

DEVOTIONAL

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## WELCOME

Become like Jesus and live for others. It is both an invitation and a challenge—to be transformed by Jesus' love and to reflect his character in how we live.

### **Become like Jesus**

When we say we want to become like Jesus, we're not talking about perfection but transformation. Becoming more like Jesus means letting the Holy Spirit shape us into people who think, speak, and act like Christ. To become like him is to surrender our old ways of thinking and living and adopt his way of life. Jesus embodied compassion, humility, forgiveness, strength and holiness. He was kind and full of grace, he was willing to stand up for those who were mistreated, he was able to see those who were outcasts. Think of the thing you love most about Jesus: to become like Jesus means that's the type of person we want to become.

This transformation begins with knowing him personally through practices like presence, community, simplicity, generosity, and hospitality. As we practice living the way Jesus lived—and allowing his teachings to guide our choices—we grow to become more like him.

### **Live for Others**

Transformation and becoming more like Jesus is never for the sake of ourselves. Jesus' life was marked by selflessness. He came “not to be served, but to serve” (Matthew 20:28), always putting the needs of others above his own. To live for others is to follow his example, prioritizing love and service over self-interest. This doesn't mean neglecting our well-being, but finding joy and purpose in serving—whether through acts of kindness, advocating for justice, or simply being present for someone in need.

This journey of becoming more like Jesus invites and challenges us to resist a self-focused life and embrace one where we live out our faith in action. As we grow to be like Jesus, we naturally begin to love as he loved—seeking the good of others, meeting tangible needs, and pointing people to the hope found in him. In doing so, we fulfill his command to love God and love our neighbor, becoming living reflections of his kingdom on earth.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

The journey of transformation begins with being with Jesus. It's not about striving to earn his love, but about growing in relationship with him. As we spend time with Jesus—through spiritual practices and by simply being present in his grace—we come to experience the depth of his love and the truth of the gospel. This is not just an intellectual understanding but a lived reality, as his presence reshapes our hearts and minds.

Over time, walking closely with Jesus frees us from the lies and destructive patterns of our past. We learn to rest in the unshakable truth that we are fully loved, fully forgiven, and fully accepted—not because of anything we've done

but because of what he has already done for us. Transformation flows not from effort, but from abiding in the one who loves us unconditionally.

That's where this devotional comes in. Over the next few months, we are going to be taking a look at what it means to become like Jesus and live for others. Each week, we're going to look at a different practice meant to help us experience life with Jesus and give us a deeper understanding of who he is.

This is not meant to be another place of obligation in your life. It's not meant to be a burden or one more thing on your to-do list. It's an invitation to experience the Jesus who said:

“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

We hope this is a tool not just for this season of life, but one that can help shape your life for years to come. A resource you can return to again and again, as you pursue a life of becoming like Jesus and living for others.



**WEEK ONE**

# IDENTITY

## DAY 1

Many of the deepest human questions revolve around identity: “Who am I?” and “Why do I matter?” From the moment we’re born, we’re given a name and surrounded by people who shape how we see ourselves. Parents, teachers, friends, and society all contribute to defining who we are, often assigning labels and expectations based on cultural norms.

Think about it: every culture has its way of shaping who we believe we’re supposed to be. Whether it’s success, appearance, relationships, or achievements, these standards often leave us questioning if we measure up. Therefore, when we fall short of these expectations, it’s easy to feel isolated, insecure, or even ashamed, wondering if we’re truly enough.

Here’s the good news: God offers something radically different. Instead of basing our worth on what we do or how others see us, God invites us to rest in an identity rooted in his love and purpose for our lives. In him, we don’t have to earn acceptance or strive to prove our value. Through the work of Jesus and the love of the Father, we are

offered the chance to become children of God—deeply loved, completely forgiven, and fully accepted. This identity isn’t fragile or conditional; it’s a foundation that allows us to live from a place of security and favor, rather than always striving for it.



Read 2 Corinthians 5:17-21:

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

### Reflection Questions:

1. In what areas of your life do you find yourself striving to prove your worth or live up to others’ expectations? How might God be inviting you to rest in his unconditional love instead?

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2. What does 2 Corinthians 5:17-21 reveal about who God is and your relationship with him?

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3. What would it look like for you to live from a place of security and favor as a child of God, rather than striving for acceptance?

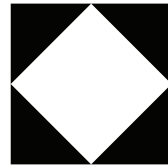
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**Prayer Prompt:**

Father, thank you for offering me an identity rooted in your love and not my efforts. Help me to let go of the need to earn acceptance or measure up to the world's standards. Teach me to rest in the truth that I am deeply loved, forgiven, and fully accepted because of Jesus. Shape my heart to live confidently in this identity, and let it guide how I see myself and others. Amen.



# IDENTITY

## DAY 2

### Who is God?

How we understand God shapes the way we see ourselves. When we know God as Creator, we realize he intentionally formed us in his image. When we know him as Redeemer, we understand that we are deeply loved and forgiven. When we know him as King, we embrace our identity as citizens of his kingdom.

Without a clear understanding of God's character, we often seek our identity in things that cannot sustain us—career, relationships, achievements, or societal approval. These sources leave us feeling insecure and unfulfilled. However, when we root our identity in the truth of who God is, we find stability and purpose.

For example, God's faithfulness reminds us that we are never abandoned, no matter how isolated we feel. His mercy reassures us that we are not defined by our failures. His power emboldens us to live with courage, knowing that we are his chosen instruments for his glory.

As followers of Jesus, our identity is not something we create but some-

thing we receive from God. He calls us his beloved, his children, his ambassadors. The more we meditate on who God is, the more we grow in confidence about who we are in him.

Take time today to reflect on one aspect of God's character. Let it shape how you see yourself and inspire you to live boldly as his child



Read Romans 8:14-17:

“For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.”

### Reflection Questions:

1. As you read Romans 8:14-17, what stands out to you about how God's character as Father shapes your identity as his child?

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2. Are there areas in your life where you've been seeking identity or purpose in things other than God? How does understanding who God is invite you to shift your focus?

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3. Which aspect of God's character resonates most with you today? How can this truth shape how you live out your identity as a follower of Jesus?

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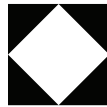
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**Prayer Prompt:**

Lord, help me to know you more deeply so I can understand who I am in you. Amen.



# IDENTITY

## DAY 3

### **Who am I?**

When we look at the creation account in Genesis, specifically when we look at the creation of people, connection with God is an explicit priority. Genesis 1:27-31 lays out the directive for people to be made in God's image. Commonly referred to as "imago Dei," we see that people were created as image-bearers with purpose. Before Adam and Eve sinned, God's image was reflected in the charge for people to create, care for, and rule over creation. There was a balance and understanding that these roles—with both their freedom and their restrictions—were a reflection of God.

After sin entered the world, God appointed a people group, the Israelites, to reflect and represent himself to the world. In the Old Testament, Deuteronomy 7:6-16 establishes the unique relationship between God and Israel. The Israelites were a people set apart, specially chosen as his spokesmen. In the New Testament, we see in the book of Acts that the church is set

apart to reflect God and represent his likeness and his kingdom to the world. The apostle Peter shares the same idea in 1 Peter 2:9, "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light."

This metaphor of reflection highlights the intimacy between two subjects. In the case of a literal reflection, such as in a mirror, the mirror can only reflect what is directly in front of it. While it might distort the image, it cannot fundamentally change the original; it simply reveals what it sees. Beyond the literal, reflection also implies shared attributes. When we spend significant time with someone, familiarity and closeness often lead to similarities in mannerisms, preferences, and even appearance.

As image-bearers of God, our connection with him is essential. The closer we are to God, the more we reflect his character and likeness. If we ever doubt the importance of this connection, we need only look to his relentless pursuit of us. Despite our tendency to neglect, minimize, or push him aside, God continues to seek relationship with us, demonstrating the depth of his love and desire for intimacy.

Read Genesis 1:27-31:

“God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.’

Then God said, ‘I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.’ And it was so.

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.”

**Reflection Questions:**

1. How does understanding that you are made in God’s image shape the way you see yourself and your purpose in life?

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2. In what ways do you feel you reflect God’s character and likeness to those around you? Are there areas where you feel disconnected from God’s image?

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3. How can you cultivate a closer relationship with God to more fully reflect his character in your daily life?

