



A 5-Day Devotional Guide

From the series The Way of Jesus

Focus:

Forgiveness is the way Jesus frees us from the past and opens us to healing. It isn't a suggestion; it's a way of life for those who follow Him. Forgiveness does not ignore pain; it transforms it. This week, we explore forgiveness as a daily decision, a path to healing, and a reflection of God's mercy.

Weekly Challenge:

Pray honestly about someone you struggle to forgive, it may even be yourself. Ask God to help you take one step toward release. You don't have to fix everything, but you can choose to let go of the power that pain has over you. Even a small act of forgiveness can begin to change everything.

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Written for the Week of July 10, 2025, by Kevin St. Martin, Pastor of The
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Day 1: Forgive Without Counting

Scripture

Then Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, how many times should I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Should I forgive as many as seven times?”

Jesus said, “Not just seven times, but rather as many as seventy-seven times.
— Matthew 18:21–22 (CEB)

Reflection

Jesus invites us to practice limitless forgiveness. It’s not about keeping track of how many times we have been wronged; instead, it’s about keeping our hearts soft, being willing to have empathy for others and sometimes even ourselves. This kind of forgiveness doesn’t come easily. It’s something we choose, again and again and again.

Questions

- Where in your life are you tempted to set a limit on forgiveness?
- What would it take to start to forgive again with grace?

Spiritual Practice

Take a few moments in silence. Whisper this phrase out loud:

“Today I choose forgiveness.”

Say it seven times slowly and prayerfully. Then name (aloud or in your heart) someone you may need to forgive, it may even be yourself. Let that be your intention throughout the day. If anger or resentment rises, pause and repeat: “Today I choose forgiveness.”

Prayer

Lord, help me stop keeping score. Soften my heart to forgive freely, as You forgive me. Amen.

Day 2: The Weight of Unforgiveness

Scripture:

When that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him one hundred coins. He grabbed him around the throat and said, “Pay me back what you owe me.”

Then his fellow servant fell down and begged him, “Be patient with me, and I’ll pay you back.” But he refused. Instead, he threw him into prison until he paid back his debt. — Matthew 18:28–30 (CEB)

Reflection

Unforgiveness traps us. It makes us clench our fists instead of opening our hands. When we refuse to release others, we hold ourselves in emotional chains. The concept of paying back may not be something we say to another person, but rather it is the idea of retaliation that holds us in bondage by occupying space in our minds for free.

Questions

- What pain are you still holding tightly?
- How is it affecting your heart, your peace, or your relationships?

Spiritual Practice

Take 10 minutes to write a letter that you will not send. Pour out the feelings of anger, hurt, or resentment you’ve been carrying; be honest. Then ask God to help you release these burdens. Tear up, shred, or burn the letter afterward as a sign of surrender and letting go.

Prayer

God, I want to live with open hands. Help me begin to release the pain I’ve carried too long so that I find the life that forgiveness brings. Amen.

Day 3: Because We Are Forgiven

Scripture:

“Shouldn’t you also have mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?” — Matthew 18:33 (CEB)

Forgive us for the ways we have wronged you
just as we also forgive those who have wronged us. — Matthew 6:12 (CEB)

Reflection

The foundation of our forgiveness is God’s mercy toward us. We forgive not because it’s deserved, but because we’ve been set free first.

Questions

- How does remembering God’s mercy help you forgive others?
- Where might God be calling you to show mercy today?

Spiritual Practice

List five ways you’ve experienced God’s mercy and forgiveness in your life.

After reflecting, choose one person with whom you’ve been withholding grace.

Pray:

“Lord, as You have forgiven me, I choose to forgive others. Help me extend Your mercy to others.”

Prayer

Merciful God, thank You for forgiving me. Help me extend that same grace to others today. Amen.

Day 4: Forgiveness and Healing

Scripture:

Prayer that comes from faith will heal the sick, for the Lord will restore them to health. And if they have sinned, they will be forgiven. For this reason, confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous person is powerful in what it can achieve.

— James 5:15–16 (CEB)

Reflection

Forgiveness opens the door to healing, not just emotionally or spiritually, but sometimes even physically. When we confess, release, and pray for one another, we allow God's restoring grace to flow.

Questions

- Is there a burden you've been carrying that needs to be released through confession or forgiveness?

Who could you pray with this week in pursuit of healing and wholeness?

Spiritual Practice

Set aside some time for confession, privately or with a trusted spiritual friend or mentor. Once you have done that, pray for someone who is hurting (even someone who has hurt you).

End your time by writing down this verse from James 5:16 and placing it where you will see it daily:

"Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed."

Prayer

Healing God, I confess what I've been holding inside. I ask for Your healing to reach every part of me. Make me whole in body, mind, and spirit. Amen.

Day 5: God's Compassion Toward Us

Scripture:

The Lord works righteousness;
 does justice for all who are oppressed.
God made his ways known to Moses;
 made his deeds known to the Israelites.
The Lord is compassionate and merciful,
 very patient, and full of faithful love.
God won't always play the judge;
 he won't be angry forever.
He doesn't deal with us according to our sin
 or repay us according to our wrongdoing,
 because as high as heaven is above the earth,
 that's how large God's faithful love is for those who honor him.
As far as east is from west—
 that's how far God has removed our sin from us.
Like a parent feels compassion for their children—
 that's how the Lord feels compassion for those who honor him.
Because God knows how we're made,
 God remembers we're just dust.
— Psalm 103:6–14 (CEB)

Reflection

God's forgiveness is rooted in compassion and understanding. We are known and loved, even in our weakness. Forgiveness doesn't deny pain rather, it embraces mercy.

Questions

- How do you experience God's compassion in your own life?
- How might you mirror that compassion to someone who has hurt you?

Spiritual Practice

Find a quiet space. Take a few slow, deep breaths. Close your eyes and imagine God looking at you with deep compassion. God knows all of your flaws yet still loves you fully.

Now imagine offering that same compassionate gaze toward someone who has wronged you.

Pray:

“God, let me love with the same mercy You’ve given me.”

Carry this prayer into your conversations and choices today.

Prayer

Gracious God, You know my flaws and still surround me with mercy. Teach me to love like You do—patient, faithful, and full of grace. Amen.

Closing Prayer for the Week

God of mercy, I give You my pain and my pride. Where I've held onto hurt, teach me to release it. Where I've been wronged, show me how to forgive. Where I've failed, remind me I am still loved. May my life reflect Your compassion and truth. Lead me every day in the way of forgiveness. Amen.