



FRUIT *of the* SPIRIT

2026

RADIANT CHURCH • SERMON GUIDE

This Book Belongs To

WELCOME TO FRUIT *of the* SPIRIT

I'm so glad we're on this journey together.

Over the next 10 weeks, we're going to explore the fruit of the Spirit, and what it looks like to become more like Jesus, together. We're not going to do this by striving or trying harder. **This isn't a self-improvement program; it's an invitation into one of the most transformational seasons of your life.**

My prayer is that this series will be more than something you engage with on Sundays. As you spend time in God's Word and apply what you're learning, I believe you'll begin to see the character of Jesus become more evident in your thoughts, your relationships, your job, and every area of your life.

Every week, here's what you can expect to get out of this book:

- **Sermon Notes:** Weekly notes to personally capture what God is speaking to you.
- **Reflection:** Questions and exercises to help you apply the message.
- **Scripture Memory:** A weekly memory verse to hide in your heart.
- **Discipleship Group Discussion:** A guide to help you grow and apply the message through conversation.

WELCOME TO FRUIT *of the* SPIRIT

Can I ask you to do three things?

1. Come ready every Sunday. Showing up prepared puts you in the right state to be ready to receive and hear from God.
2. Commit to homework. Reflection and Scripture memory during the week will strengthen your walk with Christ.
3. Join a Discipleship Group. Growth happens in community.

Those who will benefit the most from this series are those who engage with it outside of a Sunday. Your name is on the front of this book because this journey is for you. I can't wait to see what God does in your life over these next 10 weeks.

Let's grow together!

Your Pastor,
Aaron Burke



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How To Use Your Homework

Sunday mornings are designed to be the catalyst for the life-change that Jesus wants to do within us throughout the week. To help equip you, we included some homework each week. This is designed to help you grow deeper in Christ. That is why this book exists; not to give you more to do, but to give the Spirit more access to your week.

Each week of this series comes with a set of resources designed to apply what you heard on Sunday and take it deeper.

Here is what you can expect:

Memory Verse

Each week includes a verse to memorize. Don't skip this. God's Word hidden in your heart is a weapon the Spirit will use at the exact moment you need it most.

Deeper Word Study

Most weeks include a short word study that unpacks the original Hebrew or Greek behind the fruit we are studying that week. These are words worth knowing. They will change the way you read your Bible for the rest of your life.

5-Day Devotionals

Each week includes a full five-day devotional with a Scripture, a short reflection, and a prayer to close. These are meant to take 10 minutes. Do them first thing in the morning if you can. That way, you can carry that day's reminder with you throughout the rest of your day.

Sermon Deep Dive Video

Each week, we have recorded discussions specifically geared to take the sermon even further, personalize it, and continue the conversation. Engage in watching these videos in small groups and be honest in the conversations following.



Discipleship Group Discussion

Each week closes with a set of questions for your group. These are not surface-level questions. They are designed to create real conversation. Come prepared to be honest.

One Last Thing

This sermon guide only works if you actually use it. You can carry this book around for ten weeks and never open it. Or you can let this be the season where everything starts to shift. The Spirit is willing and ready to do something in you right now. Don't miss it.

MEMORY VERSES

Week 1 - How Do We Truly Change?

Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Week 2 - Love

Romans 5:5

And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

Week 3 - Joy

Philippians 4:4

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!

Week 4 - Peace

Isaiah 26:3

You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you.

Week 5 - Patience

James 1:19

Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.

Week 6 - Kindness

Romans 2:4

Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?

Week 7 - Goodness

Galatians 6:9

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

Week 8 - Faithfulness

Lamentations 3:22-23

Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

Week 9 - Gentleness

Proverbs 15:1

A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

Week 10 - Self-Control

Galatians 5:16

So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

HOW DO WE TRULY CHANGE?

Week 1

Sept. 13th, 2026

Week 1 • How Do We Truly Change?

Galatians 5:22-23 But the **fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

The Fruit of the Spirit - the _____ of Christ being made _____ in us as we walk by the _____.

“The character of Christ” - These are not random virtues, they are who _____ is.

“Made visible in us” - Christians should look _____ from the world.

“As we walk by the Spirit” - Change comes from His Spirit, not our _____.

You don't change by getting a _____ of things you shouldn't do.

Galatians 5:16-17 But I say, **walk by the Spirit**, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are **opposed to each other**, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

The Flesh: _____ ways that ultimately lead to frustration.

Galatians 5:18-21 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the **works of the flesh** are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

The Spirit: God's way, through God's _____, producing God's _____.

We don't change by _____ harder.

We change by _____ to the Spirit.

Galatians 5:22-24 But **the fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have **crucified the flesh** with its passions and desires.

The Spirit is inviting you to:

1. _____ Christ

John 6:44 No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me **draws him**.

Revelation 3:20 Here I am! **I stand at the door and knock**.

If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in.

You can't walk by the Spirit if you've never _____ Him in.

2. Release _____

Proverbs 3:5-6 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.

The level to which you release _____ determines the level of _____ you will see in your life.

The area of your life that feels most _____ is often the one you're trying hardest to control.

Matthew 16:25 Whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever **loses their life** for me will **find it**.

3. Develop _____

2 Corinthians 3:18 And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being **transformed into his image** with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

The fruit of the Spirit is not about a performance we're trying to _____, but the person we're called to _____.

Romans 5:3-4 We also **glory in our sufferings**, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.

Daily Prayer: God, what is it about my _____ that you want to change? And whatever it takes, _____.

Week 1 Homework • How Do We Truly Change?

☐ Memory Verse

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Write It Out

☐ Word Study

Karpos (καρπός) — “fruit, result, profit”

Go to blueletterbible.org and search "2590" in the search bar. This is the reference number for the word *karpos*. Find one additional Scripture that uses this word and write it below.

Write It Out

Week 1 Homework • How Do We Truly Change?

☐ **5-Day Devotional**

This week includes a five-day devotional. Set aside 10 minutes each morning. Each day has a Scripture, a short reflection, and a prayer. Let the Spirit take what you heard on Sunday and work it deeper into your week.

☐ **Sermon Deep Dive Video**

Watch this week's Sermon Deep Dive video and take notes on the Sermon Deep Dive video notes page.



☐ **Discipleship Group Discussion** (on Group Discussion Guide page)

Week 1 Deep Dive Notes

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Discipleship Group Discussion Guide

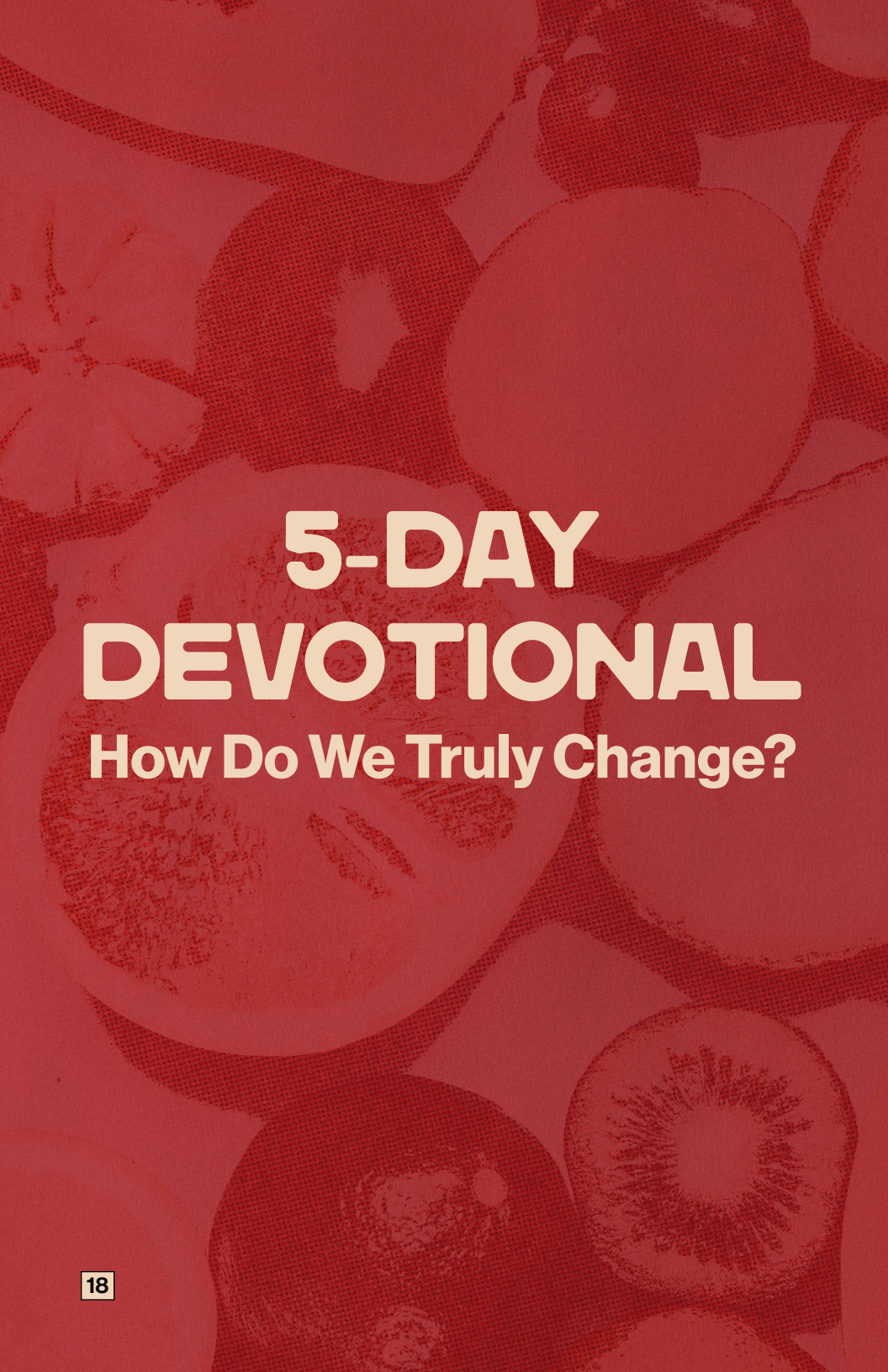
We opened this sermon series by defining what exactly the fruit of the Spirit is: the character of Christ being made visible in us as we walk by the Spirit. The way that Jesus lived should be reflected in our lives as Christians. But we cannot accomplish this on our own, only by the Spirit of God dwelling within us. Our flesh is at war with our spirit, and the way we accomplish true life transformation is by submitting to the One who sanctifies us. As you accept Christ as Lord, release control, and develop godly character, you will see true change in your life!

Memory Verse:

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Discussion Questions

1. What's one area of your life you've been trying to change through sheer effort, and how is that actually going?
2. How does it change things to think of the Fruit of the Spirit as the character of Christ rather than a checklist to improve on?
3. Which of the three invitations hit you hardest: accept Christ, release control, or develop character? Why?
4. What area of your life do you most need to stop striving in and start submitting?
5. What is one step you can take this week to walk by the Spirit?



5-DAY DEVOTIONAL

How Do We Truly Change?

DAY 1 • Stop Trying, Start Walking

“So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.” **Galatians 5:16**

Here's the truth most of us don't want to admit: we've tried harder, and it hasn't worked. You've told yourself you'd stop losing your temper, and then you get angry and watch yourself lose it all over again. You've set the resolution, deleted the app, made the promise, and you're right back where you started. I want to encourage you. That frustration you're feeling isn't a sign that you're a failure. It's actually just a sign you've been trying to do this the wrong way.

When Paul gives instructions to the church, he doesn't say, “Try harder and you'll get there.” He says walk by the Spirit. There's a massive difference between striving and walking. Striving is exhausting. Walking is simply staying close. A tree doesn't strain to grow fruit. When it's rooted in healthy soil and receiving both water and light, fruit is the natural byproduct.

God isn't asking you to produce something. He's asking you to stay connected to the One who produces it. Today, the single most important thing you can do is stop treating your faith like a self-improvement plan and start treating it like a relationship. Walk with God, and let Him do what only He can do. Before you go to bed tonight, pick the one thing you've been trying hardest to fix on your own, and instead of making a new plan for it, simply tell God you're handing it to Him.

Prayer: *Father, I'm tired of trying harder and coming up short. I confess that I've been trying to change on my own, in my own strength, and it hasn't worked. Today, I'm not coming to You with a plan. I'm coming to You in surrender. I want to walk by Your Spirit, not by my striving. Teach me what it means to stay connected to You. Where I've been holding on to control, I'm asking You to help me let go. I trust that what You produce in me will be far greater than anything I could manufacture on my own. Do what only You can do in me. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 2 • The War Within

“For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.” **Galatians 5:17**

There is a war going on inside each one of us. If you’ve ever felt like you wanted to do the right thing but couldn’t seem to pull it off, Paul is telling you that’s not weakness. It’s the spiritual war within us. The flesh and the Spirit are pulling in opposite directions, and you’re caught in the middle. This is why it feels so hard. This is why you can genuinely want to change and still find yourself doing the same things.

If you want to win, you don’t fight this war in your own strength. You surrender to the One who has already won. The Spirit of God is more powerful than any habit, any pattern, or anything that’s had a grip on you. When you try to defeat the flesh with willpower, you’re bringing a water gun to a wildfire. But when you submit to the Spirit, you bring the power of God to the fight. That changes everything. Today, name the one habit or pattern you keep fighting with willpower alone, and tell God specifically that you’re handing that fight over to Him.

Prayer: *God, I feel this war inside me. I know what I want to do and I still find myself doing the opposite. I’m asking You to remind me that this isn’t a fight I win with more effort. I surrender the struggle to You. I ask that Your Spirit be stronger in me than the pull of my flesh. Where I’ve been relying on my own willpower, replace it with Your power. I don’t want to keep fighting the same battles alone. Lead me to victory, not through my strength but through Yours. In Jesus’ name, Amen.*

DAY 3 • Let Go of the Wheel

“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**

Most of us are control freaks and we don't even realize it. When we want to change, we immediately start making a plan. We open up the mental project management app and start assigning tasks to ourselves. I'll wake up earlier. I'll be more patient. I'll try harder this week. The desire to change isn't the problem. The problem is we keep trying to manage our own transformation.

Proverbs doesn't say trust the Lord with part of your heart while you handle the rest. It says all your heart. True trust requires total and complete surrender. And here's the hard truth: the area of your life that feels most broken is probably the one you're gripping the tightest. You've been trying to fix it yourself for so long. What if today was the day you finally gave it to God? God can do in a single moment what you've been trying to do for years. Stop leaning on your own understanding. Lean on Him, and watch what He does.

Prayer: *Lord, I confess that I've been trying to drive this thing myself. I keep grabbing the wheel back from You and then wonder why I end up in the same place. Today, I'm choosing to trust You with all of it, not just the parts that feel manageable. I'm releasing control over the area of my life I've been gripping the hardest. I don't understand everything You're doing, but I trust that You do. Make my paths straight, God. I'm moving out of the driver's seat. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 4 • Built in the Hard Moments

"We also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope." **Romans 5:3-4**

Nobody signs up for hard seasons. Nobody asks for the trial, the difficult relationship, or the stretch that pushes you past what you think you can handle. Paul figured out something most of us miss: God isn't allowing those hard moments to break you. He's using them to build you. The Spirit doesn't develop your character in the easy moments. He develops it in the challenging ones.

