

DAY 6

But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.

Romans 5:8 NLT

Have you ever been able to forgive someone before they apologized? That takes a huge amount of strength! But this is exactly what Christ did for us. Jesus loved us so much that He was willing to die so we might see how worthy He thinks we are. He didn't wait until we realized how much we get it wrong. He didn't lecture us or condemn us. He decided to show us love by offering forgiveness before we even knew we needed it. His love made the first move!

Who in your life could use that message of unconditional love and forgiveness? Talk to them about how you've experienced God's forgiveness in your life this week.

DAY 7

Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.

Colossians 3:13 NLT

The word of God is a source of strength. And just like with physical strength, we can't become strong when we only exercise once a week, or the day before we have to run the mile in PE. In the same way, to really benefit from the strength God's word gives us, we need to read it and think about it consistently. This trains our minds and our hearts to know what God has said is true. So take some time to not only read God's word, but also to remember his word so that you build up your strength for life.

As you read the Scripture use your imagination to see an image that could represent the words in the Scripture. Draw what you imagine and write the Scripture under it. Hang it on the wall of your room so that you can see and remember the words from God's Word.

DAILY DEVOTIONAL

FOR AN
everyday faith.

BITTERSWEET / WEEK 2

HIGH SCHOOL

DAY 1

Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty of our sins.
Romans 3:23-24 NLT

"We all make mistakes" is a phrase everyone knows, but sometimes that's hard to remember when you need forgiveness. While we should all try to love God and others, we are incapable of living perfect lives. This is why God sent Jesus - so we don't have to live under the weight of our guilt from mistakes. Sometimes sin causes us to get in trouble, lose friends, or negatively impacts our futures. There's one thing that sin doesn't have to do: make us live under the weight of shame. Jesus came so we can be free. If Jesus thinks you are worth forgiving, then you should also forgive yourself. When someone doesn't forgive themselves, they don't allow themselves to fully experience the unconditional love of Jesus.

Today, write this verse where you can see it as a reminder that you've been forgiven.

DAY 2

If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you.
Matthew 6:14 NLT

The greatest commandment is to love God. The second greatest commandment is to love others as we love ourselves. Those two commandments are not connected on accident. You cannot do one without the other. As we love God, we love other people, and that love pushes us to forgive them. Love and forgiveness of others brings us closer to God. Holding anger starts a terrible cycle. Lack of forgiveness causes resentment and anger. Resentment, or holding a grudge, affects our ability to love others as we love ourselves because we will constantly fear getting hurt again. That's why it's impossible to love people and resent people at the same time.

Today, if you are struggling to forgive someone, consider talking to a trusted adult and ask them how they have taken steps towards forgiveness.

DAY 3

But the Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him.

Daniel 9:9 NLT

Have you ever met someone who changes how they behave depending on who they are around? They can be the nicest person around people they like, but mean and negative towards those they disagree with. God is nothing like that. God is good, and God's goodness towards us isn't based on our behavior, but on who God is: merciful, kind and loving. So, we should ask ourselves: Do people see the real me? Does the real me show off God's mercifulness, kindness, and love?

What's one thing you can start doing today to make forgiveness and mercy a genuine part of your reputation?

DAY 4

O Lord, you are so good, so ready to forgive, so full of unfailing love for all who ask for your help.

Psalms 86:5 NLT

Did you know that God is eager to forgive you? And by eager, I mean He is excited, thrilled, and happy to forgive! That forgiveness is displayed in the ultimate expression of love by what Jesus did for us on the cross: willingly dying so we could be sure of how God feels about us. Take a minute and think about the way Jesus has demonstrated His love for you- through the cross, through forgiveness, through the everyday actions of others, and evidence in creation.

No matter what we may have thought of God before, today, choose to think of God how this psalm does: as a God eager to forgive. As a God who is good. As a God who is so much better than we could possibly imagine.

DAY 5

He is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins.

Ephesians 1:7 NLT

Written by Isabel, age 17

From Indianapolis, Indiana

Have you ever had a time where you felt like you would never be able to forgive someone? I think everyone has. Maybe your friend talked about you behind your back, a family member said something mean, or the person you were dating cheated on you. No matter how forgiving of a person you are, sometimes it feels too hard to let go of the ways people have hurt you. However, we have all made mistakes. None of us do the right thing every single time, but God is always ready and willing to forgive us no matter what we do, or how many mistakes we make. And just like God forgives us, we should forgive others. I'm not saying it's easy, and often forgiveness takes time, but we should try to give grace and show love to others. Jesus died on the cross so that our past mistakes don't define us, so we can have a fresh start, which was

the ultimate act of forgiveness. Because we have been so greatly forgiven, we can forgive others when they wrong us.

Today, spend some time thanking Jesus for forgiveness, and his help to forgive others.