



## 5 Daily Devotionals (From June 14th Sermon)

### Day 1: The Battle Begins in the Heart

#### Key Verse:

*"But I say to you, do not resist the one who is evil." — Matthew 5:39*

#### Reflection

When Jesus teaches about revenge, He takes the conversation deeper than outward actions. Most people focus on what they do, but Jesus focuses on what is happening inside them. Anger, resentment, bitterness, and the desire to get even often take root long before any action is taken.

It is easy to justify our anger when we feel wronged. Someone insults us, ignores us, betrays us, or hurts us. Our natural response is to strike back, defend ourselves, or rehearse the offense over and over in our minds. Yet Jesus calls us to examine our hearts before we react.

This does not mean evil is good or that justice does not matter. Rather, Jesus warns us against becoming consumed by hatred. The moment revenge becomes our focus, our hearts begin to drift away from God's love and mercy.

The Lord invites us to bring our wounds to Him instead of carrying them ourselves. He alone can heal what others have broken.

#### Prayer

Lord Jesus, You know the hurts I carry. Guard my heart from bitterness and resentment. Help me trust You with every offense and respond with the love You have shown me. Amen.

# Day 2: Seeing People Through the Eyes of Love

## Key Verse:

*"Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." — Matthew 5:44*

## Reflection

One reason forgiveness is difficult is that we often reduce people to their worst actions. We see the offense, but we stop seeing the person.

Jesus challenges us to look deeper. The person who hurt you is still someone for whom Christ died. The person who offended you still needs God's grace just as much as you do. That perspective changes everything.

Think of a loving parent. Even when a child says something hurtful, the parent does not stop loving the child. The pain is real, but love remains. In a similar way, Jesus calls us to view others through the lens of compassion rather than resentment.

This does not excuse sin or ignore wrongdoing. Love can still speak the truth. Love can still confront sin when necessary. But love refuses to write people off.

When we pray for those who have hurt us, God often changes our hearts before He changes theirs. Prayer reminds us that every person stands in need of the same Savior.

## Prayer

Father, help me see people as You see them. Give me compassion for those who have hurt me and a sincere desire for their good. Teach me to love as You have loved me. Amen.

# Day 3: Following the Example of Christ

## Key Verse:

*"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."* — Luke 23:34

## Reflection

No one suffered injustice more than Jesus. He was mocked, rejected, falsely accused, beaten, and crucified. Yet throughout His suffering, He never stopped loving those who opposed Him.

As Jesus hung on the cross, He prayed for His enemies. Those words reveal the heart of our Savior. He did not come to destroy sinners but to save them.

The cross reminds us that forgiveness is never free. Someone always bears the cost. Jesus willingly took our sin upon Himself so that we could be forgiven and reconciled to God.

This is why Christians forgive. We do not forgive because people deserve it. We forgive because we have been forgiven. The mercy we extend to others flows from the mercy we have received in Christ.

Whenever forgiveness feels impossible, look again to the cross. There you will find both the seriousness of sin and the greatness of God's grace.

## Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for taking my place on the cross. When forgiveness feels difficult, remind me of the forgiveness You freely give. Help me reflect Your grace to others. Amen.

# Day 4: Worship That Comes from the Heart

## Key Verse:

*"Your Father who sees in secret will reward you."* — Matthew 6:4

## Reflection

Jesus warns against practicing faith merely for appearances. Whether giving, praying, or serving, our goal is not to impress people but to honor God.

It is possible to do all the right religious things while missing the relationship God desires. We can say prayers without thinking about the words. We can give offerings while seeking recognition. We can serve while secretly hoping for praise.

God is not impressed by outward performance. He desires hearts that trust Him.

The beautiful news is that your heavenly Father sees what others cannot see. He sees quiet prayers offered in faith. He sees acts of generosity done without recognition. He sees service motivated by love.

Because Christ has already secured our standing before God, we do not need to perform for approval. We are free to worship, pray, and give simply because we love the One who first loved us.

## Application

Spend five minutes today in private prayer. Turn off distractions and simply talk with God about what is on your heart.

## Prayer

Father, keep me from seeking the approval of others. Help me worship You sincerely and joyfully. Draw me closer to You through Your Word and prayer. Amen.

# Day 5: Living in Grace Every Day

## Key Verse:

*"We are saved because Jesus was righteous, not because we are righteous."*

## Reflection

As Jesus expands God's commandments in the Sermon on the Mount, one truth becomes clear: none of us measures up. We may avoid certain outward sins, but our hearts often reveal anger, pride, selfishness, and unbelief.

That realization can be discouraging—unless it drives us to Christ.

The purpose of God's Law is not merely to show us how to live. It also reveals our need for a Savior. Every failure reminds us that we cannot save ourselves.

