

Five-Day Devotional: Only the true Gospel produces real freedom

This 5-day devotional is from the sermon “No Other Gospel” based on Galatians, explores the foundation of the Christian life: the true gospel. Discover why salvation is by faith alone, what it means to be justified, how our identity changes from slaves to sons, and how real freedom grows from grace.

Day 1: Building on the Right Foundation

Devotional

Have you ever watched a house collapse during a storm? The tragedy isn't just in the destruction, but in realizing the foundation was flawed from the beginning. In our spiritual lives, we face a similar danger when we build on anything other than the pure gospel of Jesus Christ. Many believers today, like the Galatians, aren't rejecting Jesus outright. Instead, they're subtly adding requirements to faith - good works, religious traditions, or moral performance. These additions seem harmless, even admirable, but they fundamentally alter the foundation of our relationship with God. When we add anything to the simple truth that we are saved by faith alone in Christ alone, we create a shaky foundation that cannot withstand life's storms. The gospel isn't Jesus plus our efforts, Jesus plus good behavior, or Jesus plus religious activity. It's Jesus, period. This matters because everything else in our Christian life depends on this foundation. Our peace, our identity, our ability to love others, and our spiritual growth all flow from understanding that we are completely accepted by God through Christ's finished work, not our ongoing performance. Today, examine your own foundation. Are you resting entirely on what Jesus has done, or have you been adding your own efforts to the mix?

Bible Verse

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash." - Matthew 7:24-27

Reflection Question

What "additions" to the gospel have you been tempted to rely on for your acceptance with God?

Quote If the gospel is not established correctly, nothing else in this Christian life will stand when storms of life actually come, because only the true gospel produces real freedom.

Prayer

Lord, help me build my life on the solid foundation of Your gospel alone. Remove any false additions I've placed on top of Your finished work, and give me confidence in Christ's complete salvation.

Day 2: Declared, Not Improved

Devotional

Imagine receiving a phone call that changes everything. The voice on the other end declares you've inherited a fortune from a relative you barely knew. You didn't earn it, work for it, or deserve it - it's simply yours by declaration. This captures something beautiful about what God has done for us. When God justifies us through faith in Jesus, He doesn't put us on a spiritual improvement plan. He doesn't say, "You're getting better, keep trying." Instead, He declares us righteous - completely, immediately, and permanently. This isn't about our performance; it's about His pronouncement. The difference is profound. If justification were about improvement, we'd always be wondering if we're good enough yet. We'd live in constant anxiety about our spiritual progress. But because justification is a declaration, we can rest in the finished work of Christ. This truth transforms how we approach God. We don't come to Him hoping He'll accept us based on our recent behavior. We come knowing He has already declared us righteous through Jesus. We're not on spiritual probation, earning our way into His good graces. We have peace with God because of what Christ has accomplished. This declaration doesn't make us passive; it makes us secure. From this place of security, we can grow and serve not to earn God's love, but because we already have it.

Bible Verse

"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." - Romans 5:1

Reflection Question

How would your daily relationship with God change if you truly believed you were declared righteous rather than being improved?

Quote Justified means declared righteous, not improved. It's declared.

Prayer

Father, thank You for declaring me righteous through Jesus. Help me rest in this truth and live from a place of peace rather than performance.

Day 3: Faith Has Always Been the Way

Devotional

Sometimes we think God changed His mind about how people are saved - that in Old Testament times it was about following rules, but now it's about faith. This misunderstanding can make us feel like we're on shaky ground, wondering if God might change the requirements again. But Abraham's story reveals a beautiful truth: God has always saved people the same way - through faith. When Abraham believed God's promise, it was credited to him as righteousness. This happened 430 years before God gave the law through Moses. Abraham wasn't circumcised when God declared him righteous. He hadn't followed any religious rituals or earned his standing through good behavior. This means belonging to God's family has never been about ethnicity, religious traditions, or rule-following. It has always been about faith - trusting in God's promises and provision. The law that came later didn't change this fundamental truth; it revealed our need for the righteousness that only comes through faith. Your new identity isn't based on what you do but on what you believe. You're not trying to become God's child through your efforts; you already are His child through faith in Jesus. This isn't a new plan - it's the same plan God has always had. Rest in this consistency. God's way of salvation hasn't changed, and it won't change. Faith in His provision through Jesus is enough - it always has been, and it always will be.

Bible Verse

"Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness." - Genesis 15:6

Reflection Question

How does knowing that God has always saved people through faith (not works) strengthen your confidence in the gospel?

Quote Belonging to God has never been about ethnicity or law keeping or following those signs. It has always been about faith, our new identity.

Prayer

Lord, thank You that Your plan of salvation through faith has never changed. Help me rest in the consistency of Your grace and share this truth with others.

Day 4: From Slaves to Sons

Devotional

There's a world of difference between a slave and a son in a household. The slave works to avoid punishment and earn basic provision. The son works because he belongs to the family and wants to honor it. The slave performs out of fear; the son serves out of love. This distinction captures the heart of what Jesus has done for us. We are no longer spiritual slaves, desperately trying to perform well enough to earn God's acceptance. We are sons and daughters who already belong to His family. Our identity isn't based on our performance but on our position as His beloved children. Paul's words ring with personal testimony: "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me." This isn't about self-improvement or trying harder to be good. It's about a fundamental change of identity. The old self that had to earn acceptance is gone, replaced by a new self that is already accepted in Christ. When you understand that you belong rather than perform, everything changes. You serve God not to earn His love but because you already have it. You obey not from fear of rejection but from gratitude for acceptance. You grow not to become His child but because you are His child. Today, remember your true identity. You are not a slave trying to earn your place. You are a beloved child who already belongs.

Bible Verse

"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." - Galatians 2:20

Reflection Question

In what areas of your life are you still acting like a slave trying to earn acceptance rather than a son or daughter who already belongs?

Quote Slaves perform. Sons belong.

Prayer

Father, help me live as Your beloved child, not as a slave trying to earn acceptance. Transform my heart to serve from love, not fear.

Day 5: True Freedom Grows Naturally

Devotional

Freedom is often misunderstood. Some think it means doing whatever we want, living without boundaries or accountability. But true freedom isn't the absence of all restraint - it's being released from sin's power to live as we were designed to live. When Jesus sets us free, He doesn't just remove chains; He transforms our desires. The freedom He gives isn't about external rule-following but internal transformation. As we're rooted in the gospel and driven by grace, the fruits of the Spirit begin to grow naturally in our lives. Think about how fruit grows on a tree. The tree doesn't strain and struggle to produce fruit; it simply draws life from its roots, and fruit appears naturally. Similarly, when we're properly connected to the gospel, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control aren't manufactured through willpower - they grow from the life of Christ within us. This is radically different from trying to be good through human effort. When we attempt to produce spiritual fruit through our own strength, it becomes exhausting and artificial. But when the Spirit transforms us from the inside out, based on our secure foundation in the gospel, growth happens naturally. Stand firm in the freedom Christ has given you. Don't let anyone burden you again with the slavery of performance-based acceptance. Instead, rest in His grace and watch His life produce fruit through you.

Bible Verse

"It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery." - Galatians 5:1

Reflection Question

What spiritual fruit are you trying to manufacture through effort that you need to let grow naturally through grace?

Quote Freedom is not doing whatever we want, just living any O kind of way. That's another perverted gospel. Freedom is being released from sin's power.

Prayer

Jesus, thank You for setting me free from sin's power. Help me rest in Your grace and allow Your Spirit to produce fruit naturally in my life.