That thing you're walking through right now, the pressure, the frustration, the situation that has you at the end of yourself, that's not God abandoning you. That might actually be God forming you. Perseverance doesn't get built when everything is going smoothly. It gets built when you choose to trust God in the middle of the hard thing. When perseverance gets built, character follows. Where there is character, there is hope. So instead of asking God to remove the hard thing, ask Him what He's building in you through it.

Prayer: *Father, I'll be honest. I don't always love the hard moments. But I'm asking You today to help me see them the way you do. Not as punishment but as a process. Where I'm tempted to ask You to take this away, help me instead ask what You're building. Produce perseverance in me. Develop my character through this. And when I can't see past the pressure, remind me that on the other side of this there is hope. I trust the process because I trust You. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 5 • You Are Already Being Transformed

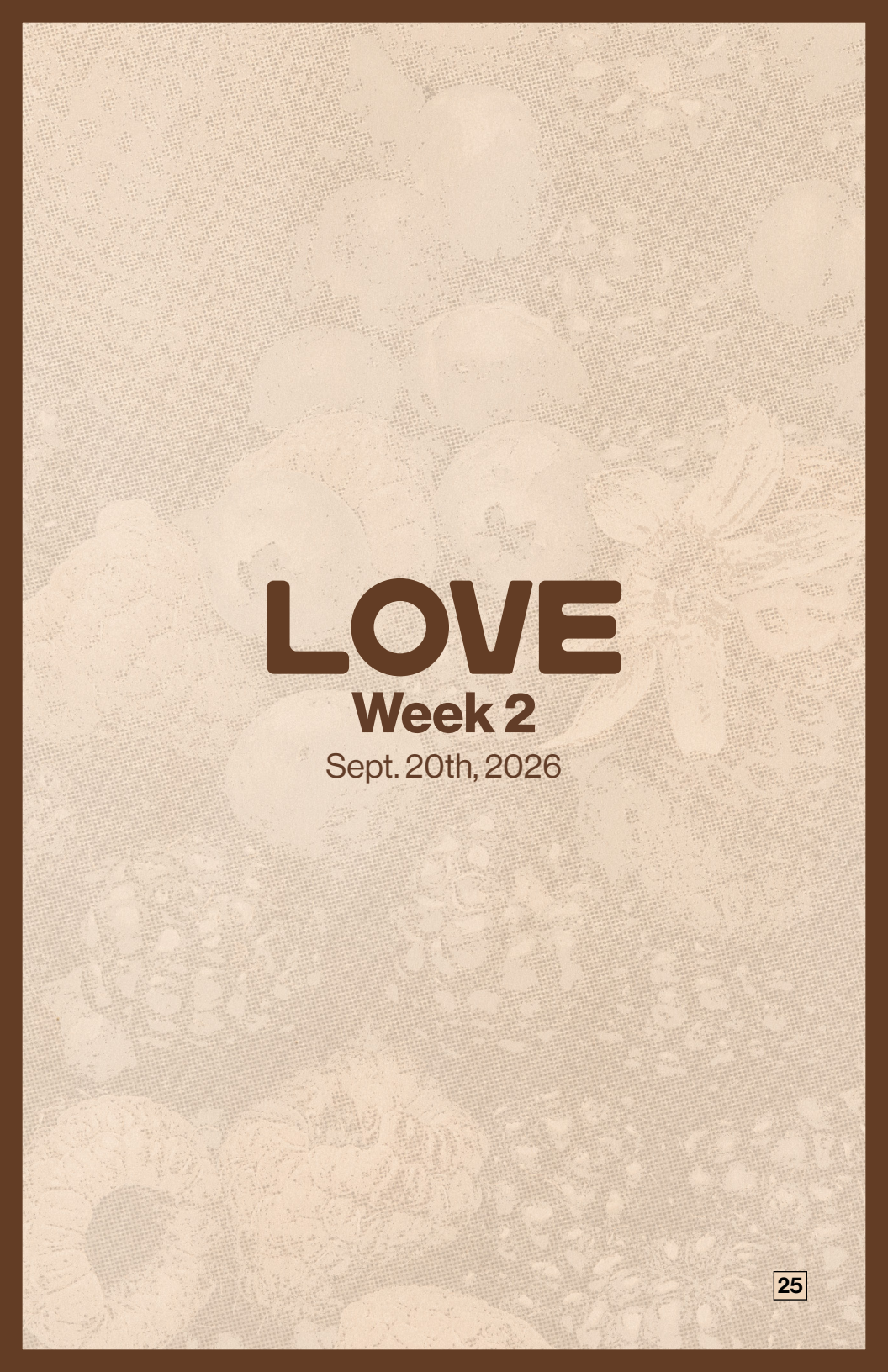
“And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.” **2 Corinthians 3:18**

You are already being transformed. Not because of how hard you’re working. Not because you’ve finally figured it all out. But because the Spirit of God is at work in you right now, transforming you to look more like Jesus. This is the whole point of the Fruit of the Spirit. Not a checklist. Not a performance. The image of Jesus showing up in your actual life.

Paul says you’re being transformed “with ever-increasing glory.” That means it builds. The more you stay connected, the more the fruit grows. The more you surrender, the more He changes you. By the end of this series, if you stay committed to walking by His Spirit, you will not look the same. People around you will notice. So close out this week by writing down the answer to one question: Am I more connected with God today than I was on Monday? Not, “Did I try hard enough?” Not, “Did I check every box?” Just, “Am I walking with Him?” Because that is all He’s asking for.

Prayer: *God, I want to look like Jesus. Not for what it does for my reputation but because You are worth reflecting. Thank You that transformation isn’t dependent on my effort but on Your Spirit. As I close out this week, I recommit to staying connected to You. I don’t want to drift back into striving. I want to keep walking with You. Keep producing in me what I could never produce on my own. I believe You’re not done with me yet, and I’m so grateful for that. In Jesus’ name, Amen.*

[illegible]



LOVE

Week 2

Sept. 20th, 2026

Fruit of the Spirit • Week 2

We don't change by _____ harder.
We change by _____ to the Spirit.

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

The Fruit of the Spirit - the _____ of Christ being made _____ in us as we walk by the _____.

"The character of Christ" - These are not random virtues, they are who _____ is.

"Made visible in us" - Christians should look _____ from the world.

"As we walk by the Spirit" - Change comes from His Spirit, not our _____.

Week 2: Love

Love is the very nature and character of _____.

Galatians 5:13 You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, **serve one another humbly in love.**

1 John 4:8 Whoever does not love does not know God, because **God is love.**

Love is the product of a life _____ to God.

Where there is a _____ of love, there is a lack of _____ with God.

Love (Eros) - _____

Love (Storge) - _____

Love (Philia) - _____

Love (Agape) - _____, seeking the
_____ good of another, no matter what

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates **his own love** for us in this:
While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

John 13:34-35 A new command I give you: **Love one another**. As
I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this **everyone**
will know that you are my disciples, if you **love** one another.

1 Corinthians 13:1 If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels,
but **do not have love**, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging
cymbal.

Love is not shown in what you _____, it's displayed in how
you _____.

How do I love like God?

1. Look at _____

John 8:9-11 At this, those who heard began to go away one at a
time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman
still standing there. Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman,
where are they? Has no one condemned you?" "No one, sir," she
said. "**Then neither do I condemn you**," Jesus declared. "Go now
and leave your life of sin."

Luke 19:5 When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said
to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must **stay at your**
house today."

Mark 1:41-42 He reached out his hand and **touched the man**. “I am willing,” he said. “Be clean!” Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed.

2. _____ like Jesus

Luke 5:16 But Jesus **often withdrew** to lonely places and prayed.

You can't love people _____ when your prayer life is _____.

John 11:41 Then Jesus looked up and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me.”

Luke 23:34 Jesus said, “Father, **forgive them**, for they do not know what they are doing.”

When you _____ like Jesus, you will start to _____ like Jesus.

3. Be _____ Like Jesus

Our love should be marked by _____.

Matthew 14:14 When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, **he had compassion** on them and **healed their sick**.

Romans 5:5 God's love has been poured out into our hearts **through the Holy Spirit**, who has been given to us.

Galatians 5:25-26 If we live by the Spirit, let us also **keep in step with the Spirit**. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Week 2 Homework • Love

☐ Memory Verse

Romans 5:5 And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

Write It Out

☐ Word Study

The Four Greek Words for Love (see next page)

☐ 5-Day Devotional

This week includes a five-day devotional. Set aside 10 minutes each morning. Each day has a Scripture, a short reflection, and a prayer. Let the Spirit take what you heard on Sunday and work it deeper into your week.

☐ Sermon Deep Dive Video

Watch this week's Deep Dive video and take notes on the Sermon Deep Dive notes page.



☐ Radiant Discipleship Group Discussion (on Group Discussion Guide page)

Week 2 Homework • Love

Word Study: The Four Greek Words for Love

Eros ("Ερως) - Romantic Love

Fun fact: the word *eros* does not appear in Scripture! Check out this article to further understand the differences between the four versions of love in Greek:



Write any observations here:

Storge (στοργή) - Familial Love

This exact Greek word does not show up in Scripture either, but is used as a compound word in Romans 12:10. Write the verse out here:

On blueletterbible.org, search "Romans 12:10". Click on the hyperlink for the reference:

TOOLS



Rom 12:10

Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

Week 2 Homework • Love

This will open the interlinear tool where you will see each phrase in English as it correlates to its original Greek word. Click on “G5360” next to “with brotherly love” to see the compound word, and other verses that use that same word. Write any observations below:

Philia (φιλία) - Friendship Love

On blueletterbible.org, search “5373”, the reference number for *philia*. Write out a verse that uses this word.

Taking it a step further, look into the root word *philos* (φίλος). You can find it under the “Root Word (Etymology)” or search by its reference number “5384”. Write down any notes:

Week 2 Homework • Love

Agapē (ἀγάπη) - Unconditional Love

On blueletterbible.org, search *agape* by its reference number, “26”. Choose one verse using this word and write it below.

Tying It All Together

How do you see these words used differently in Scripture?

What are some examples of how you would use each version in life today?

From doing these word studies, how do you better understand love as a fruit of the Spirit?

[illegible]

Discipleship Group Discussion Guide

We toss around the word love in almost any and every situation. “I love pizza.” “I love my kids.” “I love travelling.” But what does love really mean? As we dive into the first fruit of the Spirit, we take a look at the 4 different types of love found in Scripture: *eros* - romantic love, *storgē* - familial love, *philia* - the love of friendship, and *agape* - the unconditional love demonstrated in Christ. We love others the way that God loves us when we look at Jesus, pray like Jesus, and are led like Jesus. The love Jesus displayed is the ultimate example of how we should live as Christians who are filled by the Holy Spirit.

Memory Verse:

Romans 5:5 God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

Discussion Questions

1. What is the difference between the other forms of love (*eros*, *storge*, *philia*) and *agape* love? Why is *agape* only possible through the Holy Spirit?
2. How would you describe the relationship between loving others well and your level of connection with God?
3. In what ways did Jesus love others well? How does His example challenge or encourage you to demonstrate that same love toward others?
4. Why is prayer essential for loving others well? How does prayer help cultivate love for others, especially difficult people?
5. Who might the Holy Spirit be leading you to reach out to that you have been keeping at a distance?



5-DAY DEVOTIONAL

Week 1 • Love

DAY 1 • What Kind of Love Is This?

"God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us." **Romans 5:5**

We use the word love for everything. You love your spouse, and you love a good cup of coffee. You love your kids, and you love that show you just binged. The word is everywhere, and because of that, it has lost most of its weight. So when Paul lists love first in the Fruit of the Spirit, most of us read right past it like we already know what it means.

Here is the problem. The love Paul is talking about is not the love you already know how to give. In the Greek language, there are four different words for love. *Eros* is romantic love. *Storge* is family love. *Philia* is friendship love. You can do all three of those in your own strength because they are all transactional. But the word Paul uses in Galatians 5:22 is *agape*. This word means unconditional love. It is the type of love that seeks the good of another above oneself. Loving someone on their worst day, being the first volunteer, the first to forgive, the first to sacrifice. That kind of love is beyond human ability. You cannot manufacture it, which is exactly why it shows up as a fruit of the Spirit and not a goal you can set for yourself.

Prayer: *God, I realize I have been confusing smaller versions of love with the real thing. I want to love people with agape, the way You love me. I can't produce that on my own. Pour it out in me through Your Spirit, the way Romans 5:5 says You do. I'm asking today to love with a love that is beyond what I am naturally capable of. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 2 • Love Goes First

"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." **Romans 5:8**

The hardest thing about *agape* is that it does not wait for the other person to deserve it. It goes first. If you need to see what that looks like in practice, the best place to look is not a self-help book. It's the life of Jesus.

In John 8, a woman caught in adultery is thrown at Jesus' feet. The crowd is ready to stone her. The religious leaders are watching to see if He will uphold the law. Jesus kneels in the dirt, starts writing on the ground, and one by one the accusers walk away. Then He looks at her and says, "Neither do I condemn you. Go and leave your life of sin." That is not just love and that is not just truth. It is both in the right order. He did not hit her with the truth to put her in her place. He loved her first, and then the truth had somewhere to land. That is what Spirit-produced love does. It goes toward people before they've earned it. It gets close before it corrects. It looks like Jesus, who went to the cross for people who were against Him.

Prayer: *Jesus, I want to love the way You love. Not with condemnation, not with distance, but with love that goes first and then speaks truth. I confess that I often get the order backwards. I lead with correction and never get around to love. Help me today to love people the way You did, first and fully. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 3 • Love Looks Up

"When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, 'Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.'" **Luke 19:5**

Zacchaeus spent his whole life being looked down on. He was short. He was a tax collector, which made him a traitor to his own people. He was the last person anyone in Jericho would have chosen to spend time with. So he climbed a tree just to get a glimpse of Jesus from a distance, because getting close was never something people like him got to do.

Jesus walked right up to that tree and looked up. Everyone else had been looking down on this man his whole life, but Jesus looked up. He called him by name. He invited Himself over for dinner. He did not give Zacchaeus a sermon. He did not hand him a list of things to fix. He just wanted to be with him. And by the end of that meal, Zacchaeus was voluntarily giving back four times what he had stolen.

Love did in one meal what condemnation could not do in a lifetime. That is *agape*. It sees people differently than the world sees them. It moves toward the person everyone else has written off. It changes things no amount of pressure or guilt ever could.

Prayer: *God, give me eyes to see people the way You see them. Not through what they have done or what they have failed at, but through the same love that looked up at Zacchaeus in a tree and called him by name. Help me to move toward the people in my life who feel written off. Let love do what nothing else can. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 4 • Love Gets Close

"He reached out his hand and touched the man. 'I am willing,' he said. 'Be clean!'" **Mark 1:41**

Lepers in Jesus' day were not just sick, they were invisible. They were required by law to live outside the city, to shout "Unclean!" if anyone came within six feet of them, and to keep their distance from every human being around them. They were the most rejected people in all of society. Some of them had not been touched by another person in years.