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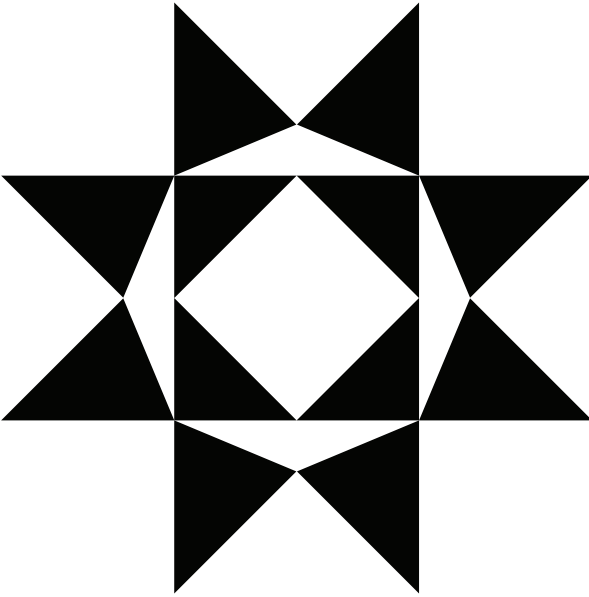
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**Prayer Prompt:**

Lord, thank you for creating me in your image and calling me to reflect your likeness to the world. Help me to grow closer to you, so that I can live out my purpose and represent you faithfully. When I feel distant or disconnected, remind me of your relentless love and the way you pursue relationship with me. Guide me to reflect your character in all that I do. Amen.





WEEK TWO

# DISCIPLESHIP

## DAY 1

Discipleship to Jesus takes more than knowledge—it requires whole life integration. We settle for a shallow form of discipleship when we live as though the highest calling of discipleship is knowing the truth.

In too much of our Christian formation and Christian discipleship, we've taught people how to learn but not how to live. Deep discipleship happens when what we learn becomes what we live.

Discipleship is a commitment that involves every part of our lives, and is not just a hobby. It only truly makes sense when following Jesus is the central purpose of our life.

Whether we like it or not, we are all deeply formed by what we do, which means we are being formed all the time. What we watch, read, and listen to is forming us. The people we interact with form us. The phone in our pocket forms us. The places we live, work, and play form us. The difficulty of discipleship is that most things are deforming us out of becoming like Jesus,

not forming us to become more like him.

The hard truth of this moment in history is that without intentionality, we cannot outmatch the level of formation we are experiencing on a daily basis. In a world that is increasingly complex, what will more deeply shape our formation: the algorithms we encounter multiple hours a day or the church service we attend once a week (or month)?

That means if we want to be holistic disciples, we have to engage in the rhythms of counter-formation: habits that reform us into the people of God. We have to develop practices and habits that help us develop into the people who reflect Jesus' beauty, creativity, kindness, joy, and love.

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“It is really pretty simple but deceptive in how profound it is: your life is the byproduct of your lifestyle. By your lifestyle we mean your rituals and routines, the way you spend your time and your money, the way you organize your day or your week or your year. Your system is perfectly designed to get you the results you are getting.”

John Mark Comer<sup>1</sup>

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Read Luke 9:23-24:

“Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it.”

**Reflection Questions:**

1. In what areas of your life do you see the gap between what you know about Jesus and how you live out his teachings?

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2. What habits in your daily life are forming you, and how can you intentionally cultivate habits that help you reflect Jesus more fully?

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3. How does the culture around you shape your identity and values, and what steps can you take to counter that formation with intentional, Christ-centered rhythms?

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**Prayer Prompt:**

Lord, thank you for calling me to follow you—not just in knowledge, but in every part of my life. Help me to move beyond shallow discipleship and into a deeper, more integrated walk with you. Teach me to live out what I’ve learned, to embrace the cost of following you, and to surrender my life daily to your will. Give me the courage to deny myself and take up my cross, knowing that in losing my life for your sake, I will find true life. May my discipleship be a reflection of your purpose for me, and may it shape every part of who I am. Amen.





# DISCIPLESHIP

## DAY 2

### **Becoming Like Jesus**

In the process of becoming like Jesus, what we learn becomes what we live.

Following Jesus requires a willingness to take up your cross and follow Jesus daily. What we learn becomes what we live when we begin to integrate Jesus' teachings with every area of our life. When we take up our cross, we're choosing daily to remind ourselves that we do not live for ourselves, but in accordance with the ways and teachings of Jesus.

In an age of self-fulfillment, where the modern ethos for wise living is living authentically to yourself and your deepest desires, the call to carry the cross and die to self is extremely counter-cultural. Our culture is built on the belief that the depth of our happiness is tied to how deeply we can stay true to ourselves. But this desire to pursue self-fulfillment at all costs directly clashes with Jesus' call to discipleship.

To be Jesus' disciple, we must go the way of self-denial in a time of self-fulfillment. We'll face this conflict and tension daily—the pull between following our own desires, chasing what we think will make us happy, and embracing what Jesus calls us to do as his disciples.

Discipleship to Jesus isn't about living authentically but about living under his authority. When Jesus calls us to follow him, he calls us to willingly submit to him, his will, and his ways. We can't settle for an "authentic spirituality" that conforms Jesus into our image rather than shaping us into his. Taking up our cross requires a whole life commitment. It's the daily practice of dying to ourselves, our desires, and our own fulfillment so that we can align our lives and longings to Jesus.



Read Philippians 2:5-11:

"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, 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!

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

**Reflection Questions:**

1. What areas of your life feel most resistant to the call of self-denial and taking up your cross?

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2. How do you navigate the tension between cultural values of self-fulfillment and Jesus’ call to self-denial?

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3. In what ways can you intentionally align your daily choices and desires with the teachings of Jesus?

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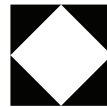
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**Prayer Prompt:**

Lord, thank you for the example of Jesus, who humbly submitted to your will and showed us the way of true discipleship. Help me to follow him daily, choosing self-denial over self-fulfillment. Teach me to surrender my desires, my will, and my pursuits, so that my life may reflect your authority and your ways. Give me the strength to take up my cross each day and live authentically in alignment with you. Amen.



# DISCIPLESHIP

## DAY 3

### **Forming Habits through Practices**

As practicing Christians, and especially as disciples of Christ, it's essential to understand the transformation that shapes both our inner attitude and outward actions. So, what does transformation mean? First, it is inevitable. The decisions we make shape who we become. We can choose to engage intentionally, staying mindful of the influences around us, or take a passive approach and, for better or worse, find ourselves shaped by the world.

This influences how we eat, spend our money, manage our relationships, finances, work ethic, etc. Logically, our brains understand that eating fast food on a regular basis is not putting our bodies in optimal health. We don't argue (outwardly, at least) that too much time on social media is detrimental to our relational and mental health. However, when our alarm goes off at 5am to get up and exercise, the disconnect between our logical appreciation for transformation and

our emotional acceptance of what active transformation requires, is stark and often overwhelming. The transformation we seek involves effort and sacrifice counterintuitive to our honest selves; the transformation we experience more often appeals to our desire for comfort and ease, yet it lacks satisfaction.

Practices of spiritual habits (like reading our Bible, praying, fasting, etc.) help equip us for the journey of becoming more like Jesus. They help us pay attention to the type of people we are becoming. When we engage with spiritual practices, it is important to remember that they shape us. Not because they help us become a better person, but instead, spiritual practices help us train ourselves to become more like Jesus.

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“One of the great temptations of the spiritual life is to believe that if I were in another season of life, I could be more spiritual. The truth is that spiritual transformation takes place as we embrace the challenges and opportunities associated with each season of our life.” Ruth Haley Barton<sup>2</sup>

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**Reflection Questions:**

1. What are some areas in your life where you see the disconnect between knowing what's good for you and actually making the effort to change?

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2. How do you approach spiritual practices (such as praying, Bible reading, or fasting), and how do you think they shape your identity and transformation?

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3. In what ways can you make space for more intentional spiritual habits in your daily routine to align more closely with the example of Jesus?

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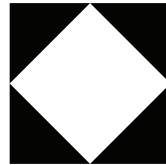
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**Prayer Prompt:**

Holy Spirit, as I embrace the spiritual practices and resources that are available to me, would you help me grow to become more like Jesus and live for others?



# DISCIPLESHIP

## DAY 4

### **Dusty Followers**

There was a saying in Jesus' day that gets at the heart of discipleship. In Jewish tradition, disciples would closely follow their rabbi, accompanying them wherever they went. It was said, "May you be covered in his dust," meaning that the disciple followed the rabbi so closely that as the rabbi walked, his trail of dust would coat the disciple. Disciples were so committed to becoming like their rabbi in mannerisms, speech, action, and thought that they would even share the same dust.

Discipleship isn't a flawless journey—it's filled with moments of stumbling, getting lost, or even heading in the wrong direction. While we might imagine our path of becoming like Jesus as a steady upward climb, the reality is it's full of ups and downs. Practicing the ways of Jesus is never about perfection, but integration.

