? How might focusing on these five characteristics (unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, compassion, and humility) change how you approach that relationship?

Quote

"One of my absolute favorite things about being part of the Church of God is that I get to have relationships with people that I would otherwise have no business being in a relationship with."

Prayer

God, thank You for bringing diverse people together in Your church. Help me to value relationships with those who are different from me. Give me humility to listen, compassion to care, and love that transcends differences. May our unity amid diversity draw others to You. Amen.

Day 4: Blessing Those Who Wrong Us

Devotional

Our natural response when wronged is to seek revenge or victory. Someone hurts us, and we want to hurt them back. Someone insults us, and we want to respond with an even cleverer insult. This eye-for-an-eye approach seems fair and satisfying.

But Peter calls us to a radically different response: "Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing." This instruction runs completely counter to our instincts.

Why would we bless those who wrong us? Because that's exactly what Jesus did for us. While we were still sinners—while we were His enemies—Christ died for us. He didn't wait for us to apologize or make amends. He took the initiative to bless us when we least deserved it.

When we respond to mistreatment with kindness, we diffuse tension and plant seeds of the gospel. Our unexpected response creates space for questions and conversations about why we choose to act differently. In this way, even difficult interactions become opportunities to point others toward Christ.

Bible Verse

"Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing." - 1 Peter 3:9

Reflection Question

Think of someone who has wronged or hurt you recently. What would it look like to genuinely bless that person instead of seeking revenge or harboring resentment?

Quote

"The natural human response to being wronged is to get even or to win."

Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for blessing me when I deserved punishment. Give me the strength to follow Your example by blessing those who wrong me. Help me to see difficult people as opportunities to demonstrate Your love rather than as enemies to defeat. May my response to mistreatment point others to You. Amen.

Day 5: The Impact of Our Daily Interactions

Devotional

Every day, we have countless interactions with people—family members, coworkers, cashiers, neighbors, and strangers. Each of these moments presents an opportunity to either draw people closer to Jesus or push them further away.

The question we should regularly ask ourselves is: "When someone is done interacting with me, are they closer to Jesus or further away as a result?"

This doesn't mean every conversation needs to include explicit evangelism. Rather, it means that our manner—our patience, kindness, attentiveness, and respect—should reflect Christ's character. People may not remember exactly what we say, but they'll remember how we made them feel.

Jesus suffered for us to bring us to God. While we may not face the same level of persecution as believers in other parts of the world, we can still have an incredible impact for God's kingdom through our daily responses. When we choose patience over irritation, kindness over rudeness, and forgiveness over resentment, we participate in God's redemptive work.

Let's commit to being people whose responses consistently draw others closer to Jesus.

Bible Verse

"For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit." - 1 Peter 3:18

Reflection Question

Consider your regular interactions at work, home, or in public places like stores and restaurants. How might you intentionally adjust your responses in these settings to better reflect Christ and draw people closer to Him?

Quote

"When somebody is done interacting with you at the grocery store, is that person closer to Jesus or further away from Jesus as a result of your interaction with that person?"

Prayer

Heavenly Father, help me to see every interaction as an opportunity to reflect Your character. May my responses to both kindness and rudeness consistently draw people closer to You. Thank You for the privilege of participating in Your work of drawing people to Yourself. Use me today to plant seeds of the gospel through my words and actions. Amen.