When Jesus encountered a leper in Mark 1, He did not speak healing from across the field. He could have. He had the power. But He reached out and touched him first, before the miracle. Because that man needed to be touched as much as he needed to be healed. That is *agape* in its purest form. It does not love from a safe distance.

Agape love gets close. It makes contact with the parts of people's lives that make everyone else uncomfortable. Today, identify the one person in your life you have been keeping a safe distance from because their situation makes you uncomfortable, and take one practical step toward them.

Prayer: *Jesus, You touched the untouchable. I want to love like that. I confess that I keep a safe distance from people whose situations make me uncomfortable. Give me the courage to get close. Show me who in my life needs someone to reach out and make contact. Let me be that person for them this week. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 5 • You Can't Love Without Praying

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." **John 13:34-35**

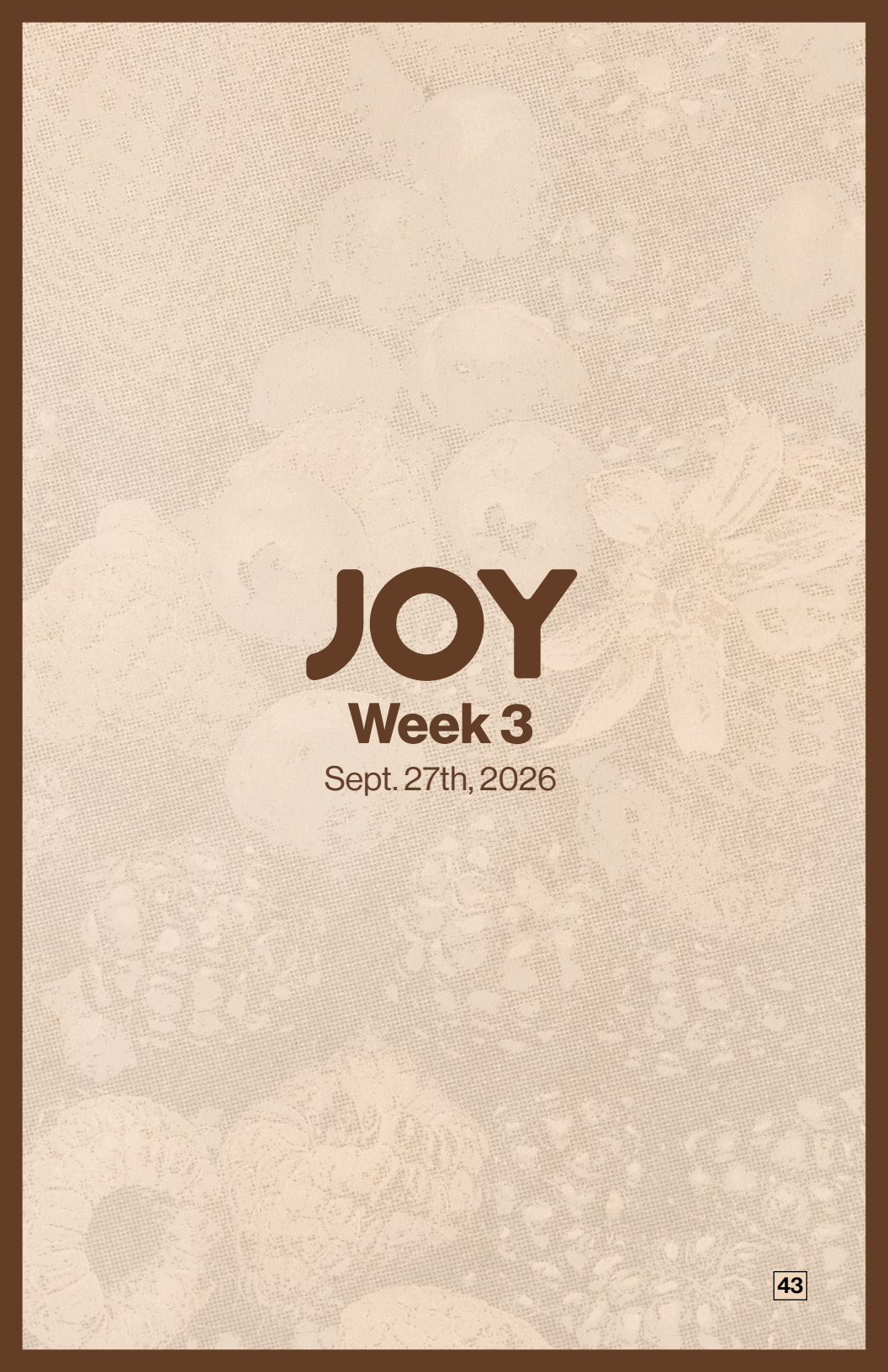
Jesus said this the night before the cross. He could have talked about anything in His final hours with His disciples. He chose love. Not theology, not strategy, and not even courage. Love. Because He knew that everything the church would become and everything the world would see would flow from whether or not His people actually love each other.

Here is the thing Jesus knew that we would forget. You cannot love people well when your prayer life is weak. Jesus loved so consistently, so sacrificially, because He prayed so much. He would withdraw to lonely places. He would stop in the middle of ministry and look up to the Father. He prayed before He fed thousands, prayed over the sick, prayed for the people crucifying Him. Prayer was how He stayed connected to the source of the love He needed to give.

Most of us try to love people on an empty tank. We pour out without going back to the source. So as you close out this week, the most practical thing you can do is pray for the person you are finding hardest to love right now. When you pray for someone, the Spirit deposits something in you that you cannot manufacture on your own.

Prayer: *Father, I want to be known for love. I want the people closest to me to say that I love like Jesus. I know I cannot get there without You. So today I am bringing You the person I am finding hardest to love right now. I am choosing to pray for them. Deposit Your agape in me as I do. Let my love for others be the overflow of my connection to You. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

[illegible]



JOY

Week 3

Sept. 27th, 2026

Fruit of the Spirit • Week 3

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

The Fruit of the Spirit - the _____ of Christ being made _____ in us as we walk by the _____.

We don't change by _____ harder.

We change by _____ to the Spirit.

Week 3: Joy

James 1:2 Consider it **pure joy**, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds.

Romans 5:3-4 Not only that, but **we rejoice in our sufferings**, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 **Rejoice always**, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

1 Peter 1:6 In all this **you greatly rejoice**, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials.

Joy (*chara*) - calm _____

Joy (*chairō*) - _____, **to be** _____

John 15:11 I have told you these things so **my joy may be in you** and your joy may be full.

Joy is not a result of my circumstances, but it is an overflow of my _____ to Christ.

Experiencing Joy:

1. Joy comes from _____

Luke 10:21 At that time Jesus, **full of joy** through the Holy Spirit, said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth..."

Happiness is based on _____ but joy is based on _____.

Psalms 16:11 You make known to me the path of life; you will **fill me with joy in your presence**, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

2. Joy brings us _____

Philippians 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: **Rejoice!**

Nehemiah 8:10 Do not grieve, for **the joy** of the LORD is your **strength**.

With God's joy as your strength, the trials won't _____ you; they will _____ you.

3. Joy is a _____

Hebrews 12:2 For **the joy set before him** he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

One of the worst advertisements for Christ is a _____ Christian.

Psalms 51:12 Restore to me **the joy of your salvation** and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

[illegible]

Week 3 Homework • Joy

☐ Memory Verse

Philippians 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again:
Rejoice!

Write It Out

☐ Word Study

Look up the Greek words on blueletterbible.org. Use the reference number in the search bar. Pick a verse and write it out on the lines provided.

Chara (χαρά) - Reference number "5479"

Chairó (χαίρω) - Reference number "5463"

Week 3 Homework • Joy

5-Day Devotional

This week includes a five-day devotional. Set aside 10 minutes each morning. Each day has a Scripture, a short reflection, and a prayer. Let the Spirit take what you heard on Sunday and work it deeper into your week.

 Sermon Deep Dive Video

Watch this week's Deep Dive video and take notes on the Sermon Deep Dive notes page.



☐ Discipleship Group Discussion

(on Group Discussion Guide page)

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Discipleship Group Discussion Guide

Can you honestly say you have joy in all circumstances... even in suffering? Joy is a recurring word throughout the New Testament. Peter talks about joy in the context of suffering, Paul writes about joy from prison, Jesus taught us that we should have full joy. But what happens when an unexpected bill shows up, or you get a bad health report, or you get stuck in bumper-to-bumper traffic? This sermon challenged us that our joy is not found in favorable circumstances, but is a deeply rooted, unchanging overflow of a relationship with Jesus. As Christians, joy should be a source of strength, a decision we make regardless of the situation we are facing, and a reflection of the Holy Spirit at work in our lives.

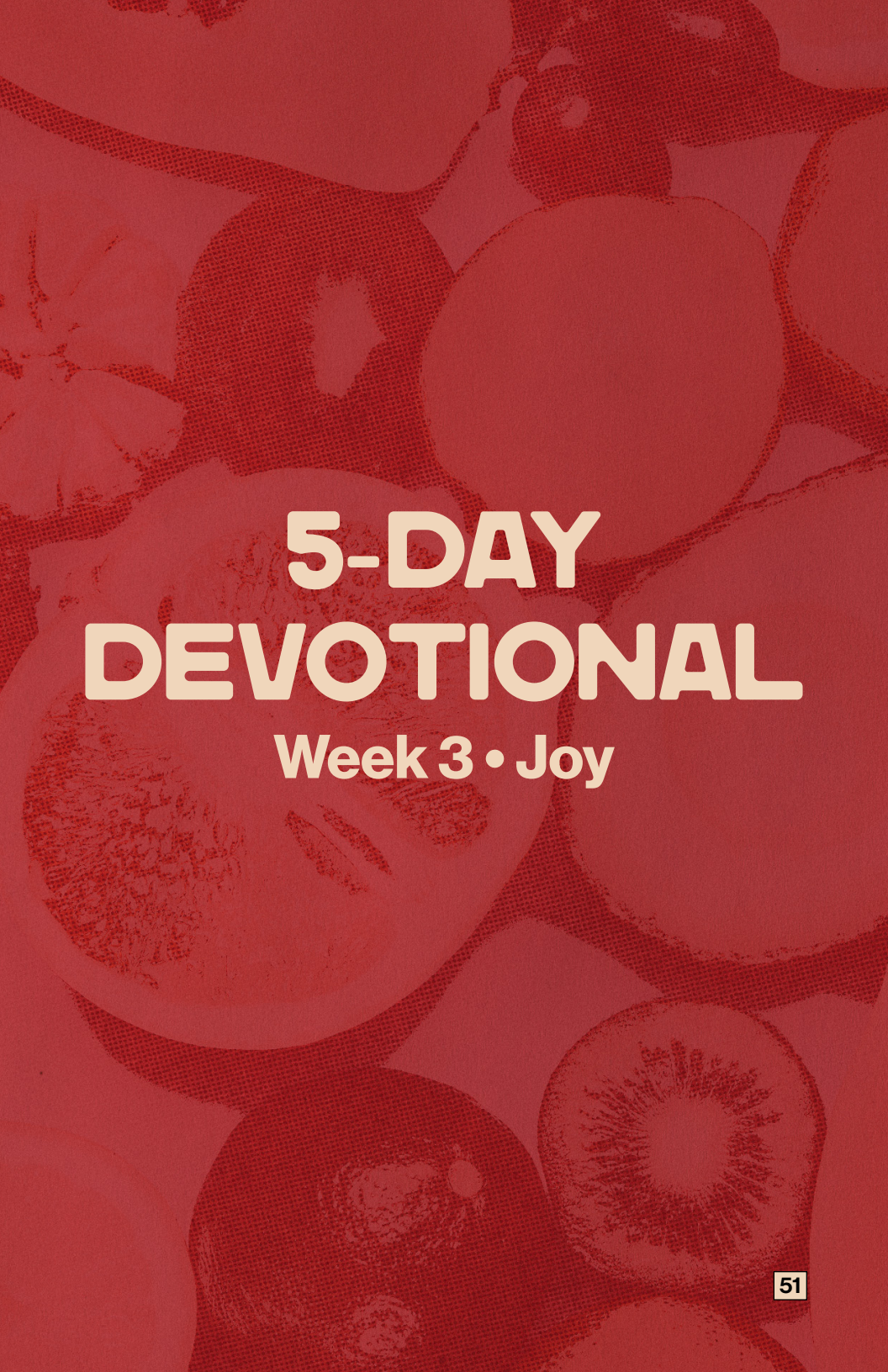
Memory Verse:

Philippians 4:4

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!

Discussion Questions

1. How would you distinguish happiness from joy? What does true joy look like?
2. Have you ever experienced joy during a difficult season? What helped anchor you in Christ during that time?
3. What does “the joy of the Lord is your strength” mean to you? How do you allow trials to build you?
4. In Hebrews 12:2, we see Jesus choosing joy in a situation that was incredibly painful and difficult. What does His example teach us about choosing joy in suffering, and how can we reflect that in our own lives?
5. What is an area where you feel called to “choose joy” this week?



5-DAY DEVOTIONAL

Week 3 • Joy

DAY 1 • More Than Happy

"I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete." **John 15:11**

Most of us have been chasing the wrong thing. We've been chasing happiness when God has been offering joy, and they are not the same thing. Happiness is based on what is happening. Good day, good mood. Bad news, bad mood. It changes with every circumstance.

Joy is something entirely different. The Greek word is *chara*, and it means a calm delight that is not at the mercy of your circumstances. It is not a feeling you work up. It is something Jesus deposits in you. Look at what Jesus says in John 15. He doesn't say, "I want you to feel better." He doesn't say, "Just think more positively." He says, "My joy may be in you." The very same *chara*, the joy that filled Christ Himself, is the joy He wants to place in you. The most joyful Person who ever lived wants His joy to be fully alive in you. That is not a small deal. This joy doesn't start with better circumstances but with a deeper connection to Him.

Prayer: *Jesus, I want the real thing. Not the happiness that comes and goes with my circumstances but the joy that only comes from You. I confess that I have been measuring my emotional state by what is happening around me instead of Who is living in me. Fill me with Your chara. Let it be so complete in me that people around me start noticing. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 2 • Joy From a Prison Cell

"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!"

Philippians 4:4

Here is what makes this verse remarkable. Paul did not write it from a beach house. He did not write it during a strong season when everything was going right, the ministry was growing, and the crowds were big. He wrote it chained to a Roman guard in a dark prison cell, waiting to find out if he was going to be executed for the gospel. And he wrote about joy 16 times in that one letter.

That is not positive thinking or mustering up positive vibes. Paul found a joy that his circumstances had no power over, because it was not coming from his circumstances. It was coming from Christ. Notice he does not suggest rejoicing. He commands it. Rejoice in the Lord always. Not when things are good. Not when you feel like it. Always. That word "always" includes the hard seasons, the uncertain seasons, and the seasons where you have every reason not to. The reason Paul could obey that command from a prison cell is the same reason you can obey it in whatever you are walking through right now. Joy is not found in the situation. Joy is found in the Lord.

