

# DAY 6

LUKE 6:37, NIV

Have you ever watched a clip of a courtroom drama on YouTube or TikTok? If you have, then you know that usually it's a judge or jury that decides who's right and wrong. Well, Jesus flips that idea right around! He tells us that when we act like judges, we open ourselves to the same judgment. So instead, He says to give a radical kind of grace—one that forgives first and asks questions later. This doesn't mean we ignore harmful behavior or pretend everything's okay when it's not. It means we choose to see people as God sees them: worthy of love and forgiveness, just like we are.

**Today, notice when you feel the urge to judge someone else. How might your perspective change if you chose to see them through God's eyes instead? Write down one judgment you made today and reframe it with a more compassionate perspective.**

# DAY 7

EPHESIANS 4:32, NIV

Imagine you're learning to speak a new language. At first, every syllable feels awkward, but with practice, it gets easier. Eventually, you can connect with new people in a new way. Forgiveness is a lot like that. It's not a one-time event but a skill we build over time. Being kind and compassionate, even to those who've hurt us, is like speaking a new language—the language of forgiveness. Just like communication brings us closer to others, forgiveness does the same.

**To help memorize this verse, try the “hand motion” method. Create a simple gesture for each key word: “kind” (thumbs up), “compassionate” (hand over heart), “forgiving” (hands outstretched), “Christ” (point up), “forgave” (wipe hands clean). Practice these motions while saying the verse to help you remember the value of forgiveness.**

# DAILY DEVOTIONAL

FOR AN  
everyday faith.

GIVE AND TAKE / WEEK 2

HIGH SCHOOL

# DAY 1

PROVERBS 17:9, NLT

Have you ever had a tiny crack in your phone screen that slowly spread until it messed up the whole display? Holding on to someone's mistakes can be a lot like that. What starts as something small can grow so big that it damages the whole relationship. Choosing to forgive is like taking your phone in to get the screen fixed. It doesn't mean the crack never happened, but it stops it from getting worse. It helps you see things clearly again. This isn't about ignoring serious problems; it's about learning when to forgive and when to address issues with grace. Sometimes, when someone hurts us, it's okay to forgive them while also setting new boundaries to protect ourselves from further hurt.

**Today, think of a relationship that's been strained. What “cracks” have you been focusing on? Take the first step by identifying what needs forgiveness and what might need clearer boundaries.**

# DAY 2

ROMANS 12:17, NLT

Picture a game of chess. Every move you make influences your opponent's next move. Life can be a lot like that, especially when it comes to how we treat each other. It's one big game of give and take. Paul's letter to the Romans challenges us to break the cycle of retaliation. Instead of responding to negativity with more negativity, we should respond in a way that's honorable in God's eyes and that others can respect, too. This doesn't mean being a pushover or ignoring injustice. It means choosing to respond in a way that elevates the conversation rather than escalating the conflict.

**Today, if someone treats you unfairly, challenge yourself to respond in a way that's respectful and constructive. How might your response change the game for that relationship entirely?**

## DAY 3

MARK 11:25, NIV

Have you ever rushed to class while carrying a heavy backpack? It's exhausting, right? Well, holding grudges is a lot like that! It weighs us down and makes everything more difficult. Jesus says that forgiveness isn't just about the other person; it's about freeing ourselves, too. When we forgive, we're not saying what happened was okay. We're saying that we're choosing to let go of the weight of resentment. It's like taking the stuff out of our backpack bit by bit. And here's the key: Our ability to receive forgiveness is connected to our willingness to give it. That's why we all must forgive like we've been forgiven.

**Today, take a moment to consider if there is anyone you need to forgive? What weights do you need to remove from your backpack? Share this with a trusted friend or Small Group Leader and ask for their support as you work through this process.**

## DAY 4

PROVERBS 25:21-22, NIV

At first glance, this proverb might sound like it's suggesting some passive aggressive revenge. But that's not the case at all. The "burning coals" aren't about hurting someone else; they're about potentially sparking a change of heart. When we respond to hostility with kindness, it can be deeply unsettling for the other person. It can challenge their perception and lead to self-reflection. This proverb guides us to a radical kind of love—one that doesn't just refrain from retaliation but actively seeks to meet the needs of those who've wronged us. It's about breaking the cycle of negativity with unexpected grace.

**Today, think about someone you don't get along with easily. What would it look like to meet a need in their life instead of holding a grudge? Take a small step toward this, even if it's just offering a genuine compliment, an encouragement, or even a smile.**

## DAY 5

EPHESIANS 1:7, NLT

*Written by Gabi Luevano, age 21, from Hull, IA*

Imagine that you've been kidnapped, and someone is demanding a huge amount of money to free you. Unexpectedly, a stranger goes to them and pays to set you free. Once you're free, that stranger tells you that you don't have to pay anything back to them. In fact, they'd do it all over again to save you! In reality, the One who paid the price for us is Jesus. In our lives, He fully took on the weight of our mess ups and mistakes through His death on the cross. He did it because He loves us, and because of that, there is nothing we can do that would change that. Jesus is kind and gracious, which means He's ready to forgive everything—past, present, and future—when you ask Him. Jesus truly wants to have a close relationship with you. No matter how much you may feel like you've messed up,

God will be with you and help you move forward every time.

**Today, take time to pause and breathe. As you breathe in, thank Jesus for being there for you. As you breathe out, let go of anything you need to trust Him with and embrace the forgiveness He offers.**