

Day 4 – It's Complicated

Scripture: *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight."* — **Proverbs 3:5-6**

Devotional

If social media has taught us anything, it's that relationships aren't always easy to define.

Sometimes people proudly post **"In a Relationship."**

Sometimes they quietly change it to **"Single."**

And then there's that one relationship status almost everyone can relate to at some point in life:

"It's Complicated."

Those three little words carry a lot of weight.

Maybe your marriage is struggling.

Maybe your children have grown distant.

Maybe a friendship ended without explanation.

Maybe you're trying to forgive someone who never apologized.

Maybe family gatherings have become stressful instead of joyful.

Maybe you're grieving someone who's gone, and your heart still hasn't caught up with reality.

Life has a way of becoming complicated.

The older we get, the more we realize relationships rarely fit neatly into simple categories.

They're messy.

People say things they can't take back.

Trust gets broken.

Promises are forgotten.

Expectations go unmet.

Sometimes the people who hurt us the most are the very people we love the most.

If we're honest, many of us spend enormous amounts of time trying to untangle complicated relationships.

We replay conversations.

We imagine different outcomes.

We wonder what we should have said.

We search for the perfect words that might somehow fix everything.

But here's the reality:

Some relationships can't be repaired by better communication alone.

Some healing only comes through God.

One of the greatest mistakes we make is believing that peace depends on everyone agreeing with us.

It doesn't.

Peace comes from knowing we've surrendered the situation to the One who sees what we cannot.

God has never been intimidated by complicated.

Throughout Scripture, He stepped into situations that looked impossible.

Joseph's family betrayed him and sold him into slavery.

Yet God used that broken relationship to save an entire nation.

Ruth lost her husband and found herself facing an uncertain future.

God turned her sorrow into a story of redemption.

The prodigal son shattered his relationship with his father.

Yet one embrace changed everything.

Peter denied Jesus three times.

Still, Jesus restored him and entrusted him with leading the early church.

Again and again, God demonstrated that broken relationships are not beyond His reach.

The same God who restored them is still restoring lives today.

But here's something important to remember:

God doesn't always begin by changing the other person.

He often begins by changing us.

That's usually not the answer we want.

We'd much rather pray,

"Lord, change them."

Instead, God gently asks,

"Will you let Me change you?"

He changes our pride into humility.

Our bitterness into forgiveness.

Our anger into compassion.

Our impatience into grace.

Sometimes the greatest miracle isn't reconciliation.

Sometimes the greatest miracle is that your heart becomes free even if the relationship never changes.

Forgiveness is one of the hardest commands in Scripture because it feels unfair.

Why should I forgive someone who never admitted they were wrong?

Why should I let go when they caused the pain?

Because forgiveness isn't saying what happened was okay.

It's choosing not to let yesterday continue controlling today.

Unforgiveness is like carrying a backpack full of rocks.

Every offense adds another stone.

Another disappointment.

Another betrayal.

Another argument.

Eventually the weight becomes exhausting.

God never intended for you to carry that burden.

Jesus invites us to lay it down.

Not because the other person deserves it.

But because **you deserve the freedom that comes from releasing it.**

That doesn't mean every relationship should be restored.

Forgiveness and reconciliation are not always the same thing.

Some relationships require healthy boundaries.

Some require distance.

Some require wisdom.

Even Jesus walked away from people who rejected Him.

He loved everyone.

But He didn't entrust Himself to everyone.

You can forgive someone without allowing them unlimited access to your life.

Boundaries aren't a lack of love.

They're often an expression of wisdom.

There are also complicated relationships that don't involve conflict at all.

Sometimes the complication is grief.

You miss someone who isn't coming back.

You wish you had one more conversation.

One more hug.

One more chance to say, "I love you."

Grief reminds us how deeply we were created to love.

The good news is that God understands grief better than anyone.

Psalm 34:18 says,

"The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit."

He doesn't ask us to pretend we're okay.

He simply promises we won't walk through heartbreak alone.

Maybe today your complicated relationship isn't with another person.

Maybe it's with yourself.

You keep replaying old mistakes.

You struggle to forgive your own failures.

You believe God has forgiven you—but you haven't forgiven yourself.

Friend, hear this truth:

If Jesus' sacrifice was enough for God to forgive you, it should be enough for you to stop condemning yourself.

Don't continue carrying what Christ already carried to the cross.

Every complicated relationship teaches us something.

Some teach us patience.

Some teach us wisdom.

Some teach us discernment.

Some teach us what real love looks like.

But every one of them can draw us closer to God if we allow Him to work through them.

When life feels tangled, don't focus on untangling every knot yourself.

Place the entire bundle into God's hands.

He sees every thread.

He knows every heart.

He understands every detail.

And while you may not always understand His process, you can always trust His character.

He is still writing your story.

And He specializes in turning complicated chapters into beautiful testimonies.

Reflection Questions

- Is there a relationship I've been trying to fix without first surrendering it to God?
- Am I holding onto bitterness that is weighing down my heart?
- Is God asking me to forgive someone—or perhaps forgive myself?
- What healthy boundary might God be leading me to establish?

Prayer

Father, You know every complicated relationship in my life. Nothing about my circumstances surprises You, and nothing is too difficult for You to handle. I surrender every broken conversation, every painful memory, every disappointment, and every unanswered question into Your hands. Give me wisdom where I need direction, courage where I need boundaries, and humility where I need to change. Help me forgive as You have forgiven me, not because others deserve it, but because You desire freedom for my heart. Teach me to trust You even when I don't understand what You're doing. Thank You for being the God who brings peace into chaos and hope into broken places. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Today's Challenge

Think of one relationship that feels "complicated."

Instead of trying to solve it today, spend ten minutes praying specifically for that person.

Don't ask God to change them first.

Ask Him to change **your** heart.

Then ask yourself:

"What would trusting God with this relationship look like today?"

Take one step of obedience—whether it's offering forgiveness, setting a healthy boundary, making a phone call, writing a note, or simply choosing to let go of the burden you've been carrying.

Today's Truth

Some relationships may always be complicated—but my relationship with God never is. When I trust Him with what I can't untangle, He gives me peace that isn't dependent on perfect circumstances or perfect people.