We want the dust of Jesus to cover every area of our lives, so that we become like him: in how we talk to others, eat our food, sit and watch TV, the way we work and play, how we drive our cars, clean our apartments, parent our children, and worship on a Sunday morning. Following Jesus affects every area of our lives.

This kind of discipleship is not something we haphazardly fall into. Integrated discipleship to Jesus takes commitment and effort on our part to allow Jesus access to every area of our life. As we learn to practice the way of Jesus, we will begin to experience the deep and meaningful change we are longing for.



Read Matthew 16:24:

"Then Jesus said to his disciples, 'Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up

their cross and follow me.”

**Reflection Questions:**

1. How can you intentionally invite Jesus into the everyday moments of your life, such as how you work, rest, or interact with others?

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2. What is one area where you can begin integrating the teachings of Jesus more fully, so that his “dust” covers that part of your life?

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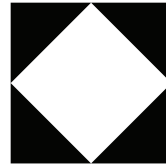
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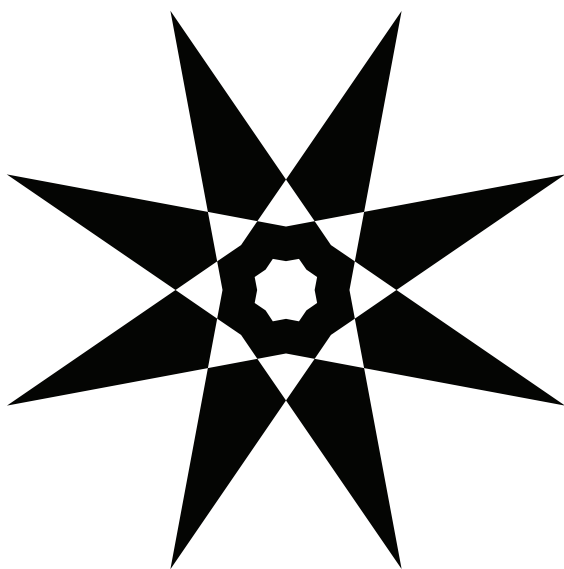
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**Prayer Prompt:**

Holy Spirit, I invite you to help me follow Jesus more closely. Show me where I am not fully living out his teachings and give me the strength to reorient those areas of my life to reflect his ways. Guide me in becoming more like Jesus in every moment—whether I am at work,

at home, or anywhere else. Thank you for the grace that covers me when I stumble and for the power that transforms me to live more like him.







**WEEK THREE**



# PRESENCE

## DAY 1

### **Be with God**

One of the great challenges of discipleship to Jesus is balancing our *doing for God* and our *being with God*. It is entirely possible to engage with spiritual disciplines and yet not actually be with God. In fact, some of us can become really good at avoiding our relationship with God by filling our time doing things for God.

One of the struggles of discipleship today is our culture's addiction to doing. Doing makes us feel accomplished and successful. It can provide us with an adrenaline rush that makes us feel better about ourselves. Doing requires a rapid pace of living that allows us to distract ourselves or avoid certain parts of our life God might be asking us to explore. The trouble is when we busy ourselves with doing, we often don't have time or energy left to invest in our relationship with God, others, or ourselves.

We learn to be with God by giving him more of our attention and being present with him. What we give our attention to has vast im-

plications for the kind of people we become. Abiding in Jesus means we don't give our attention to so many of the things that call for our attention. If we want to become like Jesus, we are not helping ourselves by giving our attention to the sensationalism of cable news, the outrage of Twitter, or the distraction of our phones.

To abide in Jesus means we need to refocus our attention on God in the midst of the chaos, busyness, and distraction of our daily lives. We need a slowed-down spirituality that does not require more doing but rather one that allows us to connect with Jesus. God himself is the goal of deep discipleship. The goal is not becoming a better person, achieving some measure of success, or becoming the version of ourselves that God always intended us to be. Deep discipleship leads us to communion with God. The whole purpose of our pursuit of Jesus is to be with God and experience his love, joy, and goodness.

If we want to get back to the heart of discipleship, we need to rediscover the art of abiding in Jesus. We need to re-balance our doing for God and our being with God. What if discipleship wasn't the process where we learned to simply become a better person, but where we learned to actually enjoy God?

Read John 15:4-7:

“Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

‘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. If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.’”

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“He does not ask much of us, merely a thought of him from time to time, a little act of adoration, sometimes to ask for his grace, sometimes to offer him your sufferings, at other times to thank him for the graces, past and present, he has bestowed on you, in the midst of your troubles to take solace in him as often as you can. Lift up your heart to him during your meals and in company; the least little remembrance will always be the most pleasing to him. One need not cry out very loudly; he is nearer to us than we think.”  
Brother Lawrence<sup>3</sup>

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**Reflection Questions:**

1. How do you tend to balance *doing for* God and *being with* God in your daily life?

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2. What distractions or busyness in your life might be hindering your ability to truly abide in Jesus and connect with him?

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3. How can you intentionally create space to simply be with God every day, without focusing on productivity or tasks?

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**Prayer Prompt:**

Jesus, be with me.

(Pray this simple prayer throughout your day when you think of it. Don't focus on how many times a day you say it. Focus on inviting Jesus into your day, continuously.)

# PRESENCE

## DAY 2

### Practice - Reading Scripture

The goal of reading Scripture is not about information but spiritual formation. We spend time with God's Word so that we "will not conform to the patterns of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of our minds" (Romans 12:2). When we read, meditate, and study God's Word our minds begin to take on the mind of Christ. Spending time reading God's Word is a central practice of becoming like Jesus.

However, we would be wise to realize that it is entirely possible to read the Bible every day and still not be transformed into the way of Jesus. It is all too easy to read Scripture and subject it to our personal preferences and allow it to reinforce what we already believe rather than challenge us toward new growth. If we want Scripture to renew our minds, we have to allow Scripture to have the authority over our life that it deserves. Like Eugene Peterson says in *Eat This Book*, we "don't simply learn or study Scripture,

we assimilate to it and take it into our lives in such a way that it gets metabolized into acts of love, cups of cold water, missions into all the world, healing and evangelism and justice in Jesus' name, hands raised in adoration of the Father, and feet washed in company with the Son."<sup>4</sup>



Read Hebrews 4:12:

"For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."

### Reflection Questions:

1. How do you currently approach reading Scripture? Do you read it for information do you allow it to transform your heart and mind?

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2. What areas of your life might need to be challenged or renewed by the truth of Scripture?

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He appeared in the flesh, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.”

3. How can you integrate Scripture more deeply into your everyday life, allowing it to shape your actions and relationships?

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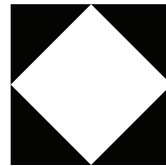
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**Prayer Prompt:**

Praying Scripture is a powerful way to connect with God and allow his Word to shape your heart and mind.

Read 1 Timothy 3:16-17 slowly and meditatively. Allow each word or phrase to sink in. Don't rush—let God speak to you through the words:

“Beyond all question, the mystery from which true godliness springs is great:

# PRESENCE

## DAY 3

### Practice - Prayer

The goal of prayer is to be continually conscious of God, remembering him and abiding in him throughout the whole day. While many of us pray before meals or at night before sleep, and there's nothing wrong with that, Jesus' vision for prayer is much deeper and more robust.

Too easily, we compartmentalize our lives, dividing the sacred and the secular in ways they were never meant to be separated. We can spend our morning in prayer and then go the entire day without experiencing the presence of God. The practice of prayer is designed to integrate and unify our lives. God desires more than just moments of our day—he wants our hearts all throughout the day. We

can become so overwhelmed by the pace of life and our never-ending to-do lists that we forget to look for God throughout the day. Prayer is the practice of awakening our lives to the reality that God is always present, always invested, and always attentive to us, as we should be to him.

“Prayer can't be mastered. Prayer always means submission. To pray is to willingly put ourselves in the unguarded, exposed position. There is no climb. There is no control. There is no mastery. There is only humility and hope. To pray is to risk being naive, to risk believing, to risk playing the fool. To pray is to risk trusting someone who might let.”<sup>5</sup>



Read 1 Thessalonians 5:17:

“...pray continually...”

### Reflection Questions:

1. How do you currently integrate prayer into your daily routine? In what ways might you compartmentalize your life, which prevents you from experiencing God's presence throughout the day?

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2. What does it mean for you to pray continually, as Paul encourages in 1 Thessalonians 5:17? What changes can you make to keep your heart more aware of God's presence in every moment?

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3. Pastor and author, Tyler Staton, writes that prayer involves humility, submission, and trust. In what areas of your life do you find it hard to fully submit to God in prayer, and how can you grow to trust him more deeply?