Prayer: *God, I want the kind of joy Paul had. The kind that does not need good circumstances to survive. I am tired of my joy being held hostage by things I cannot control. Today, I am choosing to rejoice in You, not in my situation. Anchor my joy in something that cannot be moved. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 3 • Your Strength Is in Here

"Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength."

Nehemiah 8:10

The people Nehemiah was speaking to had every reason to grieve. They had been living in exile. The walls of Jerusalem were rubble. Their city was broken and so were they. And in that moment, Nehemiah says something that sounds almost too simple: "the joy of the Lord is your strength." Not pull yourself together. Not try harder. The joy of the Lord is your strength.

Here is what that means practically. When you are running on empty, when the pressure is too heavy, and you do not know how you are going to keep going, joy is not a luxury. It is the fuel you need. It is the thing that keeps you standing when everything in you wants to sit down and quit. Paul knew this from his prison cell. The disciples knew this when they were being persecuted. Nehemiah knew this when the walls were destroyed. Every person in Scripture who went through something hard and came out on the other side did so because their strength was coming from a source that the hard seasons could not touch. That source is still available to you today. The joy of the Lord has not changed, and it is strong enough to carry you through whatever you are facing right now.

Prayer: *Father, I need strength, and I have been looking for it in the wrong places. I have been trying to push through on my own, and I am tired. Today, I am asking You to restore my joy. Not because everything is fine but because You are good and You are in this with me. Be my strength today. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 4 • Choose Joy

"For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Hebrews 12:2

Joy is a decision. And the clearest proof of that is what Jesus did the night before the cross. He was in Gethsemane sweating drops of blood, fully aware of what was coming, asking the Father if there was another way. Yet He chose to go through with it. Not because it was easy, but because He could see past the pain to the purpose on the other side. He saw the resurrection. He saw you. The joy of what was coming gave Him the strength to endure what was in front of Him.

If joy were just a feeling, Jesus could not have chosen it in that garden. Feelings do not work that way. But joy is not a feeling. It is a perspective. It is the ability to see past the present moment to what God is doing on the other side of it. And when you can see that, it does not eliminate the pain but it gives you the strength to stay in it. So today, name the one thing you are enduring right now that feels the heaviest, and ask God specifically to give you the vision to see past it. Not to ignore it. Not to pretend it does not hurt. But to see what He is building on the other side. That vision is exactly what kept Jesus on the cross. And it will keep you going too.

Prayer: *Jesus, You chose joy in the hardest moment in human history. Help me to see past what I am in the middle of right now to what You are doing on the other side of it. Give me the perspective that produces the kind of endurance I cannot manufacture on my own. I trust that what You are building is worth it. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 5 • Restore It

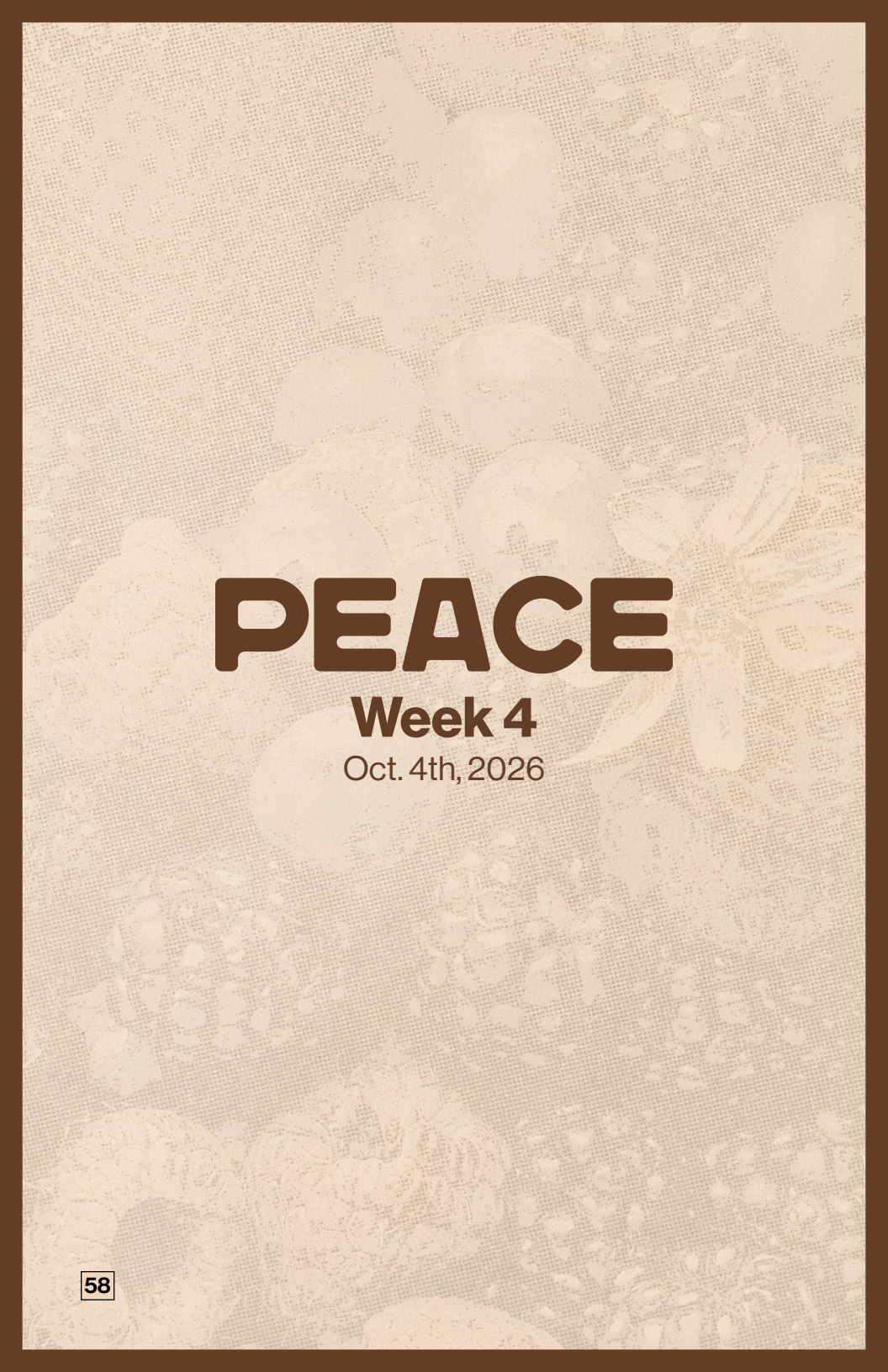
"Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me." **Psalms 51:12**

David did not pray for his reputation to be restored. He did not pray for his marriage or his throne or his legacy. He prayed for his joy. That tells you everything about what David understood. He knew that if the joy came back, everything else would follow. Joy is not the icing on the cake. It is the substance that makes this life operate the way God has intended it to operate.

Maybe you came into this week already knowing that your joy is gone. Not because anything dramatic happened, but because somewhere along the way it quietly disappeared. The faith is still there. But the joy is not. You are doing the right things from a dry place, and you cannot remember the last time following Jesus felt like anything other than obligation. If that is you, David's prayer is your prayer today. Not God fix my circumstances. Not God change this person. But restore to me the joy of Your salvation. Take me back to what it felt like when I first said yes. That prayer is an invitation for the Spirit to do something only He can do, and He will answer it.

Prayer: *God, I want joy. The joy of salvation that brings true life. I am not asking You to change my circumstances. I am asking You to restore something in me. Restore the joy of Your salvation. Remind me of what it cost You and what it means for me. Let your joy be the thing that gives me strength in all circumstances. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

[illegible]



PEACE

Week 4

Oct. 4th, 2026

Fruit of the Spirit • Week 4

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

The Fruit of the Spirit - the character of Christ being made visible in us as we walk by the Spirit.

Week 4: **Peace**

Peace (*Eirēnē*) - tranquility, security, _____

Hebrew: Peace (*Shalom*) - _____, prosperity,
_____ missing, _____ broken

Judges 6:24 So Gideon built an altar to the Lord there and called it **The Lord Is Peace...** (*Jehovah Shalom*).

Isaiah 9:6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, **Prince of Peace.**

John 14:27 **Peace** I leave with you; **my peace I give you.** I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

Peace doesn't come from what's happening _____ you;
it comes from the Spirit at work _____ you.

Peace is not the _____ of the storm.
Peace is the _____ of God in it.

Because of Jesus, I have:

1. Peace _____ God (_____)

Romans 5:1 Therefore, since we have been **justified through faith**, we have **peace with God** through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 53:5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; **the punishment that brought us peace was on him**, and by his wounds we are healed.

2 Peter 1:2 Grace and **peace be yours** in abundance through **the knowledge of God** and of **Jesus our Lord**.

2. Peace _____ God (_____)

Romans 15:13 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.

The _____ of peace you experience in life is determined by how much you _____ in God.

Isaiah 26:3 You will keep in **perfect peace** those whose minds are steadfast, because **they trust in you**.

3. Peace _____ God (_____)

Philippians 4:6-7 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And **the peace of God**, which transcends all understanding, **will guard your hearts** and **your minds in Christ Jesus**.

Once the peace of God is within me, it is my responsibility to _____ the peace of God _____ me.

Isaiah 32:17-18 The fruit of that **righteousness will be peace**; its effect will be quietness and confidence forever. **My people will live in peaceful dwelling places**, in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest.

Peace is _____ responsibility.

Romans 12:18 If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, **live at peace with everyone**.

Matthew 5:9 Blessed are the **peacemakers**, for they will be called children of God.

“When peace, like a river, attendeth my way. When sorrows like sea billows roll. Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say. It is well, it is well, with my soul.”
- *Horatio Spafford*

[illegible]

Week 4 Homework • Peace

☐ Memory Verse

Isaiah 26:3 You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you.

Write It Out

☐ Word Study

Peace (see bottom of page)

☐ 5-Day Devotional

This week includes a five-day devotional. Set aside 10 minutes each morning. Each day has a Scripture, a short reflection, and a prayer. Let the Spirit take what you heard on Sunday and work it deeper into your week.

☐ Sermon Deep Dive Video

Watch this week's Deep Dive video and take notes on the sermon Deep Dive notes page.



☐ Discipleship Group Discussion

(on Group Discussion Guide page)

Word Study: Peace

On blueletterbible.org, search for the verse “Galatians 5:22” in the search bar. Click the hyperlinked reference next to the verse, as shown below:

TOOLS

 [Gal 5:22](#)

¶ But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

Week 4 Homework • Peace

Scroll down until you see the word “peace” and click on the reference number: G1515 to look up the original Greek word *eirēnē* (εἰρήνη).

Write down the definition of this word below:

Look through the verses listed as using this particular word. As you scroll, you will notice other words that have this same reference number (G1515), such as in Acts 7:26 - the word *eirēnē* is translated to “one again”. Acts 9:31 uses this same word (G1515) in another way. Write down what other words *eirēnē* has been translated to below:

Pick one verse that highlights peace as a characteristic of God's nature and write it below:

What did you learn? Write any observations you discovered as you studied this word:

[illegible]

Discipleship Group Discussion Guide

Anxiety is at an all-time high in the world around us. In Christ, we have access to a deeper peace and true freedom that the world so desperately longs for. Peace isn't found in healthier habits, medicine, or a slower schedule, as helpful as those things may be. Peace is a person: Jesus. In Him we find security, wholeness, and prosperity. In this sermon, we learned that because of Jesus, we have peace with God, peace in God, and the peace of God. As we walk in our salvation, trust God fully, and carry the responsibility of bringing peace into every area of our life, we create space for the Holy Spirit to produce the fruit of peace within us.

Memory Verse:

Isaiah 26:3 You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you.

Discussion Questions

1. Peace is not the absence of the storm, it's the presence of God in it. How have you experienced Spirit-filled peace in the middle of a difficult, uncertain, or painful situation?
2. Our peace was paid for. How does our understanding of salvation impact our ability to have peace in all circumstances?
3. Read Isaiah 26:3. What is the relationship between trust in God and perfect peace? What are some obstacles you face when it comes to trusting God?
4. Peace is our responsibility. In what way can you allow the Holy Spirit to work through your life to cultivate peace this week?



5-DAY DEVOTIONAL

Week 4 • Peace

DAY 1 • The War Is Over

"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." **Romans 5:1**

Most of us are still fighting a war that has already been won. We carry anxiety like soldiers who never got the news that the battle ended. We stay tense, stay guarded, and stay braced for the next hit, because no one told us we could put the weapons down. This is exactly what the Gospel is telling you. The war is over, Jesus won, and the peace that came out of that victory is not something you have to earn, maintain, or hold together with good behavior and enough prayer. It is a gift that was given at the cross.

The Greek word for peace is *eirene*, and it originally meant the absence of war. The treaty has been signed. The fighting has stopped. What Paul says in Romans 5 is staggering. We have peace with God. Not we are working toward it. Not we have it on the good days. We have it. It is settled and done. The most important relationship in the universe is not in conflict anymore because of what Jesus did. This means there is no need to carry anxiety about your eternity. If your faith has been placed in Christ, the battle has been won. You are not at war. You are at peace with God, and that is good news! Here is my encouragement for you, name out one thing you have been carrying anxiety about as if the war were still going, and tell yourself the truth: the war is over.

Prayer: *Father, I confess that I live like the war is still going. I stay tense, anxious, and braced for the worst. I forget that You already won. Today, I want to live from the peace I already have, not toward a peace I am trying to earn. Help me rest in what Jesus accomplished. The war is over. Let me live like it. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 2 • Nothing Missing, Nothing Broken

"The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace." **Numbers 6:24-26**

The Hebrew word for peace is *shalom*, and it is one of the richest words in the entire Bible. It does not just mean the absence of conflict. It means wholeness. Completeness. Nothing missing. Nothing broken. True wellbeing in every dimension of your life. Your soul, your body, your relationships, and your sense of purpose. All of it whole. All of it working the way God designed it to work. That is what He is offering when He offers you peace.

Think about what you are actually longing for when you feel most restless. It is not just for the stress to go away. It is for things to be right. For your marriage to be whole, your mind to be settled, and your purpose to be clear. For the gap between who you are and who you want to be to close. That longing in your soul is true *shalom*, and the reason you feel it so deeply is because God put it there. He wired you for wholeness, because He is wholeness. You cannot manufacture *shalom* with better habits or a tidier life or a new situation. It only comes from the God who is called *Jehovah Shalom*, the Lord is peace, and who wants to be that for every part of you.

Prayer: *God, I desire shalom. Not just the absence of stress but the presence of wholeness. Nothing missing, nothing broken. I bring You every part of my life that feels incomplete right now. My relationships, my mind, and my sense of direction. You are Jehovah Shalom. Be that for me today. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 3 • Peace Is a Person

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." **John 16:33**

Jesus does not promise you a life without trouble. He promises you peace in the midst of trouble. That is a completely different offer than what most of us were expecting when we said yes to following Him. We thought peace meant things would get easier. Jesus said no, the trouble is still coming. But in Him you can have peace that makes no sense despite what you are dealing with.