The good news is that Jesus has done what we could never do. He lived the perfect life we have not lived. He died the death we deserved. He rose again so that we might have forgiveness, peace, and eternal life.

Because of Him, we do not live in fear or condemnation. We live in grace. Every day begins with His mercy. Every failure is met with His forgiveness. Every step forward is empowered by His Spirit.

So when you fall short today, do not despair. Return to Christ. He has already done everything necessary for your salvation.

## Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You that my hope rests in Jesus and not in my own efforts. Keep me close to Him each day. Fill me with confidence in His forgiveness and strength for faithful living. Amen.

# Small Group Discussion Guide

## Guarding Your Heart: Revenge, Mercy, and True Righteousness

Matthew 5:38–48; Matthew 6:1–6

### Opening Question

Think of a time when someone offended, hurt, or frustrated you. What was your first instinct: get even, avoid them, confront them, or let it go?

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### Key Idea

Jesus teaches that God's concern goes deeper than outward actions. He cares about the condition of our hearts. Whether dealing with revenge, difficult people, generosity, or prayer, followers of Jesus are called to live differently—not merely by external obedience, but by faith that flows from hearts transformed by God's grace.

### Read Together

- Matthew 5:38–48
  - Matthew 6:1–6
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## What Does This Mean?

### 1. Jesus Calls Us to Guard Our Hearts

When we are hurt, criticized, mistreated, or inconvenienced, our natural response is often anger, resentment, or revenge. Jesus reminds us that sin begins in the heart before it becomes an action.

### Supporting Scriptures

- Proverbs 4:23
- Romans 12:17–21
- Ephesians 4:31–32

## Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think revenge feels so natural?
  2. What situations tend to tempt you toward anger, bitterness, or resentment?
  3. How does remembering God's forgiveness help us forgive others?
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## 2. Christians Are Called to Love Even Difficult People

Jesus commands us to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us. This does not mean approving of sin or ignoring wrongdoing. Rather, it means seeking the good of others and caring about their eternal future.

### Supporting Scriptures

- Matthew 5:44
- Luke 23:34
- Romans 5:8
- 1 Timothy 2:3–4

### Discussion Questions

1. Why is loving enemies one of Jesus' most challenging commands?
  2. Who is someone difficult for you to pray for right now?
  3. How does Jesus' treatment of those who crucified Him shape our response to those who hurt us?
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## 3. Jesus Shows Us What True Love Looks Like

The greatest example of turning the other cheek is Jesus Himself. Though innocent, He willingly suffered and died for sinners. His sacrifice earned our forgiveness and salvation.

### Supporting Scriptures

- Isaiah 53:5–6
- 1 Peter 2:21–24
- Romans 5:6–11

### Discussion Questions

1. How does Christ's sacrifice change the way you view personal offenses?
2. What does it mean to "take the hit" for the sake of a relationship?
3. Are there relationships in your life that need forgiveness or reconciliation?

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## 4. God Wants Our Hearts in Worship

Jesus warns against practicing righteousness merely to impress others. Whether giving, praying, serving, or worshiping, our focus should be on God rather than human recognition.

### Supporting Scriptures

- Matthew 6:1–6
- Colossians 3:17
- 1 Samuel 16:7

### Discussion Questions

1. Why is it easy to care about what other people think of our faith?
2. How can we keep prayer from becoming routine or mechanical?
3. What practical steps help you connect more deeply with God during prayer and worship?

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## Gospel Focus

The standard Jesus sets is perfection: "You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48).

None of us meets that standard. We fail in our thoughts, words, and actions. Yet Jesus fulfilled God's Law perfectly for us. Through His death and resurrection, our sins are forgiven and we are declared righteous before God by grace through faith.

Because we have been forgiven, we are free to forgive others, show mercy, and love as Christ first loved us.

### Supporting Scriptures

- Ephesians 2:8–9
  - 2 Corinthians 5:21
  - Romans 8:1
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## Challenge for This Week

Choose one person who has hurt, frustrated, or offended you.

Pray for that person every day this week. Ask God to soften your heart, bless them, and help you reflect Christ's love toward them.

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## Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for Your mercy toward us. When we were sinners, Christ died for us and won our forgiveness. Forgive us for the times we have held on to anger, resentment, bitterness, and pride. Create in us clean hearts that reflect Your love and grace.

Help us to forgive as we have been forgiven. Teach us to pray for those who hurt us, to seek reconciliation where possible, and to trust You with justice. Strengthen our faith so that our giving, praying, and serving are done for Your glory rather than our own.

Keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, who loved us and gave Himself for us. Fill us with Your peace and help us live as witnesses to Your grace in the world.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.