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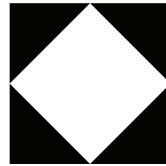
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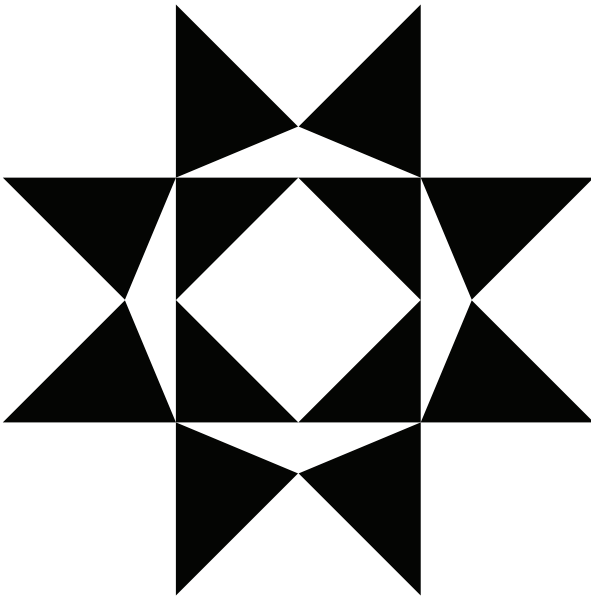
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**Prayer Prompt:**

Dear God, help me to be mindful of your presence throughout my day, allowing me to turn my heart

to you in every moment, with thoughts of gratitude, requests, and praise, so that my life becomes a continuous conversation with you. Guide me to see your hand in all things and respond with a prayerful heart. Amen.







**WEEK FOUR**



# COMMUNITY

## DAY 1

Jesus' call to follow him is also a call to connect with others. Discipleship and transformation always happen within the context of community. Yet when we think about spiritual formation, too often the church emphasizes things we do individually. We read our Bibles and other spiritual books on our own, pray by ourselves, and do devotions in an isolated place. However, discipleship to Jesus was never meant to be separated from community. As followers of Jesus, community is the environment that enables transformation. God does not expect us to follow Christ and engage in the practices of discipleship on our own.

In community, others can hold us accountable, encourage us towards Jesus, and challenge us to run harder after him. It doesn't matter if you define "church as a Sunday

gathering around a stage, a much smaller community around a table, or a mixture of both, we can't follow Jesus alone."<sup>6</sup> The call to become like Jesus is also a call to be in community with others. On the night before Jesus was crucified, his closest friend John records Jesus' teaching about the importance of community. It wasn't simply another teaching—it was the only official commandment Jesus gave. On the last night of his life, Jesus said:

"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 commanded us to love one another as he has loved us; by this love, the world will know that we are true disciples. The truth is that as difficult as community can be, it is indispensable to discipleship. As Adele Calhoun puts it, "God's family is meant to be the 'show and tell' of what true belonging and love looks like...God's one plan for reaching the world is rooted in the community of broken people who gather with a desire to love him and bring in his kingdom. We will never be perfect people; but imperfect people committed to a radical Spirit-empowered love can change their relationships and their world."<sup>7</sup>

We best express the image and likeness of Jesus when we are in a community that is committed to becoming more like Jesus together. We aren't meant to share just our Sunday mornings with one another, but our whole lives. That's why connecting with others is core to our discipleship. We can only learn to become like Jesus fully in the context of community.



Read 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.”

**Reflection Questions:**

How have you experienced the transformation of discipleship within a community? What role have others played in encouraging or challenging you in your faith journey?

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2. In what ways can you deepen your commitment to loving oth-

ers in the same way Jesus has loved you? How can you apply this commandment in your relationships within your church or community?

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3. What obstacles or challenges do you face in fully connecting with a community of believers? How can you overcome them to more effectively live out the call to follow Jesus alongside others?

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**Prayer Prompt:**

Jesus, community can be tough. Even you were betrayed by your followers. Please give me the strength to forgive those who have hurt me and to ask for forgiveness from those I've hurt. Help me live in peace with others. Amen.

# COMMUNITY

## DAY 2

### **Practice – Corporate Worship**

Worship is not inherently about attending church, singing songs, and listening to a sermon. However, the truth is, gathering for worship is becoming more and more vital. After dozens of hours of secular programming each week, we need the anchor of weekend services to re-center our minds on truth and open our hearts to God for healing and renewal.

As James K.A. Smith says, “Christian worship is essential counter-formation to those rival liturgies we are often immersed in, cultural practices that covertly capture our loves and our longings, miscalibrating them, and orienting us to rival visions of the good life.”<sup>8</sup> Each time we gather together, we are being reformed and reminded that our ultimate pursuit of formation is

to become like Jesus—not like the culture we live in.

Every time we gather to worship with other believers, we are reminded that we are not alone. In a world of isolation, we need that reminder. In a world of chaos and confusion, we need the weekly rhythm of gathering together to worship something outside of ourselves and to experience connection with others and the divine.

While it’s true that you can experience God’s presence anywhere (since God is everywhere), it’s not accurate to say that “anywhere” is the same as a place of worship. The New Testament tells us that God encounters us with his presence and power in a special and unique way when the body of believers come together. As we strive to become like Jesus, corporate worship is essential to our transformation.

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“You cannot find excellent corporate worship until you stop trying to find excellent corporate worship and pursue God himself. The notion that you can come to church on Sunday and bend your knee in worship when in fact you have not done so during the week is a delusion.” D.A. Carson<sup>9</sup>

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**Reflection Questions:**

1. How does participating in corporate worship help you re-center your heart and mind on God amidst the distractions of the world?

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2. In what ways does worship with other believers encourage your spiritual growth and transformation into the likeness of Jesus?

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3. How can you contribute to fostering a deeper sense of community and connection during corporate worship gatherings?

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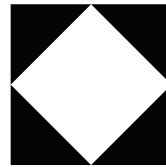
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**Prayer Prompt:**

Holy Spirit, help me to recognize the power and importance of gathering together in worship. Open my heart to the transformative work you want to do in me through the community of believers. Guide me to engage fully in the worship experience, allowing it to recalibrate my heart and mind to reflect the love and purpose of Jesus. Amen.



# COMMUNITY

## DAY 3

### **Practice – Discipleship Communities**

There is a basic truth about humanity that Eugene Peterson describes well in his book *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction*: “Scripture knows nothing of the solitary Christian. People of faith are always members of a community. Creation itself was not complete until there was community...God never works with individuals in isolation, but always with people in community.”<sup>10</sup> Peterson continues to discuss the centrality of community within the church, but we would be remiss to forget that we all were once on the outside and have been brought from stranger to neighbor, to brother and sister.

We are not meant to do this faith journey alone. We need each other. As much as we may not like to admit it, we are called to be in community with fellow believers. And it is through connection with one another that we become more like Jesus and learn to live for others.

Unfortunately, Christian community can sometimes be disappointing. It’s an imperfect group of broken people, each following Jesus in their own way, and it can often feel isolating. For some people Christian community is one of the loneliest places of our week. Church doesn’t always feel safe because Christians are good at sharing past struggles but often have a hard time being honest about what’s happening in the present. Christian community can sometimes feel like the expectation is perfection rather than openness.

Christian community can feel isolating and it can also feel insular. Many churches and small groups get stuck in a community with people who look and think like they do. Creating a community with people who don’t share our worldview or who might challenge our politics feels too difficult, so we opt out. After a long week at work, we don’t want to navigate an area of disagreement with someone who believes differently than us. But when we surround ourselves with people who look, think, and act like us, it is a poor environment for growth. For some of us, our greatest hurts have come from the faith community. The church has sometimes caused wounds through judgment or even spiritual abuse, leaving us harmed by the very place meant to

be a safe space to encounter God.

Yet, those we're in community with are also made in God's image, reflecting his character and beauty to us, just as we do to them. When we try to follow God on our own, we miss out on the fullness of who he is and who he calls us to be. We need each other.

The paradox of Christian community is that, while some of our deepest wounds may come from within the church, it's also the place where we can experience true healing.



Read Acts 2:42-47:

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”

**Reflection Questions:**

1. How does the concept of community in Scripture challenge or deepen your understanding of your role within the body of Christ?

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2. In what ways have you experienced transformation through Christian community, and how have you seen that same community help others grow?

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3. Reflecting on Acts 2:42-47, how does the early Church's commitment to fellowship, teaching, prayer, and service inspire you to live more fully as part of a community of believers?

