

DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Awkward / Week 4

“He loves whatever is just and good; the unfailing love of the Lord fills the earth.”

Psalm 33:5 NLT

DAY 1

The bad news about relationships is that, at some point, they're going to let us down. Whether it's with a friend, or a family member, or someone you are dating, disappointment, hurt, anger, and heartbreak unfortunately come as a part of our relationships along the way. No matter how much the other person means to us or how much we mean to them, we're only human. And because of that, we simply can't love each other without letting each other down in some way. But the good news is this: God can. God's love won't disappoint or disappear. It's unfailing, unconditional, and unchanging. It's the perfect love we long for in our lives. It's the one relationship that will never let us down. This week, make time to thank God for the way His love never fails.

“And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.”

Philippians 4:8 NLT

DAY 2

We all have expectations for the kind of person we hope to be in a relationship with—whether that's now or in the future. Good looking, athletic, smart, or maybe even funny. While all that stuff is good, God is asking us to dig a little deeper. To take our eyes off the things the world sees and instead focus on the things He sees. He's asking us to look for the things on His list—things like honor, truth, integrity, and excellence. As you think about the kind of person you want to be, ask God to help you think about qualities that He cares about most. Focus on becoming those things as you look for them in other people as well.

“As water reflects the face, so one's life reflects the heart.”

Proverbs 27:19 NIV

DAY 3

How many hours have we all spent in front of a mirror? Probably a lot! Solomon tells us that just as a mirror reflects what's on the outside, the way we live our lives reflects what's inside—our hearts. What's happening in your heart comes out in the way you treat other people. It comes out in the things that you do. So, the question is this: How is your heart? What is your life reflecting to others about what's happening inside of you? If you're not sure, ask someone else to be your mirror. Give them permission to help you see when your life isn't reflecting the things you want it to. And ask God to change your heart so it reflects more of who He is.

<p><i>“There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens.”</i></p> <p>Ecclesiastes 3:1 NIV</p>	<p>DAY 4</p> <p>As a middle schooler, it might seem like time moves incredibly slow. You might want to grow up. You might want to be older than you are right now. You might want to be allowed to do the things you want to do. When you feel that way, remember that God has a plan. God created you just as you are and has a purpose for you right now. There’s a time for everything—even as a middle schooler! So, don’t waste the time God has given you now by wishing for the future. Instead, remember that God has you in the right place and time just where you are. There’s so much He can do in your life and relationships today if you simply ask Him!</p>
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<p><i>“He renews my strength. He guides me along right paths, bringing honor to His name.”</i></p> <p>Psalm 23:3 NLT</p>	<p>DAY 5</p> <p>Sometimes it’s hard to know how to set the right expectations for our friendships or relationships. We think we know what we want or what we should expect from others, but how can we really be sure? Well, we can start by letting God guide us. Just as the Bible says, God will guide us along the right paths in our lives. He will give us wisdom in all areas of our lives, and that includes our friendships and relationships. As you’re thinking about your current and future relationships, pray that God will guide you. Ask Him to help you have real expectations. Pray for His wisdom to lead you down the right paths when it comes to friendships and relationships.</p>
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<p><i>“But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!”</i></p> <p>Galatians 5:22-23 NLT</p>	<p>DAY 6</p> <p>When we live for God, this verse tells us that the Holy Spirit—God’s spirit—produces good things in our lives. We have more love, are more joyful, have more patience, are gentle with those around us, and more! But here’s the thing: Developing these qualities takes time. The more time you spend with God, the more of these qualities will come out in your life. And when that happens? Your life and your relationships will be better for it! Think about a trusted friend or adult. Which of these qualities do you see in their life? Have a conversation with them and tell them about the good, Godly qualities you see in them. Then, ask them to encourage you to develop the same in you!</p>
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<p><i>“Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.”</i></p> <p>Romans 12:2 NLT</p>	<p>DAY 7</p> <p>Creativity can go a long way in helping you complete a task like memorizing Scripture. So, grab some art supplies (crayons, markers, colored pencils, or paint) and get started! Draw or paint the words from this verse in a creative, colorful way. Then, put your completed work on display where you can see it. Each time you pass by it, stop and say the verse out loud to help you memorize it. It’s a unique way to memorize an important truth that can impact your life and the lives of those around you!</p>
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