That is exactly what set Jesus apart. He was never rushed. Never panicked. Never reactive. He was traveling with no money, being hunted by religious leaders, surrounded by needy people, yet walking toward a cross He knew what was coming. And He was the most peaceful person in every room He walked into. Not because His circumstances were calm, but because He was anchored to something that circumstances could not shake. He knew who He was. He knew who His Father was. And He knew the story did not end with defeat. It ends with victory. That same anchor is available to you today. The world will give you trouble. Jesus has already overcome it.

Prayer: *Jesus, You told me the trouble was coming and You told me not to be surprised by it. I confess I am still surprised every time. Today, I want to be anchored the way You were anchored. Not in my circumstances but in You. You have overcome this world. Help me live like someone who believes that. Let Your peace be bigger than whatever I am facing today. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 4 • Guard Your Mind

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." **Philippians 4:6-7**

Paul does not say do not feel anxious. He says do not be anxious, which means there is a choice involved. Anxiety wants to move in and set up permanent residence. Paul gives us an answer to anxiety: prayer. Not just the big things but in every situation. The thing you are spiraling about at 2 am, pray. The meeting you are dreading, pray. The relationship you cannot figure out, pray. Bring all of it to God, with thanksgiving, which is the hardest part. Thanksgiving forces you to remember what is already true even when everything feels uncertain.

And look at the result: the peace of God. Not a peace you manufactured. Not a calm you talked yourself into. The peace of God Himself will guard your heart and your mind. That word guard is a military word. It means stationed at the gate, keeping out what does not belong. The peace of God stands at the door of your mind and says anxiety does not live here anymore. That is not something you can do for yourself. It is what happens when you stay in consistent conversation with God. Prayer is not your last resort. It is your first line of defense. Before you go any further, write down the things you are currently carrying and have not actually handed over, and pray through each one by name.

Prayer: *Father, I have been carrying things I was supposed to bring to You. Today, I am handing them over. Every worry, every stress, every thing I have been trying to figure out on my own. I present it all to You with thanksgiving, because even in the uncertainty I know You are good. Stand guard over my mind. Let Your peace replace the anxiety that has been living there. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 5 • Peace in the Middle of the Storm

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." **Isaiah 9:6**

Isaiah wrote this prophecy 700 years before Jesus was born. Out of every name he could have chosen to describe the coming Messiah, one of them was Prince of Peace. Peace is not a technique. It is not a mindset. It is not something you achieve through the right morning routine or stress management. Peace is a Person, and His name is Jesus.

This matters because it means you cannot separate the peace from the source of it. You can implement every tip, follow every strategy, and still feel the anxiety creeping back in, because you were trying to get the fruit without staying connected to the vine. Jesus did not come to give you peace as a gift you could take home and use on your own. He came to be your peace. This means the way to more peace in your life is not a better system. It is a closer relationship with Him. The more of Jesus you have, the more peace you have.

Prayer: *Jesus, You told me the trouble was coming and You told me not to be surprised by it. I confess I am still surprised every time. Today, I want to be anchored the way You were anchored. Not in my circumstances but in You. You have overcome this world. Help me live like someone who believes that. Let Your peace be bigger than whatever I am facing today. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

[illegible]

PATIENCE

Week 5

Oct. 11th, 2026

Fruit of the Spirit • Week 5

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

The Fruit of the Spirit - the character of Christ being made visible in us as we walk by the Spirit.

Week 5: **Patience**

Patience (*Makrothumia*) - _____, slow to anger

Exodus 34:6 The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, **slow to anger**, abounding in love and faithfulness.

Luke 23:34 Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."

Patience isn't what you _____ while you wait.
Patience is who you _____ while you wait.

Developing Patience:

1. See _____ as patient

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead **he is patient with you**, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

God _____ everything, yet _____ endlessly.

2. Practice patience with the _____ things

James 1:19 Everyone should be **quick to listen, slow** to speak and **slow** to become angry.

Patience is formed when we _____ and _____.

Proverbs 14:29 Whoever is **patient has great understanding**, but one who is quick-tempered displays folly.

3. _____ for people

If you _____ patience for someone, _____ for them.

Prayer not only _____ the person you are praying for; prayer changes _____.

God, I pray for _____.

Give me patience to love them the way you love them. Give me a long fuse and an overflow of grace. Develop patience in me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Isaiah 40:31 ...they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

[illegible]

Week 5 Homework • Patience

☐ Memory Verse

James 1:19 Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.

Write It Out

☐ Practicing Patience in the Little Things

What are 2-3 areas you can practice patience in this week?

Example: be slow to respond.

Write them below:

1.

2.

3.

What are you going to do to grow in each of these areas?

Example: mark messages unread and come back to them later.

Make a commitment and write it down:

1.

2.

3.

Week 5 Homework • Patience

☐ 5-Day Devotional

This week includes a five-day devotional. Set aside 10 minutes each morning. Each day has a Scripture, a short reflection, and a prayer. Let the Spirit take what you heard on Sunday and work it deeper into your week.

☐ Sermon Deep Dive Video

Watch this week's Deep Dive video and take notes on the Sermon Deep Dive notes page.



☐ Discipleship Group Discussion

(on Group Discussion Guide page)

Week 5 Deep Dive Notes

[illegible]

Discipleship Group Discussion Guide

Patience is a countercultural virtue. The world around us is constantly pushing for greater speed, efficiency, and instant results. Yet patience requires endurance, maturity, and strong character; and ultimately, it requires the work of the Holy Spirit. God is incredibly patient with us. We have the ability to reflect Christ more fully if we embrace His long-suffering nature and choose to be slow to anger.

One of the keys to growing in patience is prayer. Before you react, pause and pray. When someone tests your patience, pray for them rather than becoming frustrated with them. Many of us wish God would simply give us more patience when we ask for it. More often, however, He gives us opportunities to develop it.

Memory Verse:

James 1:19 Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.

Discussion Questions

1. Would you say that you have a long fuse or a short fuse? Why? What situations or areas of your life present the most opportunities for you to grow in patience?
2. Where is your impatience actually a trust issue, a sign you don't fully believe God's timing is good?
3. As you consider God's patience towards you, what stands out the most?
4. What "little things" can you practice patience with this week?
5. Prayer not only changes the person you are praying for; prayer changes you. How have you experienced this in your own life?



5-DAY DEVOTIONAL

Week 5 • Patience

DAY 1 • The Long Fuse

"The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness." **Exodus 34:6**

Our God thrives in patience. He is slow to anger, and always abounding in love. That is why Paul places patience as part of the fruit of the Spirit. He chose a unique word for patience, *makrothumia*, two Greek words put together. *Makros* meaning long. *Thumos* meaning anger. Literally: long anger. A long fuse. Slow to get hot. What's interesting is that this particular word isn't really about patience with circumstances. It's about patience with people. Our patience is tested the most with people around us.

Who bothers you? The coworker who annoys you. The kid who won't listen for the third time. The spouse who keeps doing that same thing. The friend who is stuck in the same pattern. That's where *makrothumia* is actually needed. Here's the problem with the flesh: it doesn't grow a longer fuse over time. It grows a shorter one. Stress shortens it. Sleep loss shortens it. Social media shortens it. Only the Spirit lengthens it. That is exactly why patience shows up in the Fruit of the Spirit and not in any self-help list. You cannot manufacture this. But the Spirit can produce it in you as you stay connected to Him.

Take a moment and name the one person who tests your patience the most right now and write down their name. Before you interact with them, pray for them by name and ask God to lengthen your fuse before that conversation even starts.

Prayer: *God, I'll be honest. My fuse has been short. I've been reacting instead of responding and it's damaging the relationships that matter most to me. Today, I'm asking You to begin growing something in me that I cannot grow on my own. Produce true patience in me through the power of your Spirit, not my own effort. Teach me what it looks like to be slow to anger with the people in my life. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 2 • The Ultimate Display of Patience

"Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.'" **Luke 23:34**

If you want to know what patience actually looks like, don't look at a self-help book. Look at the cross. Jesus had every right to call down legions of angels. He had the power. He had the capacity. The people mocking Him were the same people He had healed, fed, and pursued for years. Instead of responding the way we would have, He prayed for them. While they were killing Him, he prayed and forgave them.

Think about the three years leading up to the cross. Jesus chose twelve guys, and not one of them was easy. Peter kept putting his foot in his mouth. Thomas doubted after Jesus told him three times what was going to happen. James and John were fighting over the best seat in the kingdom. Judas was deceptive. Jesus knew all of it, and yet loved them anyway. If Jesus had a short fuse, none of us would have been saved. His patience is the reason the Gospel exists. And that same Jesus, the most patient person to ever walk the earth, lives in you through His Spirit. His patience is not just something to admire. It is something He wants to reproduce in you.

Prayer: *Jesus, when I look at the cross, I realize what real patience looks like. You endured what I never could, for people who didn't deserve it, and You did it with love. I want to look more like that. I know I can't get there on my own, but I believe Your Spirit can grow that in me. Take my short fuse and replace it with something that looks like You. In Jesus' name, Amen*

DAY 3 • God Is Patient with Us

"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance." **2 Peter 3:9**

Before you can extend patience to anyone else, you must recognize how God has been patient with you. God sees everything. He sees every sin, every time you said you would do better and didn't, every moment you chose yourself over Him, every relationship you damaged with impatience, and every promise you made and broke. He sees the full picture. And yet, He is still patient with you.

His patience is not passive. It is not God sitting back and tolerating you. It is the most powerful person in the universe actively choosing to hold back what He has every right to release, because He loves you. He wants you. He is keeping the door open as long as possible, because He doesn't want to lose a single one. When you understand God is patient, it changes everything. You realize you are not the patient one in this relationship. He is. This means the patience you're trying to extend to the people who frustrate you is nothing but borrowed patience from a God who has already been pouring it out on you for years. You can't give what you haven't received.

Prayer: *Father, thank You for not giving up on me. Thank You for being patient with me even when I haven't been patient with others. As I focus on Your character, let that change how I treat the people around me. What You've extended to me, help me extend to them. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 4 • Pause

"Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry." **James 1:19**

Here is what actually happens in an impatient moment. Something triggers you. A tone. A slow driver. A kid who won't listen. A text that hits wrong. And between that trigger and your response, there is a pause. A fraction of a second. That pause is where patience is developed. The problem is most of us have never been taught to do anything with it, so the reaction just fires before we even know what happened.

James tells us exactly how to use it. Quick to listen. Slow to speak. Slow to anger. That is the opposite of how most of us are wired. We are quick to speak, quick to get angry, and we barely listen to begin with. But when you flip that order, that is where relationships begin to thrive. The Spirit fills that pause with power. God brings in His wisdom with a question: Is this worth it? Is this person hurting? Is this actually that serious? And nine times out of ten, in that moment, the Spirit will tell you this is not the hill to die on.

Patience doesn't mean you never respond. It means you stop letting the worst moment define your response. Start practicing in the small things today. When you are waiting for the microwave, pause. When you are stuck in traffic, pause. When you want to send that text, pause. The Spirit is building something in you in those 30 seconds when you pause and pray.

Prayer: *God, I want to stop reacting and start responding. I want to use that gap between the trigger and my response to actually listen for Your voice. Help me be quick to listen and slow to speak today. In the moments where I feel myself about to blow, remind me to pause. Fill that gap with Your Spirit. I don't want my impatience to keep pushing away the people I love most. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 5 • Your Wait Is Not Wasted

"The testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything." **James 1:3-4**

Everyone who did something significant in Scripture had to wait. David was anointed king at age 15. He didn't wear the crown until he was 30. Joseph had a dream at age 17. He didn't see it fulfilled until he was 30. Abraham was promised a son at age 75. He didn't hold that boy until he was 100. Every single one of them had to become someone in the waiting before they could receive what the promise required of them. Your delay is not a denial.

The thing you are waiting on right now, the prayer that hasn't been answered, the door that hasn't opened, the relationship that hasn't healed, the breakthrough that isn't coming, that is not God forgetting you. That is God forming you. Patience isn't what you do while you wait. It is who you become while you wait. The people who changed the world weren't the ones who rushed past the process. They were the ones who let the process do its full work. The person you are becoming in this season is exactly the person you will need to be when the answer finally arrives.

Today, take out a notecard or open a note on your phone, and write down what you believe God is building in you during this season of waiting.

Prayer: *Father, I confess that waiting has not felt like worship. It has felt frustrating. But I'm choosing to trust that my wait is not wasted. You are doing something in me right now that cannot be rushed. Produce perseverance in me. Grow patience in me through this season, not around it. I trust that what You're building in me is worth the process. I trust that You are worth waiting on. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

[illegible]

KINDNESS

Week 6

Oct. 18th, 2026

Fruit of the Spirit • Week 6

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

The Fruit of the Spirit - the character of Christ being made visible in us as we walk by the Spirit.

Week 6: Kindness

Kindness (*Chrestotes*) - _____, softens the _____ edges

"The grace that pervades the whole nature, mellowing all that would be harsh and austere."
- *Trench*

Matthew 11:30 For my yoke is **easy** and my burden is **light**.

Hebrew: Kindness (_____) - lovingkindness

Psalms 136:1 Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. His **love endures** forever.

Romans 2:4 Or do you show contempt for **the riches of his kindness**, forbearance and patience, not realizing that **God's kindness** is intended to lead you to repentance?

Kindness is the _____ expression of God's love.

The _____ kindness that drew you to Christ is the kindness the Spirit grows in you to _____ others to Him.

Becoming a Kind Christian:

1. _____ **God's Kindness**

You can't _____ kindness that you haven't first _____.

Titus 3:4-5 But when **the kindness and love of God** our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. **He saved us** through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

2. _____ God's Kindness

Galatians 6:10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us **do good to all people**, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

Practical ways to be kind:

- Be fully present in conversations
- Put the phone down
- Say thank you
- Notice people
- Ask how people are
- Look for ways to bless someone
- Don't say you'll pray for them, pray for them right then
- Slow down enough to see people around you
- Eat dinner as a family and ask how everyone's day was
- Ask follow up questions to your spouse/boss

Kindness should be a central part of the _____ strategy of the church.

3. _____ Watered-Down Kindness

Truth without kindness _____.

Kindness without truth _____.

Ephesians 4:15 Instead, **speaking the truth in love**, we will grow to become in every respect **the mature body of him** who is the head, that is, Christ.

Week 6 Notes

[illegible]

Week 6 Homework • Kindness

☐ Memory Verse

Romans 2:4 Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?

Write It Out

☐ Word Study

Hesed (חֶסֶד); reference number: H2617

Search the reference number on blueletterbible.org and write out the definition of hesed in your own words below:

Choose a verse using hesed that stands out to you and write it out below:

Week 6 Homework • Kindness

☐ 5-Day Devotional

This week includes a five-day devotional. Set aside 10 minutes each morning. Each day has a Scripture, a short reflection, and a prayer. Let the Spirit take what you heard on Sunday and work it deeper into your week.

☐ Sermon Deep Dive Video

Watch this week's Deep Dive video and take notes on the Sermon Deep Dive notes page.