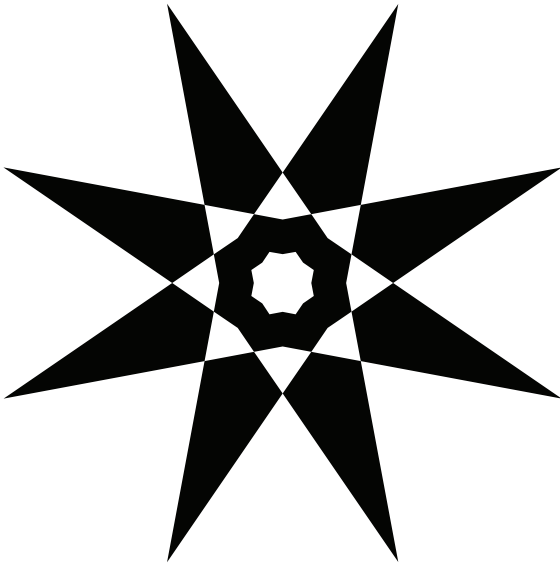
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**Prayer Prompt:**

Jesus, help me remain committed to your bride—the Church. Help me see the beauty. Give me compassion and grace for those in my church, in my small group and even “on the stage” at worship every weekend. Help me to love as you have loved. Help me to forgive as you have forgiven. Help me to remain committed to your bride, just as you have. Amen.





**WEEK FIVE**



# SIMPLICITY

## DAY 1

We live in an incredibly fast-paced world where everything feels non-stop, always pushing for more, and constantly operating at maximum intensity. This mindset shows up in every aspect of life—work, technology, education, and even how we approach leisure.

Productivity is almost core to our identity. Being a successful person is synonymous with busyness and output. Everything seems to be about growth and encouraging people to seek better, faster and more—whether in possession, status, or experiences. We seem to always push for the latest and greatest.

While these traits can drive progress and innovation, they can also lead to significant challenges. Anxiety, burnout, and depression have never been higher. The relentless pursuit of more can lead to strug-

gles in mental health and the feeling that we never measure up. It weakens our relationships by shifting the focus from meaningful connection to transactional interactions.

Christian teaching, in particular, offers a counter-cultural mindset to this ethos. In a world driven by consumerism and busyness, the way of Jesus offers a different path: one of simplicity. Cultivating this offers a compelling witness of contentment and trust in God. Simplicity points others to a greater reality: the sufficiency and joy of life in Christ. It is the discipline of intentionally letting go of nonessentials to focus on what truly matters.

What makes this tricky is that sometimes even discipleship to Jesus can be commandeered by the cultural norms around us. Suddenly what is meant to be relational between Jesus and his followers becomes transactional. The call to become like Jesus is replaced with a call to become the best version of ourselves. But this misses the very heart of what Jesus actually desires, which is us!

In John 15, Jesus explains that being his disciple means remaining connected to him (abiding), just as a branch stays connected to a tree. He emphasizes that without him, “we can do nothing.”

What Jesus is saying is that we can spend our lives doing discipleship, but if we are doing it apart from him it will amount to nothing. Imagine working in an orchard: planting trees, watering, pruning, fertilizing, and providing the trees with protection from the elements. Yet when the time comes for harvest, despite all your effort, there is no fruit. It would be frustrating to say the least. For many of us, however, that's exactly our experience in our spiritual journey. We can spend all of our time doing the right things, but forget that the main point is to be with God.

The Greek word for abide is *menō*, which means “to remain in, to tarry, to not depart from.” Tarrying doesn't come naturally to many of us. However, part of discipleship and learning to practice the way of Jesus is learning to slow down and stay longer than expected with Jesus. When Jesus tells us to abide in him, he is inviting us to stay longer than we planned and not feel the need to rush off to whatever is next in our day. This invitation isn't limited to our morning quiet time—it's a call to walk with Jesus in every part of our lives.

Becoming like Jesus isn't about becoming better people, or a more effective follower of Jesus. It's not about growing into the best version

of ourselves. Becoming like Jesus is about being made alive through life with Christ.

So, how do we practice this? There are three simple practices: Sabbath, fasting and solitude. We'll look at each this week.

“To abide in Christ means to keep up a habit of constant close communion with him—to be always leaning on him, resting on him, pouring out our hearts to him, and using him as our fountain of life and strength, as our chief companion and best friend. To have his words abiding in us, is to keep his sayings and precepts continually before our memories and minds, and to make them the guide of our actions and the rule of our daily conduct and behavior.” J.C. Ryle<sup>11</sup>



Read Matthew 6:25-34:

“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than

they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?

And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

**Reflection Questions:**

1. How does the constant drive for productivity and efficiency in your life affect your ability to slow down and abide in Jesus?

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2. In what ways have you made discipleship more about doing rather than being?

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3. What practical steps can you take to invite Jesus into every area of your life and tarry with him throughout your day?

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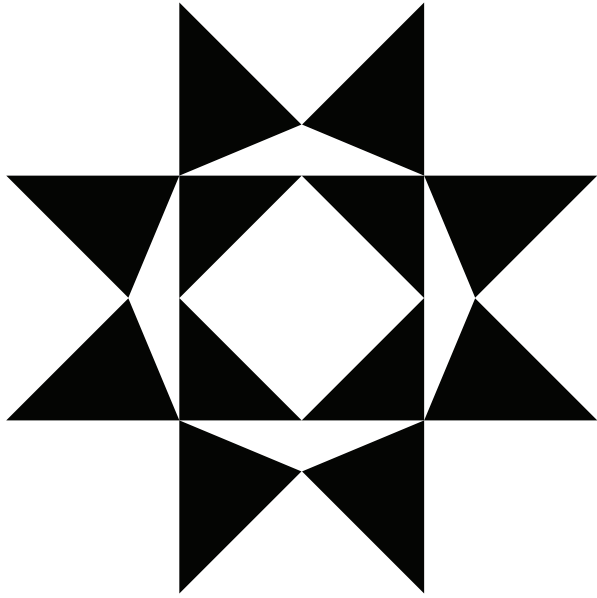
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**Prayer Prompt:**

Holy Spirit, teach me to abide in Christ. Help me slow down, stay longer, and rest in his presence. Let my heart remain in constant communion with Jesus, leaning on him as my source of life and strength. Guide me in letting go of distractions and the relentless pursuit of more, so I may find true joy and sufficiency in abiding in you. Amen.





# SIMPLICITY

## DAY 2

### Practice – Sabbath

In our fast-paced world, one of the most counter-cultural practices we can engage in is the practice of Sabbath. The Sabbath is a day God blessed and set apart for rest and worship. Jesus made rest and Sabbath a core part of his life, and we're called to follow his example. Let's be honest—rest doesn't come naturally to many of us. Our restless hearts, combined with the constant noise of our digital age and the pull of consumerism, make it even harder. However, Jesus shows us a better way. Sabbath isn't just about taking one day off; it's about adopting a spirit of restfulness that shapes how we live every day.

God himself participated in Sabbath. Let's think about that for a moment. The God who spoke the universe into existence, who holds the cosmos in the palm of his hand, who is endless energy and life and vitality: rested. Why would we

think we could make it through life without Sabbath?

Have you ever paused to rest and found it unsettling? When everything slows down, you have no place to be, or you turn off your phone for an afternoon, the silence can feel surprisingly uncomfortable. We've trained ourselves to stray from the rhythm of rest and Sabbath.

Jesus is inviting his followers to a space of rest and restoration. Sabbath is less about unplugging and more about plugging into the source of life.

Think of your phone: if you leave it unplugged—it's nice that it's not attached or grounded. But if you leave it unplugged long enough, what happens? The battery dies. Plug your cell phone into an outlet and even though it is grounded, suddenly it is rejuvenated and has new life. That's a metaphor for Sabbath. It's less about what we stop doing and more about creating space where we can be in communion with God and celebrate his good world and his good works.

It's an easy practice to neglect. It's an easy practice to think is just for people in the Old Testament. But Jesus practiced Sabbath (Luke 4:16)! And if we want to become

like him, we need to practice rest too.



Read Luke 13:10-17:

“On a Sabbath Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues, and a woman was there who had been crippled by a spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not straighten up at all. When Jesus saw her, he called her forward and said to her, ‘Woman, you are set free from your infirmity.’ Then he put his hands on her, and immediately she straightened up and praised God.

Indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, the synagogue leader said to the people, ‘There are six days for work. So come and be healed on those days, not on the Sabbath.’

The Lord answered him, ‘You hypocrites! Doesn’t each of you on the Sabbath untie your ox or donkey from the stall and lead it out to give it water? Then should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years, be set free on the Sabbath day from what bound her?’

When he said this, all his opponents were humiliated, but the people were delighted with all the won-

derful things he was doing.”

