

DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Afterlife / Week 3

But if we confess our sins to Him,
He is faithful and just to forgive us
our sins and to cleanse us from
all wickedness.

1 JOHN 1:9 NLT

DAY 1

Have you ever been nervous about the way someone would respond to something you've done? It's the rush of panic when you break something that belongs to a sibling. It's that sinking feeling in your stomach when your teacher asks to speak to you after class. It's the panic you feel when you do something your parents wouldn't approve of. It's natural to avoid having to face the facts of our poor decisions. We don't have to take this approach with God. We don't have to wonder how He'll respond or what punishment He'll pass along. Instead, we can be confident that when we confess our sins, or the things we do that are less than what God says is best, He will meet us with forgiveness and a way forward.

Today, practice the act of confession. Take a few minutes and talk to God about anything you may have been holding back from bringing up. You can be confident that He will meet you with love, forgiveness, and kindness.

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

DAY 2

We are obsessed with the idea of revenge. The best movies, TV shows, and video games are often based on someone who has been wronged doing everything they can to get revenge. Something about taking matters into our own hands and giving someone what we think they "deserve," hits us deep in the feels and makes for great superhero stories. God gives us an entirely different approach. Instead of going after revenge, we're supposed to give away forgiveness. We do this because, through the death and resurrection of Jesus, this is exactly what God has done for us.

Forgiveness should be the first priority of Jesus followers. **Today, ask God to remind you of how much you've been forgiven from so that you remember how important it is to give forgiveness to others.**

**If you forgive those who sin against you,
your heavenly Father will forgive you.**

MATTHEW 6:14 NLT

DAY 3

Forgiveness can be frustrating. When someone wrongs you, sometimes the last thing you want to do is let them off the hook. Instead, it makes more sense to try to take matters into your own hands. We want to work it out on our own terms. We'd prefer to pay them back the way we think is best. We'd even like to give forgiveness, "when we're ready." Look, all of these responses are so normal. But God rarely asks us to live ordinary lives. Instead, our default response to being wronged by someone else should be a desire to forgive. It doesn't mean we avoid anger, or hurt, or sadness, but it does mean that we move toward forgiveness however we can.

As we choose to avoid holding grudges against others, we can be confident that God does the same with us. **This week, if there's a**

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| | <p>situation where you feel wronged by someone, take a moment to pause, acknowledge what happened, talk to God about what happened and how you feel, then ask Him to help you forgive that person.</p> |
| <p>He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west.</p> <p>PSALM 103:12 NLT</p> | <p>DAY 4</p> <p>Some competitions are no contest. Whether it's a battle at the box office for movie supremacy, an intense game on the football field for the state championship, or just two siblings fighting over the front seat on a road trip, sometimes the winner is clear from the start. The superhero movie is always going to dominate, the strongest team is typically going to win, and of course the older sibling is going to take the front seat in the end.</p> <p>The same is true in the battle between Jesus and death. There was never a contest; death didn't stand a chance! And when we believe in Him, the fear and sting of death doesn't stand a chance against Jesus' power and purposes at work in us. As you think about Easter this season, keep this verse in mind. Be encouraged of Jesus' victory over death and what it means for your life today.</p> |
| <p>For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.</p> <p>ROMANS 6:23 NLT</p> | <p>DAY 5</p> <p>We spend so much time and energy trying to earn things in life—a good grade, a spot on the team, a paycheck, or even a college acceptance letter. None of those things are bad goals to have or things to strive for, but if we aren't careful, the mentality that we must work hard to earn everything we want in life begins to seep into our faith. Being a Christian can quickly become about trying to earn God's love, but the beauty of the Gospel is that you don't have to be good enough for God to love you and save you. There's nothing you can do to earn His love. All you have to do is believe and receive it.</p> <p>So, this week do just that! Spend some time thanking God for the free gift of His love and let Him know you not only believe it, but want to find ways to truly accept it in every part of your life.</p> |
| <p>O Lord, you are so good, so ready to forgive, so full of unfailing love for all who ask for your help.</p> <p>PSALM 86:5 NLT</p> | <p>DAY 6</p> <p>Movies do an amazing job depicting the way a hero rises to the occasion to save the day. It's exciting to watch the story unfold as all the pieces fall into place and the hero does what only they can do to save the day. When you think about it, the story of your faith is the same. Jesus died on the cross for all humanity—something only He could do. He rose to the occasion to save us all—the ultimate hero move! Jesus' story is so much better than a movie because it is nonfiction.</p> <p>Jesus is the real deal. He truly saves and conquered death and sin. How cool is it that we get to participate in this amazing heroic story? This week, look for opportunities to serve those around you by doing something that only you can do. Let it be a chance to show a small glimpse of the hero that Jesus is to someone in your life.</p> |

This is real love—not that we loved
God, but that He loved us and sent
His Son as a sacrifice to take away
our sins.

1 JOHN 4:10 NLT

DAY 7

Write this verse on a sticky note and put it somewhere you will see it as a way to memorize it and as a reminder that you are loved.