☐ Discipleship Group Discussion

(on Group Discussion Guide page)

[illegible]

Discipleship Group Discussion Guide

Jesus demonstrated kindness all throughout His ministry, seen in the Gospels. We see His kindness towards the woman at the well, lepers, tax collectors, and countless others whom society rejected. It is the kindness of the Lord that draws us toward Him. There are many ways we can demonstrate the kindness of God to the people around us. In fact, kindness is the most effective strategy for evangelism. But remember, kindness without truth coddles people; and truth without kindness crushes them. As we demonstrate kindness, may we do so full of grace and truth.

Memory Verse:

Romans 2:4 Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?

Discussion Questions

1. What is the difference between being nice and kind? Why is reliance on the Holy Spirit a non-negotiable when it comes to kindness?
2. You can't give kindness that you haven't first received. How have you experienced the kindness of God in your own life?
3. Why is kindness what draws people to God? Share stories of how Christians being kind have impacted people's lives.
4. How do you actively represent Christ with both grace and truth?
5. What are some things you can do this week to be kind to others?



5-DAY DEVOTIONAL

Week 6 • Kindness

DAY 1 • Nice Isn't Enough

"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." **Ephesians 4:32**

The world has plenty of nice. Nice holds the door open. Nice smiles at the cashier. Nice throws a dollar to someone who needs it and feels good about it for the rest of the day. Nice is everywhere, and it costs almost nothing. This is exactly why the Spirit is not producing nice in you. He is producing something far deeper.

The Greek word Paul uses in Galatians 5 for kindness is *chrestotes*, and it means the grace that softens the rough edges. One Greek scholar described it as the quality that mellows all that would be harsh and austere. Mellow is a word we do not use enough, because most of us are a little harsh. We're a little too quick and a little too blunt, especially with the people we are closest to. We save the polite version for strangers and coworkers. The people who live in our houses get whatever is left over. *Chrestotes* is the Spirit working on the part of you that is too sharp, too reactive, and too hard. It is not making you soft. It is making you kind. Genuine kindness, the *chrestotes* kind, changes the atmosphere of every room you walk into.

Prayer: *God, I want to be genuinely kind, not just polite when it is convenient. I confess that the people closest to me often get the harshest version of me. Today, I'm asking Your Spirit to produce chrestotes in me. Soften the rough edges. Mellow what is too harsh. Let the people in my life feel the difference. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 2 • The Kindness That Never Quits

"Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. His love endures forever."

Psalm 136:1

Psalm 136 repeats one phrase 26 times in a row. "His love endures forever." The Hebrew word being translated there is *hesed*, and it is one of the most important words in the entire Old Testament. It means loving kindness. A kindness that does not quit. A kindness that goes beyond what is owed, stays when most people would walk away, and keeps showing up even when it is not reciprocated.

This is how God treats you. God sees everything you have done, and He keeps showing up. He knows every time you have pulled away, chosen yourself, and broken the same promise again. But His *hesed* endures. His lovingkindness does not have an expiration date based on your behavior. That is the nature of God. And here is what makes it personal: the *hesed* you extend to the people in your life is not supposed to come from your own reserves. You cannot sustain that kind of staying, enduring, never-quitting kindness on your own. It has to flow from what God has already poured into you. You extend *hesed* because you have received *hesed*. And the more you receive it from Him, the more naturally it flows out of you to everyone else.

Prayer: *Father, thank You that Your hesed never quits on me. Even when I quit on myself, You keep showing up. I want to love people with that same staying power. Help me extend to others the same enduring kindness You have extended to me. Let my kindness outlast the moments when it is not returned. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 3 • Kindness Has a Mission

"Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?" **Romans 2:4**

God's kindness is not random. It has a destination. Paul says it clearly: God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance. Not His anger. Not His disappointment. Not His list of your failures. His kindness. The thing that moves people toward God is not being told how far they are from Him. It is experiencing how close He is willing to get to them.

This completely reframes how you engage with people who are far from God. Most of us think the way to help people change is to make sure they understand exactly what is wrong with them. But that is not what moved you. What moved you was encountering the kindness of God: Someone who loved you before you had it together, Someone who got close when they had every reason to keep their distance, Someone who extended grace before you earned it. That is what softened your heart and made you willing to turn around. The next time you interact with someone who is far from God, remember that the greatest thing you can offer them is that same kindness, the steadfast, *hesed* love God used to draw you to Himself.

Prayer: *God, You used kindness to get my attention. Not condemnation, not pressure. Help me extend that same thing to people around me who are far from You. Let my kindness point people toward You. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 4 • He Crossed Every Line to Be Kind

"The Samaritan woman said to him, 'You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?'" **John 4:9**

The woman at the well had three strikes against her before the conversation even started. She was a Samaritan, which meant Jews wanted nothing to do with her. She was a woman, which in that culture meant a Jewish rabbi would never speak to her in public. She had been married five times and was living with someone she was not married to, which meant the religious community had already written her off. She came to the well at noon, the hottest part of the day, almost certainly because she was avoiding the other women who came in the morning. She was used to being alone.

And Jesus sat down and asked her for a drink. He initiated. He crossed every social, racial, and religious line to start a conversation with the one person everyone else was avoiding. He did not lead with her sin. He led with genuine interest in her. He asked questions. He engaged her as a person worth talking to. And kindness did in one conversation what five marriages and an entire community never could. By the end of that exchange, she ran back to town and told everyone she had met the Messiah. That is what real kindness does. It sees the person everyone else has written off and moves toward them anyway.

Prayer: *Jesus, You crossed every line to be kind to that woman. You saw her when everyone else looked away. I want to love people like that. Show me today who I have been avoiding or writing off, and give me the courage to cross whatever line stands between them and me. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 5 • Let Him Mellow You

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." **Matthew 11:28-30**

Jesus uses the word easy to describe His yoke in this passage. In Greek, that word is *chrestos*, the same root as *chrestotes*, the word for kindness. His yoke is kind. The burden of walking with Him is a kind burden. The Person you are following is the kindest Person who has ever lived. He is not harsh. He is not frustrated with you. He is not disappointed and waiting for you to finally get it right. He is gentle and humble in heart. That is how He describes Himself.

Here is what that means for you today. If you have been harsh with people, if your edges are too sharp, and if you know that the people closest to you would not describe you as kind, it does not start with trying harder to be nicer. It starts with coming to Jesus and letting Him work on you from the inside. The more time you spend with the kindest Person in the universe, the more His character becomes yours. You cannot look at Jesus consistently and stay hard. His *chrestotes* is contagious. It gets into you, and what gets into you eventually comes out of you to the people in your life who need it most.

Prayer: *Jesus, I want to learn from You. You said You are gentle and humble in heart, and I want that to be true of me too. I know I cannot manufacture it. So I am coming to You today and asking You to do in me what only You can do. Mellow what is harsh. Soften what is hard. Make me the kind of person people feel safe to be around. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

GOODNESS

Week 7

Oct. 25th, 2026

Fruit of the Spirit • Week 7

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

The Fruit of the Spirit - the character of Christ being made visible in us as we walk by the Spirit.

Week 7: Goodness

Goodness (*Agathosune*) - uprightness of heart and _____, taking _____ for the benefit of others, _____

James 2:17 In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by **action**, is dead.

Goodness is _____ generosity.

Hebrew: Good (*Tov*) - good, pleasing, _____

Genesis 1:4 God saw that the light was **good**.

Psalms 34:8 Taste and see that **the LORD is good**.

You cannot _____ the fruit of goodness if you do not _____ God is good.

Acts 10:38 ...God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how **he went around doing good** and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.

The same Spirit that anointed Jesus to do _____ lives in _____.

Growing in Goodness:

1. _____ God's goodness

Psalms 23:6 Surely **your goodness** and love will follow me **all the days of my life**.

Romans 8:28 And we know that in **all things God works for the good** of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

We are never more like _____ than when we are _____.

2. Implement a _____

2 Corinthians 9:6-8 Remember this: Whoever **sows sparingly** will also **reap sparingly**, and whoever **sows generously** will also **reap generously**. Each of you should give what you have **decided in your heart to give**, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for **God loves a cheerful giver**. And **God is able to bless you** abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

Strategy for a Generous Life:

_____ Intentionally
_____ Freely
_____ Completely

James 4:17 If anyone, then, **knows the good** they ought to do and doesn't do it, **it is sin** for them.

3. Don't _____

[illegible]

Week 7 Homework • Goodness

☐ Memory Verse

Galatians 6:9 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

Write It Out

☐ 5-Day Devotional

This week includes a five-day devotional. Set aside 10 minutes each morning. Each day has a Scripture, a short reflection, and a prayer. Let the Spirit take what you heard on Sunday and work it deeper into your week.

☐ Sermon Deep Dive Video

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☐ Discipleship Group Discussion

(on Group Discussion Guide page)

☐ Live it Out: Goodness in Action

On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your generosity as an act of goodness? Why?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Week 7 Homework • Goodness

Where are you at in your financial generosity? What are some obstacles you face in growing in this area? What is your generosity strategy?



**Join our 90 Day
Tithing Challenge**

weareradiant.com/tithingchallenge

How are you sowing intentionally in other areas of your life such as your talents and time? How could you demonstrate goodness more fully in either of these areas?

“The greatest legacy is not a life spent getting but a life spent giving.” What legacy do you want to leave? How are you building towards that now? What do you need to start, stop, or continue doing to accomplish this goal?

[illegible]

Discipleship Group Discussion Guide

Goodness is kindness amplified. While kindness is acting in a loving way toward others, goodness takes it a step further into radical, sacrificial generosity. We see Christ modeling goodness in His acts of generosity: feeding crowds, healing the sick, delivering people, welcoming children, and ultimately, the cross. When we settle that God is the definition of good, it enables us to display His goodness by the power of the Holy Spirit. When we sow intentionally, give freely, and trust in Him completely, we create opportunities for the Spirit to develop the fruit of goodness in our hearts.

Memory Verse:

Galatians 6:9 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

Discussion Questions

1. You cannot bear the fruit of goodness if you do not believe God is good. How have you experienced God's goodness toward you? Are there any areas you are wrestling to believe His goodness more fully?
2. We reflect Christ by living generously. Have you had an opportunity to act generously toward someone and seen God move through it?
3. Do you have a strategy for generosity? What are some ways you can intentionally develop generosity in your life?
4. The fruit of the Spirit grows slowly. How did this sermon encourage you to not grow weary in doing good?
5. The greatest legacy is not a life spent getting but a life spent giving. What is the legacy you want to leave? How are you going to actively build toward that legacy this week?



5-DAY DEVOTIONAL

Week 7 • Goodness

DAY 1 • Good Is a Verb

"In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead." **James 2:17**

The Greek word is *agathosune*, and it means uprightness of heart and life, taking action for the benefit of others. Not just being good in theory. Not just having good intentions. It is actually doing something that makes a tangible difference for the person in front of you. James says faith without action is dead, and it is the same idea. You can believe all the right things and still produce nothing. You can have the right disposition, be kind, gentle, patient, and loving, and still never cross the line into goodness. Goodness requires you to actually move. It is inconvenient. It costs something. It takes you out of your comfort zone, and that is what makes it different from all the rest, and that is exactly why the Spirit has to produce it in you, because your flesh will always find a reason to stay comfortable.

Prayer: *God, I want to be someone who actually does something. Not just someone who feels the right things or believes the right things, but someone whose life produces real, tangible good for the people around me. Produce agathosune in me. Move me out of comfort and into action. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 2 • You Have to Believe He Is Good First

"Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him." **Psalms 34:8**

You cannot produce the fruit of goodness if you do not believe God is good. The two are inseparable, because goodness flows from the nature of God. If your picture of God is harsh, demanding, hard to please, or waiting for you to slip up, then what you produce will have that same edge to it. You will do good things, but underneath them will be fear, obligation, or the need to earn something. That is not *agathosune*. That is performance.

When you actually believe God is good, the real kind of good, the kind that looked at everything He made and called it good, the kind that tastes like something worth coming back for, something changes. Generosity becomes natural. Sacrifice becomes possible. Doing good for someone who cannot repay you stops feeling like a loss because you already know you are held by a God who lacks nothing and gives freely. The invitation in Psalm 34 is not just to agree intellectually that God is good. It is to taste it, and to experience it personally in a way that changes how you move through the world. When you have tasted His goodness, you cannot help but spread it.

Prayer: *Father, I want to believe You are actually good. Not just say it but taste it. Where I have had a wrong picture of You as harsh, distant, or hard to please, correct it today. Let me experience Your goodness in a way that makes it impossible not to pass it on. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 3 • He Went Around Doing Good

"God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him."

Acts 10:38

If you want to summarize the entire ministry of Jesus in one sentence, Acts 10:38 does it: He went around doing good. Not He went around correcting people. Not He went around debating theology. Not He went around setting boundaries, building His platform, or managing His reputation. He went around doing good. That is the one-sentence summary of three years of the most significant life ever lived.

He fed thousands of hungry people. He healed people nobody else would touch. He stopped in the middle of a crowd for one woman who was too afraid to approach Him directly. He restored a broken fisherman on a beach over a charcoal fire. He climbed toward a man in a tree who just wanted a glimpse. Every single day was a continuous movement toward people in need, toward situations that required something of Him, and toward the inconvenient, the overlooked, and the desperate. Acts 10:38 tells us why: because God was with Him. The same Holy Spirit that anointed Jesus and sent Him out to do good lives in you. The same power is available. The same mission is yours. You are anointed to go around doing good.

Prayer: *Jesus, I want that one sentence to be true of my life too. That I went around doing good. Not building something for myself, not managing my image, but actually doing good for the people around me. Send me out today the same way the Spirit sent You. In Your name, Amen.*

DAY 4 • Don't Quit Before the Harvest

"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." **Galatians 6:9**

Paul would not have written this verse if people were not tempted to quit, and they are. You are. Doing good is exhausting when it goes unnoticed. When you serve and nobody says thank you. When you give and nobody acknowledges it. When you show up consistently for someone and they do not seem to be changing. The temptation is to pull back, to stop putting yourself out there, and to decide that doing good is not worth it when no one sees it or responds to it.

Paul says do not give up. The reason he gives is not that it will feel better soon. It is that there is a harvest coming at the proper time. Not on your timeline. Not necessarily when you can see it. But at the right time, if you do not give up. Every act of goodness plants something. The meal you made for the grieving family. The conversation you had with the person nobody else talked to. The money you gave when it was a sacrifice. None of it is wasted. God tracks every seed, and the harvest will come. So today, wherever you are tempted to pull back from doing good because it has not produced visible results yet, stay in it. The proper time is coming.

Prayer: *God, I confess there are places where I have gotten tired of doing good and started to pull back. Renew my commitment today. Remind me that You see every act of goodness even when no one else does. Help me stay in it long enough to see the harvest. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 5 • What Does God Actually Require?

"He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." **Micah 6:8**

Micah 6:8 is one of the clearest summaries of what a life of goodness actually looks like. It looks like three things: act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God. Not a long list of religious activities. Not a performance checklist. Three movements that together paint the picture of a person in whom the Spirit is producing *agathosune*.