**Reflection Questions:**

1. What prevents you from fully embracing the practice of Sabbath—whether it’s distractions, busyness, or discomfort with slowing down?

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2. How can you shift your mindset from seeing Sabbath as simply “unplugging” to viewing it as an opportunity to connect deeply with God and experience his restoration?

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3. In what ways could practicing Sabbath regularly help you align your life more closely with Jesus and his rhythms of rest and renewal?

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**Prayer Prompt:**

Choose a day this week to practice Sabbath. Embracing Sabbath rest might seem challenging in our fast-paced culture, but with intentionality, it can become a refreshing and life-giving rhythm. Here are some practical tips to help you incorporate Sabbath into your routine:

**PREPARE AHEAD OF TIME**

**Plan your work:** Try to finish chores, errands, or major tasks before the Sabbath begins.

**Set boundaries:** Decide ahead of time what you'll say "no" to during the Sabbath (e.g., emails, social media, work-related calls).

**Communicate your plan:** Let family or housemates know your intentions so they can support you or join you, if possible.

**DEFINE WHAT SABBATH MEANS FOR YOU**

**Start with a timeframe:** If a full day feels overwhelming, start with a block of time (e.g., 4-6 hours).

**Focus on rest and worship:** Identify activities that feel restful and worshipful for you, such as reading Scripture, spending time in nature, or listening to worship music.

**Avoid legalism:** Don't stress about doing Sabbath "perfectly." Focus on

your heart's posture toward God.

**CREATE A RESTFUL ATMOSPHERE**

**Turn off distractions:** Limit or eliminate phone, TV, or internet use.

**Embrace silence and simplicity:** Light candles, play soft music, or sit quietly to mark the start of your Sabbath.

**Include loved ones:** Share meals, pray, or spend time with family and friends in ways that foster connection and joy. Sabbath is best done in community!

**ENGAGE IN LIFE-GIVING ACTIVITIES**

**Worship:** Attend church, listen to a sermon, or spend extended time in prayer.

**Celebrate:** Reflect on God's blessings through journaling, gratitude, or simply enjoying his creation.

**Rest:** Take a nap, enjoy a hobby, or engage in anything that refreshes your soul.

**REFLECT AND RECONNECT WITH GOD**

**Read Scripture:** Focus on passages about rest (e.g., Psalm 23, Matthew 11:28-30, Hebrews 4:9-10).

**Connect:** Spend time in prayer, asking God to reveal himself and renew your spirit.

**Reflect:** Use the time to align your heart with God's purposes and allow his peace to fill your soul.

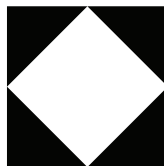
**END WITH GRATITUDE**

**Review:** Reflect on how God showed up during your Sabbath.

**Offer Gratitude:** Offer a prayer of thanksgiving for his presence and the gift of rest.

**Think Ahead:** Look for ways to adopt a spirit of Sabbath into your week.

Remember, Sabbath is a gift, not a burden. As you practice, you'll discover how it enriches your relationship with God and renews your soul.





# SIMPLICITY

## DAY 3

### **Practice – Fasting**

As we strive to become more like Jesus, we must open every part of our lives to God's presence and will, allowing him to shape and guide us completely. This requires a willingness to surrender our desires and priorities to align with his. The practice of fasting provides a powerful opportunity to do this. By setting aside physical needs or distractions, fasting creates space for God to work in us, helping us grow in dependence on him, deepen our faith, and align our hearts more fully with his purpose.

Fasting isn't for losing weight, and it's not a magical way to manipulate God into doing what we want. Instead, it's an opportunity for us to

lay down an appetite and practice self-denial—denying an appetite for food, for media, shopping, etc. Fasting empties us and opens our hearts and minds to seek God's will and grace in a way that goes beyond normal habits of worship and prayer. When we fast, we are offering God the time and attentiveness we might otherwise be giving something else in our daily life.

A good place to begin the practice of fasting is to abstain from one meal a week and spend that time in prayer. When you feel hungry throughout the day, sit with Jesus and remind yourself that he is the bread of life. Converse with Jesus about what his self-denial means to you.

Pay attention to what feelings arise in you as you are fasting. What thoughts interrupt your prayer? How does this act of self-denial affect your mood or treatment of others? Fasting often reveals to us the areas of our lives that are out of alignment from becoming like Jesus.

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“Jesus assumes that one of the three core practices of his disciples was giving, which we get. Prayer, which we love. And fasting, which we totally neglect.” Jon Tyson<sup>12</sup>

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Read Matthew 6:16-18:

“When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.”

**Reflection Questions:**

1. What appetite or activity in your life might be competing for the time and attentiveness that God desires from you? How might fasting help you redirect that focus to him?

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2. When you experience hunger or discomfort during fasting, how can you use those moments to draw closer to Jesus and reflect on his self-denial?

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3. What emotions or thoughts arise during fasting that reveal areas of your life needing greater alignment with Christ’s character and will?

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**Prayer Prompt:**

Practice fasting this week. Take one day to skip breakfast and lunch and fill that time with prayer.

Here are a few practical tips for practicing the spiritual discipline of fasting to cultivate simplicity in your life:

**START SMALL AND BE SPECIFIC**  
Begin with a short and manageable fast, such as skipping one meal or fasting from a specific activity (e.g., social media or shopping).

Choose a focus for your fast—what distraction or excess are you laying down to simplify your life and draw closer to God?

**REPLACE WHAT YOU GIVE UP WITH TIME FOR GOD**  
Use the time you would normally

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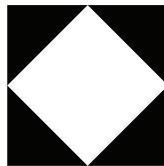
spend eating, scrolling, or consuming to pray, read Scripture, or simply sit in God's presence.

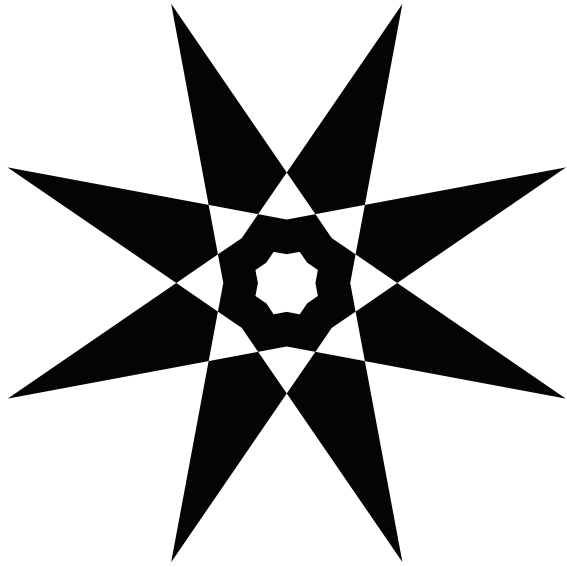
Let the hunger or discomfort remind you of your dependence on God as your ultimate source of sustenance and fulfillment.

#### **PAY ATTENTION TO WHAT SURFACES**

During your fast, notice what thoughts or emotions arise—whether it's impatience, anxiety, or craving.

Bring these to God in prayer, asking him to reveal what they might signify about areas where you need greater simplicity and trust in him.





# SIMPLICITY

## DAY 4

### **Practice - Silence and Solitude**

We live in a loud and noisy world, full of distractions and countless ways of filling our time and attention. The act of practicing silence and stillness is critical, not just for our mental health, but for nurturing our relationship with Jesus. Even though it's one of the most difficult practices, the integration of silence into our lives will utterly transform the way we follow Jesus. Silence allows us to let go of our agendas and commune with God at the core of our being. It slows us down enough to receive God's love without distractions. Silence challenges our addiction to and culture of amusement, words, music, noise, advertising, alarms, and agendas. It requires patience and waiting, not productivity and activity.

Silence makes us uncomfortable, so most of us do all we can to avoid it. We put on a podcast or music, anything to avoid the empty expanse of nothingness that silence forces us to face; however, it is in the nothingness that we find opportunities to pay attention to the Spirit of God in us and what he might bring to the surface of our souls. We avoid silence, because in silence, we notice things we would rather not notice or feel. Sometimes we're confronted with emotions like sadness, anger, loneliness, or impatience—the parts of ourselves we often try to avoid. These feelings rise to the surface in the stillness, forcing us to face them.

Because we live in such a noisy and hurried world, the discipline of silence with God can be one of the most challenging to engage. In order to help develop this practice, it's a good idea to set a timer for a few minutes when you begin. Using a timer can help you avoid constantly checking the clock and keep your focus on Jesus. Other tricks to this practice include placing your feet firmly on the floor and speaking aloud a simple prayer, "God, here I am." As thoughts, tasks, or the schedule for the day come to mind, embrace them. Instead of ignoring them invite God into those spaces and ask what his will might be for those areas of your life.



