

DAILY DEVOTIONAL

I Have Questions - Arguing

O Lord, **you are so good**, so ready to forgive, so full of unfailing love for all who ask for your help.

PSALM 86:5 NLT

DAY 1

We spend a lot of time getting ready every day. We get ready for the day by eating breakfast and brushing our teeth (hopefully!). We get ready for the sports we compete in by practicing before a game. We get ready for our future by working hard in school or saving money from our job.

What's so great about this verse is that it reminds us we serve a God who is always ready! He is ready to forgive because forgiveness is in His DNA. It's who He is and how He loves us. **The next time we need to forgive, we can turn to the God who is always ready. We can ask Him to make us ready to forgive those who have wronged or hurt us. To make us more like Him in this way.**

This is my command:
Love each other.

JOHN 15:17 NIV

DAY 2

Love each other. It sounds so simple, but in reality, we know it's a lot easier said than done. Our emotions can get the best of us quickly. They can override our good intentions. We want to love, but in the heat of an argument or the height of hurt feelings, actually doing that becomes a lot more difficult.

This week, write out this verse and put it in a wallet, purse, or notebook. The next time you find yourself tempted to choose an argument rather than choose to love, stop and read this. Let it be the catalyst, or reminder, that helps you to flip the switch toward love in that moment.

Your **kindness will reward you**, but your cruelty will destroy you.

PROVERBS 11:17 NLT

DAY 3

The world is covered with volcanoes. Some of them are extinct (meaning they'll never erupt again), some of them are dormant (meaning they might erupt again), and some of them are active (meaning they might erupt at any time). The point of this pseudo-science lesson? Cruelty in our hearts works in the same way. Left to erupt, it can lead to nothing but destruction in our lives. The alternative? As King Solomon said, it's kindness. If we want to stop cruelty, hate, or anger from erupting in our words and actions, we have to replace it with kindness.

Make a point to pay attention to the things that tempt you to erupt with cruelty this week. If you can't figure it out, ask a trusted friend or adult for their input. Then, talk about steps you can take to choose kindness in those moments instead.

How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and **then you will see clearly** to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

MATTHEW 7:4-5 NIV

DAY 4

It's easy to judge other people. It's easy to look at the lives of those around us and think: *She shouldn't have done that, or He made a huge mistake, or I would never act like them!* Whether we realize it or not, that's judgement. And as Jesus reminds us here, it's not ours to give. If we want to pass judgement on other people, we first have to take a look in the mirror—an honest look at ourselves.

The reality is, we're all on an equal playing field when it comes to mistakes, mess ups, and reasons to be judged. That makes the way God sees each one of us that much more valuable. He sees us through His eyes—eyes that love us no matter what. **As you find yourself tempted to be hard on someone else or even yourself this week, pray that God would help you see with His eyes instead.**

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, **so that you may overflow with hope** by the power of the Holy Spirit.

ROMANS 15:13 NIV

DAY 5

Have you ever run out of gas? If you have, then you probably know it usually happens when you take your eyes off the tank! If we're not careful, the needle will end up on empty before we even realize it! The same could be said for things like hope, joy, peace, and trust in our lives. If we're not paying attention, our reserve of the things of God may run out before we realize it! But if we're focusing on spending time with Him and growing in our faith, our tank will stay filled, almost to overflow!

What's one way you can focus on making sure you are filled with the things of God this week? **Whether it's prayer, reading your Bible, listening to worship music, or even just having an honest conversation with a friend, make an effort to fill your tank with the things God offers you this week.**

You will keep in perfect peace all who **trust in you**, all whose thoughts are fixed on you!

ISAIAH 26:3 NLT

DAY 6

How many things have you seen that are truly perfect? Probably very few. That's because perfection is hard to achieve. In fact, as people, perfection is just not possible on our own. Thankfully, we have access to a God who offers to give us a glimpse of His perfection.

If we trust in Him and keep our thoughts on Him, He promises to give us His perfect peace. Does it mean everything will always be easy or simple, or that nothing will ever make us angry? No, but it does mean that we can find peace no matter what we're dealing with, because God's peace is perfect. **What areas in your life do you feel the most in need of peace? Ask God to help you trust Him with those things. Ask Him to give you His perfect peace.**

My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.

JAMES 1:19 NIV

DAY 7

The Bible is actually one of the best tools we have to help us navigate arguments. Not because it will stop a fight or even keep us from wanting to argue, but because it will help us handle our arguments in healthier ways.

When things get tense, remember to listen first and keep anger under control. **To help you have this verse on hand when you need it, work on memorizing it this week. Make it the lock screen on your phone or write it on the mirror you check before leaving the house. Each time you look at it this week, work on committing it to memory each time.**