"Act justly" means you do not just feel bad about what is wrong in the world, but you do something about it. You use whatever influence, resources, and access you have to make things more right. "Love mercy" means you extend grace generously, the same grace that has been extended to you. And "walk humbly" with your God means none of it is done independently, none of it is done for your own glory, and all of it flows from staying connected to the One who is good. That last part is where the whole thing is held together, because goodness that is disconnected from God eventually becomes pride. You start doing good to feel good about yourself rather than it being God's goodness flowing through you. So, stay humble and stay connected to Him. Let people experience His goodness flowing through you.

Prayer: *Father, I want my life to look like Micah 6:8. I want to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with You. Not for my reputation, but because You are good, and I want to look like You. Keep me humble enough to know that any good I do is only possible because of Your Spirit in me. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

[illegible]

FAITHFULNESS

Week 8

Nov. 1st, 2026

Fruit of the Spirit • Week 8

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

The Fruit of the Spirit - the character of Christ being made visible in us as we walk by the Spirit.

Week 8: Faithfulness

Faithfulness (*Pistis*) - trust, fidelity, _____, can be _____ on

Hebrew: Faithfulness (*Emunah*) - _____

Faithfulness is _____ committed when the emotions that made the commitment are _____.

Hebrews 3:6 But **Christ is faithful** as the Son over God's house.

Revelation 19:11 I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is **called Faithful** and **True**.

A Life of Faithfulness Is:

1. _____

Galatians 5:19-21 The **acts of the flesh** are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this **will not inherit the kingdom of God**.

When faithfulness is _____, _____ follows.

2. _____

Faithfulness is not built in the _____.

Faithfulness is built in the parts of your life nobody _____.

Luke 16:10 Whoever can be trusted with **very little** can also be trusted with much.

Don't expect God to bless what is _____ when you aren't faithfully stewarding what is _____.

The biggest test of your faithfulness is what you do when no one is _____.

Matthew 25:21 His master replied, 'Well done, good and **faithful** servant! **You have been faithful with a few things**; I will put you **in charge of many things**. Come and share your master's happiness!'

3. _____

Proverbs 20:6 Many claim to have unfailing love, but **a faithful person** who can find?

We overestimate what we can do in the _____ term, but we underestimate what God can do through a _____ of faithfulness.

2 Timothy 2:13 If we are faithless, **he remains faithful**, for he cannot disown himself.

_____ is faithful.

[illegible]

[illegible]

Week 8 Homework • Faithfulness

☐ Memory Verse

Lamentations 3:22-23 Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

Write It Out

☐ Word Study

Pistis (πίστις) - search reference G4102 in blueletterbible.org and pick a verse demonstrating God's faithful character that stands out to you and write it below:

How can you reflect the fruit of faithfulness in your own life? What areas are you winning in faithfulness, and what areas have room to grow?

Week 8 Homework • Faithfulness

☐ **5-Day Devotional**

This week includes a five-day devotional. Set aside 10 minutes each morning. Each day has a Scripture, a short reflection, and a prayer. Let the Spirit take what you heard on Sunday and work it deeper into your week.

☐ **Sermon Deep Dive Video**

Watch this week's Deep Dive video and take notes on the Sermon Deep Dive video page.



☐ **Discipleship Group Discussion**

(on Group Discussion Guide page)

[illegible]

Discipleship Group Discussion Guide

The fruit of faithfulness is the grit to not quit. When the world around us celebrates talent, the Lord celebrates the uncommon choice to see things through. Faithfulness means continuing the commitment, even when the emotions that led us to commit have long passed. It's the consistency and follow-through when no one else is watching. It's the unwavering, long-sighted choice to keep going, especially when it would be easier to throw in the towel as circumstances get hard. The Lord's faithfulness is great, even when ours is not. While the world around us is constantly changing, He remains the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Memory Verse:

Lamentations 3:22-23 Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

Discussion Questions

1. What does it look like to choose faithfulness instead of letting emotions lead?
2. What are the obstacles you face when it comes to staying faithful, even in the little things?
3. How can you better steward what God has given you now instead of focusing on what you want next?
4. What's one commitment you've quietly let slide that you need to pick back up this week?
5. Read 2 Timothy 2:13. How does this verse encourage you?



5-DAY DEVOTIONAL

Week 8 • Faithfulness

DAY 1 • The Amen Life

"Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." **Lamentations 3:22-23**

Every time you say Amen at the end of a prayer, you are saying something more significant than you probably realize. The Hebrew word for faithfulness is *emunah*, and it is the same root as Amen. When you say Amen, you are saying let it be firm, let it stand, and let it be steady. It is not just agreement. It is a declaration of trust. Paul is saying the Spirit produces that same quality in you. A life that is firm, steady, and someone people can count on.

Think about what it would mean to have an Amen reputation. To be the person in your family, your workplace, your church, and your neighborhood who people describe as steady. The one who shows up when they say they will, keeps the promise even when it gets inconvenient, and stays committed even when the emotion behind the commitment has faded. That is not a personality trait. It is a fruit of the Spirit. The flesh is not naturally steady. It is reactive, inconsistent, and driven by how it feels in the moment. The Spirit produces something different. He produces an Amen life.

Prayer: *God, I want an Amen reputation. I want to be known as someone who is steady, dependable, and true to their word. Where I have been inconsistent, forgive me. Produce faithfulness in me through Your Spirit, the same faithfulness You show me every single morning. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 2 • Faith and Faithfulness Are the Same Thing

"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'"

Matthew 25:23

Most people treat faith and faithfulness like two separate things. Faith is what you believe. Faithfulness is how you behave. But, in the Greek New Testament, they are the exact same word: *pistis*. When it describes your posture toward God, it gets translated as faith. When it describes your character toward other people, it gets translated as faithfulness. It's the same word, which means what you genuinely believe about God will always show up in how consistently you live for Him.

That is the uncomfortable truth in Matthew 25. The master does not come back and ask the servant what he believed. He looks at what the servant did with what he was given while the master was away. Faithfulness is the evidence of real faith. It's not the performance of faithfulness to earn something but the natural overflow of a genuine trust in God. If you truly believe God is good, you will stay faithful to His call even when you cannot see the results. If you truly believe He keeps His promises, you will keep yours. The two are inseparable. So today the question isn't just what you believe about God, but whether what you believe is actually showing up in how you live when no one is watching.

Prayer: *Father, I want my faith to show up as faithfulness. Not as a performance but as the genuine overflow of trusting You. Where there is a gap between what I say I believe and how I am actually living, close it. Let my life be the evidence of my faith. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 3 • Even When You're Not

"If we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot disown himself." **2 Timothy 2:13**

This might be the most comforting verse in the entire Bible for anyone who has ever broken a commitment, walked away from something they should have stayed in, or looked back and realized they have not been as faithful as they wanted to be. Paul is not writing to perfect people. He is writing to people who have been faithless. People who quit. People who let go when they should have held on. And he says: God remains faithful.

God's faithfulness to you is not contingent on your faithfulness to Him. It cannot be, because His faithfulness is not a response to your behavior. It is an expression of His nature. He cannot be unfaithful. It would require Him to stop being Himself, which means on your worst day, on the day you broke the promise, walked away, said things you should not have said, and did the thing you swore you would never do again, He was still faithful. His mercies are new every morning regardless of what you did the night before. That truth is not a license to be careless. It is actually the thing that makes lasting faithfulness possible. You can stay committed because you are not depending on your own consistency. You are leaning on His.

Prayer: *God, thank You that Your faithfulness does not depend on mine. Thank You that Your mercies are new this morning even when I was not faithful yesterday. Let that truth produce something in me, not carelessness but gratitude. Let Your faithfulness be the foundation I build mine on. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 4 • Who You Are When No One Is Watching

"Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful." **1 Corinthians 4:2**

Pistis, the word for faithfulness, means more than what you believe. It is who you are when no one is watching. It is the covenant you keep when your spouse is not in the room. It is the promise you hold to when the person you made it to has forgotten it. It is the standard you maintain when no one would ever know if you lowered it. That is faithfulness. And Paul says it is required of people who have been given a trust.

You have been given trust. Your marriage is trust. Your kids are trust. The calling on your life is trust. The people in your small group, your staff, your team are trust. The question is not whether you are trustworthy in the moments when everyone is watching, and the stakes are obvious. The question is whether you are the same, trustworthy person in private that you are in public. Whether the commitment survives the moments when nobody would notice if it didn't. Jesus said the person who is faithful in the small things will be trusted with bigger things. This means the seemingly insignificant faithful moments, the ones nobody sees and nobody applauds, are actually the ones that determine everything that comes next.

Prayer: *God, I want to be faithful in private the same way I present myself in public. I confess there are gaps. There are commitments I keep in front of people and let slide when no one is looking. Forgive me and help me close those gaps. Make me the same person in every room. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 5 • His Name Is Faithful and True

"I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True." **Revelation 19:11**

When Jesus returns at the end of all things, the Bible gives Him a name. Not powerful; not famous; not successful; but Faithful and True. Out of every word available to describe the returning King of the universe, those are the ones chosen. Because at the end of the story, faithfulness is what will have defined everything. Every promise He made will have been kept. Every word He spoke will have been proven true. Not one thing will have fallen to the ground. He will return as exactly the Person He said He would be, doing exactly what He said He would do.

That is the Jesus you are following. The more consistently you walk with a God who is Faithful and True, the more that character gets produced in you. Not through effort and willpower but through proximity. The Spirit points you to Jesus, and the more you look at Him, the more you start to look like Him.

Prayer: *Jesus, You are Faithful and True. You have never been anything other than that. I want to be known for the same thing. Not because I have it in myself but because I have been with You. Make me someone who reflects the character of the One I am following. In Your name, Amen.*

[illegible]

GENTLENESS

Week 9

Nov. 8th, 2026

Week 9 • Gentleness

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

The Fruit of the Spirit - the character of Christ being made visible in us as we walk by the Spirit.

Week 9: Gentleness

Strength without gentleness is _____.

Strength with gentleness is godly _____.

Gentleness (*Prautes*) - _____ under _____

Matthew 5:5 Blessed are the **meek**, for they will inherit the earth.

Numbers 12:3 Now Moses was **a very humble man**, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth.

Cultivating Gentleness:

1. _____ from Jesus

Matthew 11:28-30 Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for **I am gentle** and **humble in heart**, and you will find rest for your souls.

The most _____ person in the universe picked one word to describe His personality, and He chose _____.

Philippians 2:6-8 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself **nothing** by taking **the very nature of a servant**, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, **he humbled himself** by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

Isaiah 40:11 He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; **he gently leads** those that have young.

The more you look _____ Jesus, the more you will look _____ Jesus.

2. Lower the _____

Ephesians 4:2 Be **completely humble and gentle**; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

Proverbs 15:1 A **gentle answer** turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

2 Timothy 2:24-25 And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but **be gentle to all**, able to teach, patient, in **humility correcting** those who are in opposition.

Don't _____ the argument and _____ the relationship.

3. Lead with _____

Gentleness means extending _____ to people, even when they keep _____.

Galatians 6:1 Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should **restore that person gently.**

Gentleness is _____ that is surrendered to God for the good of _____.

[illegible]

[illegible]

Week 9 Homework • Gentleness

☐ **Memory Verse**

Proverbs 15:1 A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

Write It Out

☐ **Additional Study: Taming the Tongue** (see next page)

☐ **5-Day Devotional**

This week includes a five-day devotional. Set aside 10 minutes each morning. Each day has a Scripture, a short reflection, and a prayer. Let the Spirit take what you heard on Sunday and work it deeper into your week.

☐ **Sermon Deep Dive Video**

Watch this week's Deep Dive video and take notes on the Sermon Deep Dive video page.



☐ **Discipleship Group Discussion**

(on Group Discussion Guide page)

Taming the Tongue

1. Read the passage found in James 3 below.

James 3:1-12

Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. We all stumble in many ways. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check. When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell. All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind, but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be. Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.

Week 9 Homework • Gentleness

2. Read through it a second time. This time, circle or highlight every time the words “mouth” or “tongue” are used.

3. Read through the passage a third time and underline every consequence of our words.

4. Find another version of this passage (we recommend ESV, NASB, or AMP-C translations) and take note of any difference that help you understand this passage better. Write any observations below.

5. What things are compared in this passage to help us understand the weight of our words?

Week 9 Homework • Gentleness

6. According to this passage, why do you think words matter so much?

7. What can you take away from this passage to help you apply what it's saying? What can you start or stop? Is there an attitude or perspective that needs to change? How will you live differently?

[illegible]

Discipleship Group Discussion Guide

Strength with gentleness is a key marker of godly leadership. It is strength under control. Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords, yet He is described in Scripture as gentle and humble in heart. The more we look at Jesus, the Gentle Shepherd, the more we will become like Him. Beyond understanding the heart of God, we must also acknowledge and own that our words have the power of life and death; and even the right answer with the wrong approach can still make you wrong. When we lead with gentleness, we extend the same grace God has given us. Gentleness is strength that is surrendered to God for the good of others.

Memory Verse:

Proverbs 15:1 A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

Discussion Questions

1. How did you view gentleness before Sunday's message? How did this sermon shift your perspective on what the fruit of gentleness truly means?
2. How do you see Jesus modeling gentleness and strength simultaneously in Scripture? What can you learn from His example?
3. Read Proverbs 15:1. Why do words matter so much? How have you seen gentle words bring peace in a situation?
4. Pastor Aaron gave the example of Jesus restoring Peter with grace, even though Peter denied Him three times. What could this look like in your life today?
5. Don't win the argument and lose the relationship. Are there any relationships where God might be highlighting a need for the fruit of gentleness? What are some steps you can take to lean into the Holy Spirit's work in your life in this area?



5-DAY DEVOTIONAL

Week 9 • Gentleness

DAY 1 • Strong, Not Soft

"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth."

Matthew 5:5

When most people hear the word gentle, they picture a doormat. Quiet. Passive. The person who never says anything, who stands for nothing. And if that is what gentleness is, most of us want no part of it. But that is not what the Bible is describing. Not even close.

The Greek word is *prautes*, and it was used in classical Greek literature to describe a wild horse that had been broken for the rider. The horse still has all of its power. It has all of its muscle and all of its speed, but the will is now under the control of the rider. That is the picture. Not weakness, but strength under control. A war horse with a saddle. Jesus uses the same word in Matthew 5 when He says the meek will inherit the earth. He is not saying the pushover will win. He is saying the person with power who has learned to submit that power to God is the one who actually leads. The world celebrates the loudest voice and the most dominant personality. God celebrates the one who is strong enough to be gentle. That is a far rarer and far harder thing than just being loud, and it is exactly what the Spirit wants to produce in you.

Prayer: *God, change my picture of what gentleness is. It is not weakness; it is strength under Your control. Help me surrender to the process as You develop prautes within me. Make me strong enough to be gentle. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 2 • The Most Powerful Person Chose Gentle

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

Matthew 11:28-30

Of all the words Jesus could have chosen to describe Himself, He chose gentle. Think about who is saying this. The One who spoke the universe into existence. The One who calmed a storm with three words, walked on water, raised the dead, and is described in Revelation as a warrior on a white horse with a sword coming from His mouth. That Jesus is the One who describes Himself as gentle.