Read Psalm 46:10:

“He says, ‘Be still, and know that I am God;

I will be exalted among the nations,

I will be exalted in the earth.”

**Reflection Questions:**

1. What emotions or thoughts arise in you when you sit in silence? How might God be inviting you to confront or release these feelings in his presence?

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2. In what ways has the noise and busyness of your life distracted you from hearing God’s voice or sensing his love?

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3. How can intentionally incorporating moments of silence

and solitude into your daily routine transform your relationship with Jesus and your ability to follow him?

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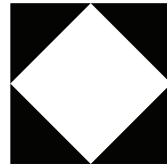
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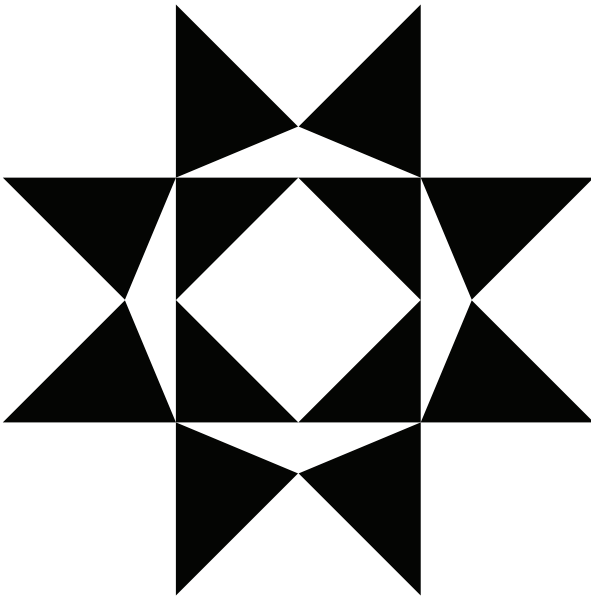
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**Prayer Prompt**

Holy Spirit, help me embrace the quiet and stillness where your voice can be heard. Teach me to be present with you in the silence and to surrender my distractions and fears. Reveal what you desire to show me and guide me to rest in your love, peace, and presence. Amen.







**WEEK SIX**



## HEART CHECK

### **Remembering the Gospel**

When we, followers of Jesus, start talking heavily about practices, it is easy for our hearts to subtly shift toward living for Jesus and not with Jesus. We want to pause this week and refocus on the gospel. Remember, the Christian faith and discipleship to Jesus is not about trying harder, but instead, it's about becoming like Jesus.



Read John 15:1-17:

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are al-

ready clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

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. If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for every-

thing that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. This is my command: Love each other.”

**Reflection Questions:**

1. How does the idea of “abiding in Jesus” (John 15:4-5) challenge or reshape your understanding of living with Jesus instead of merely living for him?

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2. In what ways do your spiritual practices reflect a growing relationship with Jesus rather than striving to earn his approval or achieve personal goals?

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3. How can you intentionally refocus your daily life to prioritize connection with Jesus as the source of your transformation?

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4. In what areas of your life do you sense God inviting you to shift from a mindset of doing tasks for him to cultivating a deeper relationship with him?

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5. How do you feel like you are growing in the call to become like Jesus and live for others through this series?

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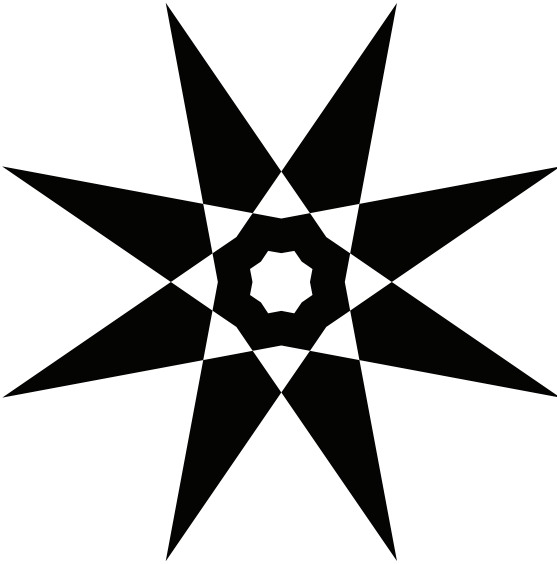
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**Prayer Prompt:**

This week take some time to pray through some of the practices we’ve already looked at over the last few weeks.







**WEEK SEVEN**

# GENEROSITY

## DAY 1

Generosity is an essential part of the Christian life because it reflects the very nature of Jesus. To become more like him, we should aim to develop a spirit of generosity in every area of our lives. From creating the world to giving us his Son, God's generosity is limitless. As his image-bearers, we're called to mirror his character in how we live. When we practice generosity, we join in God's work in the world and reveal his heart to others.

Generosity, however is not just about giving money or possessions; it's about developing a heart of compassion. By giving of our time, talents, and resources, we cultivate empathy and actively care for the needs of others, embodying the love of Christ. Generosity fosters a spirit of connection, helping to build and strengthen the community.

Not only that, but becoming generous people also helps us cultivate an eternal perspective. Jesus teaches us that where our treasure is, our hearts will be also (Matthew 6:21). When we give generously, we shift

our focus from temporary, worldly things to the eternal, heavenly reality. Generosity helps us keep our priorities aligned with God's kingdom and reminds us that our lives are about more than accumulating wealth or possessions; they are about making a difference for God's purposes.

When we develop a heart of compassion and an eternal perspective, we are also freed from enslavement to materialism. Living in a culture that values acquisition and success, generosity is a powerful antidote to materialism. By choosing to give freely, we release the hold that possessions and wealth can have on us. Generosity helps us embrace the simplicity of living for God's glory rather than for the accumulation of things.

Generosity creates a ripple effect, blessing not only those we give to but also bringing us joy and fulfillment. Jesus reminds us, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). Through giving, we experience God's provision and faithfulness, deepening our trust in him and opening our hearts to his blessings.

Cultivating a spirit of generosity aligns us with God's character, fosters compassion, shifts our focus to eternal values, and frees us from

materialism. It enriches both the lives of others and our own, drawing us closer to God.

In response to God's abundant generosity, becoming more like Jesus means learning to give generously, joyfully, and sacrificially—offering our time and resources to support the local church, care for the vulnerable, and contribute to discipleship efforts worldwide.

Sometimes we hesitate to give generously because we're unsure where to give. We worry about whether organizations are stewarding money well or making a real impact. We might hold back, fearing we'll unintentionally enable harmful behavior or diminish someone's dignity. While these concerns are valid, they shouldn't stop us from giving generously. A generous life doesn't mean giving recklessly—it means giving thoughtfully, guided by the wise principles for managing resources that Scripture provides. True generosity reflects God's heart and allows us to make a meaningful impact on the world around us.



Read Matthew 6:19-21:

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store

up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

**Reflection Questions:**

1. Where has your view of money strayed out of alignment from the way Jesus taught? Are there people that God has called you to be generous to that you haven't yet?

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2. How does the example of God's generosity (by giving his son) challenge or inspire the way you approach generosity in your own life?

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3. In what areas of your life do you find it difficult to be generous, and what might that reveal about your heart or priorities?

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4. How does the practice of generosity help you shift your focus from temporary, worldly things to an eternal, kingdom-focused perspective?

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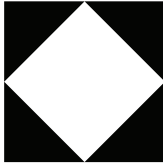
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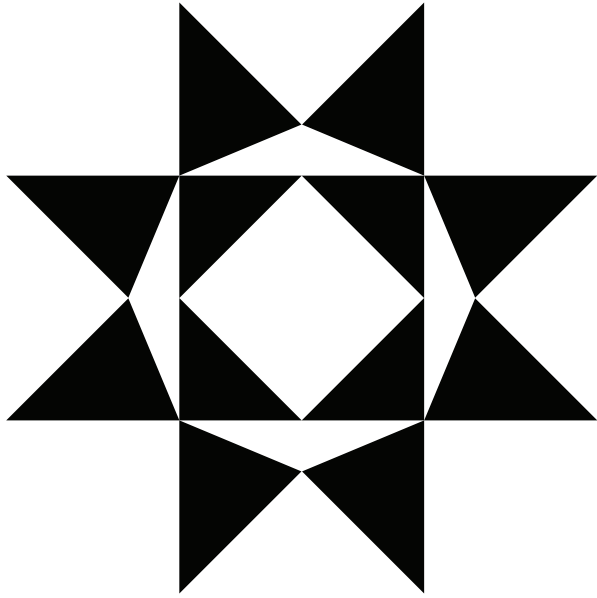
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**Prayer Prompt:**

Pray Matthew 6:19-21. What is Jesus saying to you as his disciple about cultivating a spirit of generosity as you pray this text?







