

Five-Day Bible Reading Plan and Devotional Guide

Who Has a Chair at Your Table?

Day 1: The Mercy That Moves Us

Reading: Romans 12:1-2

Devotional: Paul opens with the word "therefore" -- a word that carries the weight of all that God has already done. Before he asks anything of us, he reminds us of God's mercies. Grace is not a reward for our effort; it is the foundation beneath our feet. When we truly understand what God has done for us -- forgiving our sin, accepting us unconditionally, drawing us back from alienation -- our response is not obligation but gratitude. Worship becomes more than a Sunday activity. It becomes the shape of an entire life. Today, reflect on one specific mercy God has shown you, and let that mercy move you toward someone else.

Day 2: The Renewal That Requires Others

Reading: Romans 12:3-8

Devotional: Paul describes a community where every person carries a gift and no gift is more important than another. Transformation is not a solo project. Our blind spots are invisible to us precisely because they are blind spots. We need people who know us well enough to see what we cannot -- the fear driving our decisions, the pride narrowing our vision, and the old patterns pulling us backward. The renewal of our minds happens in relationship. Today, consider who in your life speaks the truth to you with enough love that you are willing to hear it. If no one comes to mind, ask God to provide that person.

Day 3: Love Without a Mask

Reading: Romans 12:9-13

Devotional: Paul calls for love that is genuine -- sincere, without pretense or performance. This is the kind of love that does not disappear when the conversation becomes uncomfortable or the need inconvenient. It shows up. It listens. It contributes. It opens the door to strangers. Genuine love requires us to stop managing our image and to become truly present to the people God has placed around us. It is far easier to believe in love as an idea than to practice it as a way of life. Today, identify one person in your life who needs your presence more than your advice, and choose simply to show up.

Day 4: Loving Across the Divide

Reading: Romans 12:14-18

Devotional: Paul instructs us to bless those who persecute us and to live peaceably with everyone, as far as it depends on us. These are not comfortable instructions, especially in a world that rewards outrage and punishes vulnerability. The Christian community is not built on compatibility. Grace brings together people who would not otherwise choose one another and asks the Holy Spirit to form them into something new. The church becomes a sign of God's reconciling love when divided people learn to listen, forgive, and seek one another's good. Today, think of someone with whom you have a genuine disagreement. Ask God to help you see their dignity before you notice your difference.

Day 5: The Debt That Never Ends

Reading: Romans 13:8-10

Devotional: Paul declares that the only debt we should carry indefinitely is the debt of love. Love is not a transaction we complete but a way of life we inhabit. When we have received God's love through Christ and through a community of faithful friends, we are compelled to pass it forward. We become people who notice who is missing, listen for the honest answer beneath the polite one, and pull up a chair for the person standing alone. The long argument of Romans ends here -- not in doctrine alone but in love made visible. Today, ask yourself: for whom is God inviting me to make room?