

5 Day Devotional

Day 1: We Were Never Immune

Devotional

Have you ever looked around at conflict in your church and thought, "How did we get here?" You are not alone, and honestly, neither is your church. Division is not a sign that something has gone uniquely wrong with your congregation. It is one of the oldest struggles in the history of God's people.

The churches in Corinth and Galatia were founded by the apostles themselves. These were people who witnessed miracles firsthand, and yet they were constantly battling disunity. Jesus knew this was coming. The night before His crucifixion, He prayed specifically for the unity of His followers. That tells you something. He knew how hard it would be, and He cared deeply about it anyway.

So if your church has experienced tension, conflict, or division, you are in very human company. The encouraging news is that God has not left us without an answer. He has given us His Word, His Spirit, and a Savior whose life shows us exactly what unity requires.

This week, we are going to explore that answer together. It starts not by looking at the people around us, but by looking at Jesus. And when we do, everything else begins to come into focus.

Bible Verse

"I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me." - John 17:20-21

Reflection Question

When you think about conflict in your church or relationships, do you tend to see it as a personal failure or as a shared human struggle that God wants to redeem?

Quote

"Division is the most common issue that churches face."

Prayer

Lord, thank You for not leaving us to figure this out on our own. Open our hearts this week to see what You have for us, and give us the courage to honestly examine our own role in the unity of Your church. Amen.

Day 2: The Problem Is Closer Than You Think

Devotional

Here is something uncomfortable but freeing: most conflict does not start with the other person. It starts with us.

We all carry a quiet assumption that our preferences are the right ones. Our way of doing things just makes sense. And when someone else sees it differently, something inside us bristles. It feels personal, because in a way, it is.

Paul wrote to the church in Philippi with this exact tension in mind. His instruction in Philippians 2 is striking because he does not tell them to agree on everything. He tells them to change how they think about each other. The goal is not the elimination of differences. It is a transformation of perspective.

He puts it plainly: "Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility, count others more significant than yourselves." That is a high bar. It means you can genuinely believe someone is wrong and still treat their interests as more important than your own.

That kind of humility does not come naturally. But it is exactly what Paul calls us to, and it is possible because of what we are about to see in Jesus. The good news is that you do not have to manufacture this on your own. God is ready to grow it in you.

Bible Verse

"Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves." - Philippians 2:3

Reflection Question

Think of a recent disagreement you had. Were you more focused on being understood, or on truly understanding the other person?

Quote

"Every one of us has this natural tendency to believe that the things that matter to us should matter just as much to everybody else, right? We think that our preferences are obviously the best ones."

Prayer

Father, show me where selfish ambition has quietly shaped my thinking. Give me a genuine desire to value others above myself, not just in words, but in the way I actually live. Amen.

Day 3: How High He Was

Devotional

Before you can fully appreciate what Jesus did, you need to understand who He was before He did it.

Jesus did not begin at Bethlehem. He is the eternal Son of God. John 1 tells us He was with God in the beginning and that all things were made through Him. Every mountain, every ocean, every star burning in the far reaches of the universe, every single cell in your body. It all exists because He spoke it into being. He possessed every right and privilege of deity. He was worthy of every act of worship, every crown, every throne.

And then He chose to lay it all down.

He took on human flesh. He was born in a stable. He lived as a servant. He was mocked, beaten, and crucified by the very creation He had made and continued to sustain. Nobody forced this on Him. He chose it freely, and He chose it for you.

You cannot understand the humility of Christ until you understand His glory. The distance He traveled to reach us is almost incomprehensible. And that is exactly the point. When you see how far He came down, the things we tend to fight about begin to look very small by comparison.

Bible Verse

"He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and He upholds the universe by the word of His power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." - Hebrews 1:2-3

Reflection Question

How does understanding the full glory of who Jesus is before the incarnation change the way you see His sacrifice for you personally?

Quote

"You cannot understand the humility of Christ until you understand His glory. You can't understand how far he came down until you understand how high he was."

Prayer

Jesus, help me grasp the weight of what You gave up for me. Let the reality of Your humility sink deep into my heart and reshape the way I treat the people around me. Amen.

Day 4: He Chose This for You

Devotional

There is a detail about the cross that changes everything: Jesus was never a victim.

He told His disciples plainly that no one took His life from Him. He laid it down on His own. He had the power to call down legions of angels at any moment. He chose not to. He humbled Himself all the way to death, and He did it willingly, for us.

Think about what that means for the way we hold onto our preferences, our recognition, and our need to be right. Jesus laid aside privileges that actually and rightfully belonged to Him. The things most of us fight for in our relationships and in our churches? We never truly owned them in the first place.

When we look at the cross and really let it sink in, something shifts. The petty things we tend to protect start to feel exactly that: petty. Paul wants us to look at our Savior until all those things that we tend to fight about look pitifully small in comparison.

This is not about losing. It is about freedom. You do not have to spend your life making sure you get yours. Jesus already secured everything that matters. You are free to serve, to give, and to put others first.

Bible Verse

"No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again." - John 10:18

Reflection Question

What is one thing you tend to hold tightly in your relationships or church life that, in light of what Jesus willingly gave up, might be worth releasing?

Quote

"Jesus chose this. He humbled himself, and he did it for you."

Prayer

Lord, thank You that the cross was not an accident but a choice You made out of love for me. Help me hold my preferences loosely and find my security in You rather than in getting my own way. Amen.

Day 5: Nothing Left for Division to Feed On

Devotional

Here is a question worth sitting with: what would your church look like if everyone was more concerned with serving others than with securing their own position?

When two people in conflict are each genuinely focused on the other person's good, division runs out of fuel. There is nothing left for it to feed on. No one needs to win. No one needs to be recognized. No one needs to have their way. That is not a naive dream. It is the natural result of people who have truly been shaped by the mind of Christ.

And here is the promise that makes it all possible: humility is never ultimately lost. Scripture is clear that God exalts those who humble themselves before Him. You do not need to fight for your place. God is faithful to lift up those who trust Him enough to serve others first.

Beyond your own relationships, this matters for the world watching your church. A congregation consumed by internal conflict cannot carry the gospel outward effectively. But a church that chooses humility and makes much of Jesus becomes a powerful witness in its community.

We have something so much bigger to do than fight with each other. It has never been about us. It has always been about Him.

Bible Verse

"Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will exalt you." - James 4:10

Reflection Question

If the people around you in your church were watching how you handle disagreement, what would they learn about Jesus from what they see?

Quote

"What would happen to division in a church if we really had the mind of Christ? And what happens when two people disagree and both of them are more concerned about serving the other than they are about getting their own way? What happens when nobody has to win or be recognized or to have their own way? There's nothing left for division to feed on."

Prayer

Father, make us a church that looks more like Jesus than like the world around us. Let our unity be a witness to Your grace, and remind us daily that it has always been about You. Amen.