

5 Day Devotional

Day 1: When the Storm Hits

Devotional

Life has a way of throwing unexpected storms our way. One moment everything feels calm and manageable, the next we're battling fierce winds that threaten to overwhelm us. In Matthew 14, the disciples found themselves in exactly this situation - caught in a violent storm while Jesus seemed distant on the mountainside.

But here's what's remarkable: Jesus didn't abandon them in their struggle. He came to them, walking on the very waters that threatened to destroy them. This reveals something profound about God's character - He doesn't promise us a storm-free life, but He promises His presence in every storm.

Fear is a natural response when life feels out of control. Sometimes that fear even serves us well, like when it keeps us alert to danger. But when fear paralyzes us from trusting God, it becomes a barrier to experiencing His faithfulness. The disciples' initial terror at seeing Jesus reminds us that even in God's presence, our human nature struggles with fear.

Yet God's faithfulness remains constant. He has proven Himself trustworthy through generations, and His character doesn't change based on our circumstances. When storms rage around you today, remember that the same Jesus who walked on water is present with you now.

Bible Verse

'Know therefore that the Lord your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments.' - Deuteronomy 7:9 (New International Version (NIV))

Reflection Question

What current 'storm' in your life is making it difficult for you to trust in God's faithfulness?

Quote

Life can be very good and easy to believe when it's sunny and the lake is peaceful. But what about those challenges, those times in which our faith is tested?

Prayer

Lord, when life's storms rage around me, help me remember Your unchanging faithfulness. Give me peace in knowing that You are present even when I cannot see You clearly.

Day 2: Getting Out of the Boat

Devotional

Peter did something extraordinary that night on the Sea of Galilee - he asked to join Jesus on the water. While the other disciples stayed in the relative safety of their boat, Peter was willing to step into the unknown. This wasn't recklessness; it was faith in action.

We all have our 'boats' - those comfortable places where we feel in control. Maybe it's a job that feels secure but unfulfilling, relationships that are safe but shallow, or spiritual routines that are familiar but lack growth. These boats aren't necessarily bad, but they can become barriers to experiencing God's extraordinary work in our lives.

Stepping out requires us to release our grip on control and trust in God's control instead. Peter's request wasn't presumptuous; it was an expression of faith that recognized Jesus' power and desired to participate in it. When we step out in faith, we're not just taking risks - we're positioning ourselves to witness God's power in ways we never could from the safety of our boats.

The beautiful truth is that faith is contagious. When others see us step out in trust, it encourages them to do the same. Your willingness to leave your boat might be exactly what someone else needs to see to take their own step of faith.

Bible Verse

'Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.' - Colossians 3:1-3 (New International Version (NIV))

Reflection Question

What 'boat' in your life represents safety and control, but might be keeping you from experiencing God's extraordinary work?

Quote

That kind of faith is contagious. I believe when I see some of you step out in faith, do take up a challenge that maybe you've never done before. That attracts me, attracts others, because it is the spirit of God.

Prayer

Father, give me courage to step out of my comfort zones and trust in Your control rather than my own. Help me remember that my identity is secure in Christ.

Day 3: When Faith Feels Like Failure

Devotional

Peter walked on water - until he didn't. The moment he took his eyes off Jesus and focused on the storm, he began to sink. Many would call this a failure, but was it really? Peter experienced something none of the other disciples did that night. He felt the solid water beneath his feet, even if only briefly.

Failure often feels final, especially when we've stepped out in faith and things don't go as planned. But with Jesus, our failures become learning opportunities rather than final defeats. Peter's sinking wasn't the end of his story - it was part of his growth in faith.

Consider Jonas Salk, who tried 200 different approaches before discovering the polio vaccine. Each 'failed' attempt brought him closer to the breakthrough. Or Churchill, who viewed his repeated grade school class not as failure, but as a second opportunity to get it right. This perspective transforms how we view our setbacks.

When we step out in faith and stumble, Jesus doesn't abandon us to drown. He reaches out His hand, just as He did for Peter. Our temporary sinking doesn't negate the miracle of our walking. Every step of faith, even the wobbly ones, builds our trust in God's faithfulness and prepares us for the next opportunity to step out.

Bible Verse

'It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control your own body in a way that is holy and honorable.' - 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4 (New International Version (NIV))

Reflection Question

How can you reframe a recent 'failure' as a learning opportunity that brought you closer to God's purpose for your life?

Quote

Failures aren't final with Jesus. Our failures aren't final.

Prayer

Jesus, thank You that my failures aren't final with You. Help me see setbacks as stepping stones toward greater faith and trust in Your plan.

Day 4: Removing the Old Clothes

Devotional

Before we can put on new clothes, we must first remove the old ones. Paul reminds us that transformation requires intentionally taking off attitudes and behaviors that don't fit our identity in Christ. This isn't about earning God's love - it's about living in alignment with who we already are in Him.

Sexual immorality, greed, uncontrolled anger, malice, and lies are like ill-fitting garments that restrict our movement and misrepresent our true identity. Greed grasps for more while envy resents what others have. Both reveal hearts that have forgotten God's abundant provision and our secure position in Christ.

Removing these old patterns isn't easy - they often feel comfortable because they're familiar. But just as we wouldn't wear dirty, torn clothes to an important event, we shouldn't clothe ourselves with attitudes that contradict our calling as God's children.

This process of removing and replacing happens daily through the Holy Spirit's work in us. We don't have to do this in our own strength. As we recognize behaviors that don't reflect Christ, we can confess them and ask for God's help in developing new patterns that honor Him.

Remember, this transformation isn't about perfection - it's about progression. Each day offers new opportunities to choose attitudes that reflect our true identity in Christ.

Bible Verse

'Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.' - Colossians 3:1-3 (New International Version (NIV))

Reflection Question

What 'old clothes' - attitudes or behaviors - do you need to intentionally remove because they don't fit your identity in Christ?

Quote

Our first and foremost identity is in Christ. In Christ.

Prayer

Holy Spirit, show me the attitudes and behaviors that need to be removed from my life. Give me strength to let go of what doesn't honor You and embrace who I am in Christ.

Day 5: Clothed in Christ's Character

Devotional

After removing what doesn't belong, we're called to put on the beautiful garments of Christ's character: compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, and love. These aren't just nice qualities - they're the very nature of Christ being formed in us.

Compassion means coming alongside others with our hearts, offering encouragement in their struggles. Kindness puts that compassion into action through smiles, hugs, helpful words, and generous acts. Gentleness isn't weakness but strength under control - the power to help rather than harm.

Patience and forgiveness work together, especially when others disappoint us. Peter once asked Jesus how many times he should forgive - seven times seemed generous to him. But Jesus responded with seventy times seven, indicating that forgiveness should be limitless, just as God's forgiveness toward us is limitless.

These character qualities don't come naturally to our fallen nature. They're woven into us by the Holy Spirit as we surrender to His work each day. Like putting on clothes each morning, we must intentionally choose to clothe ourselves with Christ's character.

When we step out of our boats wearing these garments, we represent Christ well to a watching world. Our transformed lives become testimonies of God's power to change hearts and evidence of His kingdom breaking into our everyday experiences.

Bible Verse

'Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.' - Colossians 3:1-3 (New International Version (NIV))

Reflection Question

Which aspect of Christ's character - compassion, kindness, gentleness, patience, or forgiveness - do you most need to intentionally 'put on' today?

Quote

These clothes don't always come naturally. They're woven by the Holy Spirit in us. Each and every day.

Prayer

Lord, clothe me with Your character today. Let compassion, kindness, and gentleness flow through me as natural expressions of Your Spirit within me.