

QFMC 5 Day Devotional

Week of January 11, 2026 by Ed Burns

Grace in the Genealogy

Day 1: The Gospel Is For Sinners

Reading: Genesis 37:23-28; Matthew 1:1-3

Devotional: Matthew begins Jesus' genealogy with Judah—the brother who sold Joseph into slavery for profit. Why include such a shameful story? Because the gospel exists precisely for people like Judah. And people like us. We often approach God thinking our good deeds earn His favor, but Matthew reminds us that Jesus came to save sinners, not the self-righteous. Judah's inclusion in Christ's lineage declares that no past is too broken for God's redemptive purposes. Your mistakes don't disqualify you from God's grace; they position you to receive it. Today, release any belief that you must clean yourself up before coming to God. He meets you exactly where you are.

Reflection: What secret shame keeps you from fully accepting God's grace? Confess it to Him today.

Day 2: When Secrets Control Us

Reading: Genesis 38:1-26

Devotional: Judah's story reveals a dangerous pattern: people with secrets often become self-righteous. When Judah heard of Tamar's pregnancy, he immediately condemned her to death—all while hiding his own guilt. This is human nature unbroken by grace. Our hidden sins don't stay hidden in our character; they leak out as judgment toward others. The very things we condemn most loudly often mirror our own struggles. Jesus came to free us from this exhausting pretense. His grace transforms us from secret-keepers into truth-tellers, from condemners into extenders of mercy. Living in the light of God's grace means we no longer need to project our shame onto others.

Reflection: Is there an area where you've been harshly judgmental? Ask God to reveal any hidden connection to your own struggles.

Day 3: God's Intentions Versus Ours

Reading: Genesis 50:15-21

Devotional: "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good." Joseph's words to his brothers reveal the stunning truth of God's sovereignty over our worst moments. Judah's betrayal, meant for evil, became part of God's plan to save nations—and ultimately to bring the Savior into the world. God doesn't just clean up our messes; He weaves them into His redemptive story. The very sins we're most ashamed of can become testimonies of His transforming grace. This doesn't excuse sin, but it does reveal God's character: He specializes in bringing beauty from ashes. Your past failures aren't footnotes in your story—they're platforms for displaying God's amazing grace.

Reflection: What painful situation in your past might God be redeeming for His purposes?

Day 4: Extending the Grace We've Received

Reading: Matthew 18:21-35; Colossians 3:12-14

Devotional: Having received undeserved mercy, we're called to extend it. Joseph could have executed his brothers; instead, he reassured them and provided for their families. This is the gospel pattern: freely you have received, freely give. Perhaps there's a "Judah" in your life—someone who betrayed you, forgot you, or harmed you. The grace you've received from God isn't meant to stop with you; it's meant to flow through you. Withholding forgiveness while claiming God's forgiveness reveals we haven't fully grasped the gospel. Today, God may be calling you to speak kindly to someone who doesn't deserve it, just as He has spoken kindly to you.

Reflection: Who in your life needs to receive the same grace God has given you?

Day 5: A New Year, A Fresh Start

Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Lamentations 3:22-23

Devotional: Matthew's genealogy announces good news: Jesus came for people with complicated pasts, messy families, and shameful secrets. As you begin this new year, remember that God's mercies are new every morning. You don't have to carry last year's guilt, shame, or self-righteousness into 2026. In Christ, you are a new creation. The old has gone; the new has come. God has made you His ambassador of reconciliation—a bearer of the gospel to others who feel disqualified by their past. Your story of grace received becomes your message of grace extended. Let this year be marked not by self-improvement projects, but by deeper dependence on God's amazing grace.

Reflection: What would change in your life if you fully believed God's grace is sufficient for you today?