The most powerful Person in the universe picked one word to describe His own personality, and He chose gentle. Not strong. Not authoritative. Not bold. Gentle. And He says when you come to Me and learn from Me, you find rest for your soul. Not more pressure. Not a longer list. Rest. Because gentleness creates safety. When someone is strong, submitted, and not trying to dominate, people relax around them. People open up. People are willing to be changed. That is what made Jesus the most effective leader, teacher, and pastor who ever lived. Not the force of His personality but the safety of His gentleness. And that same character is what the Spirit wants to produce in you.

Prayer: *Jesus, You described Yourself as gentle and humble in heart, and I want to be known the same way. I want people to feel safe around me. I want my presence to bring rest, not pressure. Produce in me what You displayed perfectly. In Your name, Amen.*

DAY 3 • He Emptied Himself

"In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant." **Philippians 2:5-7**

This is one of the most theologically staggering passages in the entire Bible. The One who had every right to dominate chose to empty Himself. The One who deserved every seat at every table took the form of a servant. The One who could have ridden into Jerusalem on a war horse showed up on a donkey, so that anyone could approach Him without feeling intimidated.

That is what gentleness looks like at its highest level. It is not just controlling your tone in an argument. It is choosing to set aside what you are entitled to for the sake of someone else. Jesus had authority and set it aside. He had power and made it accessible. He had every right to be served and spent every day serving instead. Paul says we are to have the same mindset. Not just admire the mindset. Have it. This means the places in your life where you are tempted to pull rank, use your position, or demand what you are owed - that is where the Spirit of Jesus wants to produce something different. A willingness to empty yourself the way He did. Not because you are a doormat but because you are secure enough in God that you do not need to be the most important person in the room.

Prayer: *Jesus, You had every right and You set it aside. Forgive me for the moments where I pull rank and demand what I think I deserve. Give me the mindset of a servant. Make me secure enough in You that I do not need to be the most powerful person in the room. In Your name, Amen.*

DAY 4 • Lower the Volume

"A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger."

Proverbs 15:1

Most of us are surprisingly gentle with strangers and surprisingly harsh with the people we love most. We are patient with the barista and short with our spouse. We are kind to coworkers and cutting with our kids. We give the polite version to people who barely know us and whatever is left over to the people who matter most. If you are honest, you know exactly what this looks like in your home.

Proverbs 15:1 is one of the most practical verses in the Bible. A gentle answer turns away wrath. Not the most clever answer. Not the loudest answer. Not the one that wins the argument. The gentle one. One of the most transformational things you can do this week is simply lower the volume. Talk quieter when you are correcting someone. Sit down before you say something hard. Look the person in the eye. Take one breath before you respond to the thing that just irritated you. These are small things that produce enormous results. You will be amazed at how much gentleness lives on the other side of a one-minute pause. The goal is not to suppress what you feel. The goal is to deliver it in a way that the other person can actually receive. A harsh word never gets to where it was trying to go. A gentle answer does.

Prayer: *God, I want to be known as gentle at home first. With my spouse, my kids, and the people I live with. Forgive me for saving my patience for people who barely know me. Teach me to lower the volume. Help me pause before I respond. Let the people closest to me feel the difference. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 5 • Three Questions on a Beach

"Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted." **Galatians 6:1**

After the resurrection, Jesus found Peter on a beach. Peter had denied Him three times around a fire on the worst night of his life. He had failed publicly, completely, and at the moment it mattered most. Jesus could have confronted him, corrected him, or cut him loose. Instead, He made breakfast. Then He asked Peter three questions: "Do you love me?" Three times. One for each denial. Not to shame him, but to restore him. Every question was the Spirit of Jesus reaching into the wound and healing it from the inside out.

That is what leading with grace looks like. It is not pretending the failure did not happen. It is choosing restoration over punishment. It is meeting the person at their lowest moment with something they did not earn and do not deserve. Galatians 6:1 tells us that if someone is caught in a sin, those who live by the Spirit should restore them gently. Not pounce on them. Not post about it. Not hold it over them. Restore them. Gently. The same gentleness that Jesus extended to the broken fisherman on the beach is the same gentleness He is asking you to extend to the people in your life who have let you down, because that is the gentleness He extended to you first.

Prayer: *Jesus, thank You that You did not write Peter off and that You have not written me off either. I want to love people the way You loved him. Give me the grace to restore instead of punish. Help me lead with gentleness toward the people who have let me down the most. In Your name, Amen.*

[illegible]



SELF-CONTROL

Week 10

Nov. 15th, 2026

Fruit of the Spirit • Week 10

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

The Fruit of the Spirit - the character of Christ being made visible in us as we walk by the Spirit.

Week 10: Self-Control

Without self-control, every other fruit gets _____.

Self-control (*Egkrateia*) - inner strength, mastery over _____

Self-control is not _____, it is the Holy Spirit's _____.

Proverbs 16:32 Better a patient person than a warrior, **one with self-control** than one who takes a city.

Matthew 4:3-4 The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." It is written: Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.

Luke 22:42 Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet **not my will**, but **yours be done**.

The ABC's of Self-Control:

1. _____

James 3:2 We all stumble in **many ways**...

Admitting you have an issue isn't a sign of _____;
it's a sign of _____.

2. _____

Proverbs 25:28 Like a city whose walls are broken through is a person who **lacks self-control**.

Boundaries are needed on your:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

The wrong question: How _____ is too far?

The right question: How can I stay as far away from
_____ as possible?

1 Thessalonians 5:22 Abstain from all appearance of evil.

3. _____

John 15:5 I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will **bear much fruit**; apart from me **you can do nothing**.

Grace is not a _____ to sin, but empowerment to be _____.

Titus 2:11-12 For the **grace of God** has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to **say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions**, and to live **self-controlled**, upright and godly lives in this present age.

God's grace teaches us to say _____.

1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And **God is faithful**; he will **not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear**. But **when you are tempted**, he will also provide **a way out** so that you can endure it.

God's grace gives us a way _____.

Galatians 5:16 So I say, **walk by the Spirit**, and you will not gratify **the desires of the flesh**.

Galatians 5:25 Since we live by the Spirit, **let us keep in step** with the Spirit.

[illegible]

Week 10 Homework • Self-Control

☐ Memory Verse

Galatians 5:16 So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

Write It Out

☐ Additional Study: **Tying it All Together** (see next page)

☐ 5-Day Devotional

This week includes a five-day devotional. Set aside 10 minutes each morning. Each day has a Scripture, a short reflection, and a prayer. Let the Spirit take what you heard on Sunday and work it deeper into your week.

☐ Sermon Deep Dive Video

Watch this week's Deep Dive video and take notes on the Sermon Deep Dive video page.



☐ Discipleship Group Discussion

(on Group Discussion Guide page)

Week 10 Homework • Self-Control

Tying It All Together

Look up "G1466" on blueletterbible.org. This is the reference number for *egkrateia* (ἐγκράτεια) - self-control. Write out your own definition below:

Write out 1 Peter 1:5-6 below. This verse uses the same word *egkrateia*.

In the message, Pastor Aaron explained that self-control is the fruit that holds the whole cluster together. Consider these statements:

- Love that has no self-control becomes lust.
- Joy that has no self-control becomes thrill seeking.
- Peace that has no self-control becomes passivity.
- Patience that has no self-control becomes apathy.
- Kindness that has no self-control becomes flattery.
- Goodness that has no self-control becomes performance.
- Faithfulness that has no self-control becomes religion.
- Gentleness that has no self-control becomes weakness.

Week 10 Homework • Self-Control

Which 2-3 statements on the previous page stands out to you most and why?

Choose 1-2 of the fruit of the Spirit to continue growing in after this series ends, and make a commitment to follow through on it. Write your applications below.

Discipleship Group Discussion Guide

Self-control is the last fruit listed in Galatians 5:22-23, but it is the fruit that holds all of the other ones together. The baseline of the world around us can be defined by a lack of self-control. Telling ourselves “no” can be one of the biggest challenges of our Christian walk. Why? Because it means denying our flesh, and sometimes our flesh can be really loud. Even Jesus, the Holy and Perfect One, had to exercise self-control as seen in Matthew 4. Praise God that the same Spirit that produced self-control in Him is the One producing it in us too!

Memory Verse:

Galatians 5:16 So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

Discussion Questions

1. What is the difference between self-control through willpower versus self-control through the Holy Spirit's power? What is different about the results?
2. When it comes to awareness, boundaries, and connection, which is the one you are strongest in? Which are you needing the most growth? How can you grow in that area this week?
3. What does it mean that without self-control, every other fruit gets compromised?
4. Read Galatians 5:25. What does it mean to keep in step with the Spirit? What are some practical examples?
5. Looking back over this series, which fruit stands out to you most and why? Which one are you most excited to continue growing in as we wrap up this series?



5-DAY DEVOTIONAL

Week 10 • Self-Control

DAY 1 • It's Not Willpower, It's the Holy Spirit Power

"For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age." **Titus 2:11-12**

Most of us have treated self-control like a personal discipline problem. If we just tried harder, got up earlier, downloaded the right app, and set the right goal, we could finally get a handle on it. And most of us have a long track record of proving that doesn't work. You start the week with resolve and by Friday you've compromised again. You make the promise and break it. You reset the counter and watch it go back to zero.

Here's what changes everything. The Greek word Paul uses for self-control is *egkrateia*, and it literally means "power within." Not "try harder" willpower but supernatural power within. And the power within every believer is not your discipline or your determination; it is the Holy Spirit. That means self-control was never meant to be something you produce. Self-control is a fruit. Fruit doesn't get manufactured; it grows when you stay connected to the right source. The same Spirit that helped Jesus resist the enemy in the wilderness lives in you right now. You are not doing this alone. So today, stop treating your struggle like a self-help project and start treating it like a spiritual one.

Prayer: *God, I confess that I've been trying to fix this in my own strength and it hasn't worked. I'm tired of the cycle of failing, resetting, and trying again on my own. Today, I'm choosing to believe that the power I need isn't something I have to manufacture. It's already in me through Your Spirit. Produce self-control in me the same way You produce every other fruit. Not through my striving but through Your power. I surrender this area to You today. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 2 • Call It What It Is

"We all stumble in many ways. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check."

James 3:2

The first step to lasting change is one of the hardest ones. Not because it's complicated, but because it requires honesty most of us haven't been willing to give. You have to call your struggle what it actually is. Not, "I get heated sometimes." That could be uncontrolled anger with a lasting impact on the people you love most. Not, "I just like to snack." That might be a real and destructive pattern with food. Not, "I look at stuff online sometimes." That's pornography addiction.

That's not to shame you. It's actually the opposite. The shame cycle keeps you hiding. It keeps the thing in the dark where it keeps destroying your life. When you name something at its worst name, you're not condemning yourself. You're finally being honest enough to deal with it. God already sees it. He's not surprised. He's not disgusted. He's waiting for you to stop calling it by a smaller name than it is so He can actually meet you in it. Awareness isn't weakness. It is the beginning of wisdom. And wisdom is where the Spirit starts His work.

Before you go to bed tonight, write down your real struggle by its true name, not the softened version you've been using, and bring it to God in prayer.

Prayer: *Father, today, I'm choosing to be honest with you about what's really going on in my life. I'm naming it before You right now. I'm not coming in shame. I'm coming because You already know, and I'm finally ready to deal with it. Meet me here. I trust that Your grace is bigger than anything I've been carrying. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 3 • Build the Wall

"Like a city whose walls are broken through is a person who lacks self-control." **Proverbs 25:28**

In ancient times, the wall around a city was the difference between life and death. If the walls were down, the enemy could walk in whenever they wanted to steal, destroy, and threaten at will. Solomon uses that image to describe a person without self-control. They are wide open and defenseless. Anything can walk in.

Here's what walks in when there are no walls: lust walks in, addiction walks in, and bitterness walks in. The wrong relationship walks in. The impulse that wrecks your finances walks in. The outburst that damages your family walks in. Not because you're a bad person, but because you left the gate open. Boundaries are not legalism and they are not punishment. They are wisdom. They are the Spirit guiding you to protect what matters most. The right question is never "how far is too far?" The right question is "how far can I stay from the thing that takes me down?" Today, get honest about where the walls are broken in your life. Your phone. Your finances. Your schedule. Your relationships. The Spirit gives you the wisdom to see the weak spots and the strength to build something there. Walls are not about restriction. They are about protecting your future.

Pick one category right now - phone, money, schedule, health, or relationships and put one specific, concrete boundary in place before the day ends, whether that's a screen time limit, a deleted app, or a conversation you finally have.

Prayer: *Lord, I can see where the walls are broken in my life. I can see the places where I've left myself wide open to things that keep taking me down. Today, I'm asking you to give me the wisdom to know where I need stronger boundaries and the courage to actually build them. Help me to stop asking how close I can get to the edge and start asking how far I can stay from it. Guard my life and guard what You've placed in it. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 4 • There Is Always a Way Out

No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it." **1 Corinthians 10:13**

The moment a temptation is at its strongest is usually the moment it feels like there's no choice. Like the pull is too powerful, the habit is too deeply rooted, the craving is too overwhelming, and giving in is just inevitable. That feeling is a lie. Paul is clear: with every temptation there is a way out. God always provides an escape route. Not sometimes. Always. The problem is most of us aren't looking for it, because some part of us has already decided we're going to give in.

Think about what Jesus did in the wilderness. He had not eaten in 40 days. The enemy came and offered Him a way to meet a very real, intense need. But Jesus reached for the Word of God instead of satisfying His flesh. That is the escape route in action. Not pretending the temptation isn't real, but looking for the door God already opened.

When temptation shows up, pause long enough to pray. One prayer. One moment of connection with the Spirit. That is often all it takes to find the way out that God already built. He is faithful. He does not leave you without an exit.

Prayer: *God, thank You that You never leave me without a way out. I confess that there are moments where I've told myself I had no choice, but the truth is I stopped looking for the door You already opened. Today, I'm asking for eyes to see it. When the temptation comes, help me pause. Help me pray. Help me reach for You instead of reaching for the thing that's been taking me down. I trust that You are faithful to always provide a way through. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

DAY 5 • Stay on the Vine

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

John 15:5

After ten weeks of studying the Fruit of the Spirit, every single one of them comes back to the same thing. You cannot produce what only God can grow. Not love. Not peace. Not faithfulness. And not self-control. Every fruit on this list is a byproduct of one decision made consistently: staying connected to the vine.

So today and every day after this, the decision is simple. Not easy. Simple. Stay connected. Walk with Him. Keep in step with His Spirit. The fruit will come, because that is what happens when a branch stays on the vine.

Before today ends, put a specific time on your calendar, even five minutes, to sit with Him in prayer or in His Word, and treat that appointment as non-negotiable, because that is what staying on the vine actually looks like in practice.

Prayer: *Jesus, I want to stay connected to You. I've learned over these ten weeks that everything I've been trying to produce on my own is already available to me through Your Spirit. Today, I'm committing to staying connected to the vine. Not striving, not performing, not powering through another week. Just walking with You. Produce self-control in me. Produce every fruit in me. I can't do this without You, and I don't want to try. Keep me close. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

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weareradiant.com/fruitofthespirit