

5 Day Devotional

Day 1: The Plank in My Eye

Devotional

It's so easy to spot the flaws in others. We notice their mistakes, their sins, their shortcomings—often before they do. And sometimes, with the best of intentions, we rush to point these things out. After all, we're just trying to help, right?

But Jesus challenges this approach. He asks us to look inward before looking outward. Before addressing the speck in someone else's eye, we must deal with the plank in our own. This isn't just about hypocrisy—it's about perspective.

When we confront our own failings first, something transformative happens. We develop humility. We gain compassion. We remember that we too are works in progress, dependent on God's grace. Self-examination softens our approach to others.

This doesn't mean we never address issues in others' lives. Rather, it means we do so from a place of humility, having first done the hard work of self-reflection. The goal isn't to prove ourselves right or superior, but to genuinely help others grow—just as we are growing.

Bible Verse

"Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?" - Matthew 7:3

Reflection Question

What area of your life might God be asking you to address before you attempt to correct others?

Quote

"Jesus remedy for those who pass judgment is to say, confront yourself before you confront others."

Prayer

Lord, give me the courage to examine my own heart before I critique others. Help me to see myself clearly, to confess my own sins, and to grow in humility. May I be an instrument of Your grace rather than judgment. Amen.

Day 2: Truth with Tears

Devotional

We live in a world of extremes. Some people value truth above all else, delivering it bluntly regardless of how it lands. Others prioritize kindness to such a degree that they avoid difficult truths altogether. But Jesus models a different way—a perfect balance of truth and compassion.

When Jesus encountered Martha and Mary after their brother's death, He responded differently to each sister. To Martha, He offered theological truth. To Mary, He simply wept alongside her. Jesus knew exactly what each person needed in that moment.

This is our challenge too. We're called to speak truth, but never without love. We're called to show compassion, but never at the expense of truth. This balance isn't easy to achieve, but it's essential if we want to truly help others.

Jesus wasn't pushy with His truth. He understood His audience and tailored His approach accordingly. He knew when to speak and when to weep, when to challenge and when to comfort. And He invites us to develop this same discernment in our relationships.

Bible Verse

"Jesus wept." - John 11:35

Reflection Question

Think of a difficult conversation you need to have with someone. How might you balance truth with compassion in that interaction?

Quote

"We don't like pushy people, but sometimes we can become one. And Jesus was not pushy. He understood his audience. As Tim Keller says and writes, he knew how to balance truth with tears."

Prayer

Father, give me wisdom to know when to speak and when to listen, when to challenge and when to comfort. Help me to be like Jesus, full of both grace and truth. May my words and actions reflect Your heart for others. Amen.

Day 3: Sacred Timing

Devotional

Have you ever shared something precious with someone who didn't value it? Perhaps you opened up about your faith, only to have your words dismissed or mocked. It hurts when sacred things are treated carelessly.

In Matthew 7:6, Jesus speaks about not throwing pearls before swine. This isn't about labeling people as unworthy; it's about discernment. Jesus is teaching us to be mindful about when and how we share sacred truths.

The human heart isn't always ready to receive certain truths. Sometimes people need time, preparation, or a different approach before they can digest spiritual insights. This doesn't mean we withhold the gospel—it means we share it wisely, with sensitivity to where people are in their journey.

Jesus Himself demonstrated this principle. He spoke in parables to the crowds but explained everything privately to His disciples. He knew some weren't ready for the full revelation, while others were. This wasn't exclusion; it was divine wisdom about sacred timing.

Bible Verse

"Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces." - Matthew 7:6

Reflection Question

When have you experienced the importance of timing in sharing your faith? How might God be asking you to be more discerning about when and how you share sacred truths?

Quote

"Matthew 6 is not warning us to stay away from people. Matthew 6 is warning us to be mindful of people. In other words, Jesus is saying, be mindful about when and how you give the gospel."

Prayer

Lord, grant me discernment to know when and how to share Your truth. Help me to be sensitive to where others are in their spiritual journey. May I never cast pearls carelessly, but instead share Your wisdom with divine timing. Amen.

Day 4: The Miracle of Transformation

Devotional

Sometimes we grow impatient with others' spiritual progress. We wonder why they don't "get it" yet or why they continue struggling with the same issues. We may even become judgmental, forgetting our own journey.

But spiritual transformation is never instantaneous. It's a process—often a slow one. And more importantly, it's a miracle. Our own conversion to Christ wasn't merely a decision we made; it was God's supernatural work in our hearts.

Remembering this truth changes how we approach others. Instead of pushing our agenda or timeline, we learn to trust God's perfect timing. We recognize that the same God who patiently worked in our lives is working in theirs too.

Jesus never forced truth on people who weren't ready to receive it. He planted seeds, told stories, asked questions, and allowed truth to take root in its own time. He was patient with the pace of God in people's lives—and He calls us to do the same.

Bible Verse

"Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God." - Romans 14:10

Reflection Question

How has God been patient with you in your spiritual journey? How might this perspective change how you interact with someone who is still growing?

Quote

"I think sometimes we forget the fact that our own conversions to Jesus Christ were a miracle."

Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your patience with me. Help me to extend that same patience to others. Remind me that transformation is Your work, happening in Your timing. Give me faith to trust Your process in others' lives. Amen.

Day 5: Creating Safe Spaces

Devotional

What kind of person are you known to be? When others are struggling, do they feel safe coming to you? Or do they fear your criticism?

Jesus calls us to be safe people—those who create spaces where others can be authentic without fear of judgment. This doesn't mean we never speak truth; it means we speak it from a place of love and acceptance rather than criticism.

Safe people listen before they speak. They seek to understand before being understood. They recognize that behind every behavior is a heart with its own story, wounds, and needs. They approach others with curiosity rather than assumptions.

When we become safe people, something beautiful happens. Others begin to open up. They share their struggles, their doubts, their questions. And in that vulnerability, real growth can occur—not because we forced our truth upon them, but because we created a space where God's truth could take root.

Today, let's commit to being people who make others feel seen, heard, and valued—just as Jesus does for us.

Bible Verse

"Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister." - Romans 14:13

Reflection Question

What is one practical way you could become a safer person for others to approach with their struggles?

Quote

"Are you a safe person or are you a critical person?"

Prayer

Lord Jesus, make me a safe person who reflects Your heart. Help me to listen well, to suspend judgment, and to create spaces where others can be authentic. May those around me experience Your acceptance through my words and actions. Amen.