# GENEROSITY

## DAY 2

### **Practice - Giving Our Money**

If we want to become like Jesus, we have to talk about money. Jesus talked about finances more than almost any other topic and has a lot to say about the ways our money can contribute to his restorative work in the world. As uncomfortable as it is, Jesus tells us that we're incapable of serving God if we are serving money (Matthew 6:24). But what does that mean? If we devote ourselves to God, we will despise money. The opposite is also true: if you love God, you will hate money.

If we want to love God we need to learn what it means to give generously. Giving generously requires a shift in perspective in two ways: how we see our money and how we see those in need.

If we aim for wealth and it is the most important thing to us, or if we see our bank accounts as our hard-earned cash instead of God's gift to us, then we're in danger of being devoted to money. As disci-

ples learning to become like Jesus, we are called to share our resources. We're called to stay away from sitting on our opportunities, and storing up treasures and wealth in this world for ourselves. It's not about exploiting every loophole we can to keep as much for ourselves, but about leveraging our assets in every way we can for the sake of the kingdom.

Everything we are given is a gift from God to be given back for the restoration of the world, just as Jesus gave himself as a sacrifice. If there is any lack of generosity in us, any area we'd rather keep "ours," it displays our heart's refusal to acknowledge that our money and assets are not really ours, but God's.

It's easy to believe our wealth is solely the result of our hard work and effort. While many of us work diligently for what we have, it's important to recognize that factors entirely beyond our control—like the time and place we were born, the talents we were given, or even our ability to work—have shaped our opportunities. None of these are things we earned; they are all gifts from God.

Acknowledging this truth reshapes how we view ourselves, others, and God. It transforms our perspective on money and resources, remind-

ing us that they are entrusted to us not for self-centered purposes, but to reflect God's generosity and care for the world.



Read Hebrews 13:15-16:

“Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that openly profess his name. And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.”

**Reflection Questions:**

1. How does the perspective that all resources are gifts from God challenge the way you currently view or manage your finances?

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2. In what ways might your current financial priorities or habits reflect an attachment to money rather than to God's kingdom?

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3. How can you shift your mindset to see giving generously as a way of participating in God's restorative work in the world, rather than simply fulfilling an obligation?

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**Prayer Prompt:**

Take a moment to reflect on the ways God has been generous to you. Express gratitude for his gifts. Invite the Holy Spirit to reveal any areas of your life where you may be holding back, whether in your finances, time, or resources. Ask God to soften your heart and open your eyes to opportunities to give, not just out of obligation, but from a place of joy and compassion. Pray for the wisdom to see everything you have as a gift from God, and for the courage to use it in ways that bless others and advance his kingdom. Ask God to transform your understanding of generosity, making it a reflection of his heart in the world.



# GENEROSITY

## DAY 3

### **Practice - Giving All of Ourselves**

The Good Samaritan is an example of living generously. He not only covered the injured man's immediate expenses but also promised to return and pay any additional costs. Two denarii—about two days' wages—was no small amount, yet the Samaritan's willingness to make that sacrifice and commit to the man's care stands in stark contrast to the inaction of the priest and the Levite. His actions show a generosity that goes beyond convenience or obligation.

True generosity isn't limited to financial giving, though that's an important part of it. It's about offering our time, talents, and resources to further God's kingdom. God doesn't just desire our money; He calls us to live generously in every area of our lives. Whether it's our income, skills, or opportunities, all that we have is a gift from God, and

Jesus invites us to use those blessings to reflect his love and generosity to the world.

When Jesus came, he gave himself for us, so that we might be restored to God; he withheld nothing of himself (Philippians 2). Jesus was willing to give up his position, his power, and his privilege in obedience to God's will. He was willing to die for those who were his enemies. He gave of himself sacrificially and completely to bring others to restoration.

To become like Jesus means learning to live generously, just as he did, and understanding that one of the greatest ways we can bring about God's restoration is by giving generously.



Read Luke 10:25-37:

“On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. ‘Teacher,’ he asked, ‘what must I do to inherit eternal life?’

‘What is written in the Law?’ he replied. ‘How do you read it?’

He answered, ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’

‘You have answered correctly,’ Jesus replied. ‘Do this and you will live.’

But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbor?’

In reply Jesus said: ‘A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’

‘Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?’

The expert in the law replied, ‘The one who had mercy on him.’ Jesus told him, ‘Go and do like-

wise.’”

**Reflection Questions:**

1. How does the Good Samaritan’s example of sacrificial generosity challenge your understanding of what it means to give, both financially and in terms of your time and talents?

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2. In what areas of your life—whether with your finances, time, or skills—might God be calling you to offer more generously for the sake of others and his kingdom?

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3. Reflect on Jesus’ example of giving himself fully for others. How does this inspire you to live a life of generosity that mirrors his sacrificial love?

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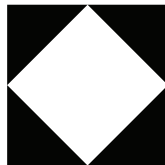
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**Prayer Prompt:**

Lord, help me to see the needs around me and respond with the same compassion and generosity as the Good Samaritan. Teach me to look beyond my own concerns and recognize the opportunities to love and serve others. Give me the courage to sacrifice my time, resources, and energy, not just when it's easy, but when it truly matters. Open my heart to those who are hurting or in need, and help me act with kindness and generosity. May my life reflect your love, reaching out to others selflessly and bringing hope and healing to the world around me. Amen.





## WEEK EIGHT

# HOSPITALITY

## DAY 1

Hospitality is a cornerstone of Christian faith and practice. In the New Testament, hospitality is not just about opening our homes to others—it is a tangible expression of love and service. Hebrews 13:2 reminds us, “Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.” What a thought! That verse should give us pause, to reflect on how deeply God values hospitality in his people.

We are in the most connected age in the history of civilization, yet we are suffering from loneliness, isolation, and closed doors unlike

any other time in history. We want to be part of something, and we have countless ways to build relationships; however, if you look up from your own phone as you walk around town, sit at the gate waiting for a flight, or drive through any number of neighborhoods in the evenings or over the weekend, you’re likely to see a lot of heads down and doors closed.

In a world that is increasingly marked by isolation, the Christian call to hospitality becomes more urgent and vital than ever. We live in a time where, despite being more connected than ever digitally, many people feel profoundly disconnected. Social media, while intended to keep us in touch, can often make us feel more alone. The pressures of work, the demands of life, and the overwhelming busyness that comes with modern living can lead us to retreat into our own little worlds, often leaving us disconnected from the community around us. In this culture of isolation, Christians are called to counteract the tide by cultivating a spirit of hospitality.

Romans 12:13 urges us, “Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.” As we learn to follow Jesus, hospitality is an act of grace, a way of opening our hearts and lives to others in the name of Jesus.

Jesus himself exemplified the ultimate hospitality. He ate with sinners and outcasts, shared meals with the marginalized, and extended welcome to all who came to him. His life was an invitation—a constant call to come, find rest, and experience God’s love and community. Jesus showed us that true hospitality goes beyond the physical act of sharing a meal or opening our homes; it is an invitation to enter into deeper relationships, to see the value and dignity in others, and to share life with them.

In today’s world, true hospitality can feel like a radical act. The isolation that many people feel in a digital age, where face-to-face interaction is increasingly rare, creates an environment where hospitality is not just needed but necessary. People long for connection. They crave the warmth of a welcoming home, a listening ear, and the comfort of shared time together. As followers of Christ, we are called to be those who offer these things—not as a duty, but as a way of embodying the love of God in a fractured world.

Hospitality can take many forms. It doesn’t always have to mean hosting a dinner party or inviting people into your home. It can be as simple as offering a kind word, a listening ear, or an invitation to share a cup of coffee. It’s about opening

our lives to others, sharing what we have—whether it’s time, resources, or simply our attention. It’s about making space for others in our often crowded and busy lives.

One of the most profound ways to cultivate a spirit of hospitality is by being present with others. In a world that constantly demands our attention through notifications, to-do lists, and endless distractions, simply being fully present in someone’s company is a gift. In giving our time and attention, we are telling others, “You matter.” And in doing so, we reflect the heart of God who delights in us and welcomes us into his family.



Read Romans 12:13:

“Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.”

**Reflection Questions:**

1. How does the example of Jesus’ hospitality—eating with sinners and outcasts—challenge the way you view and practice hospitality in your own life?

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2. In what areas of your life (time, attention, resources) could you make more space to embody hospitality and reflect God's love to those around you?

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3. How can you intentionally counteract the isolation and busyness of modern life to foster deeper, more meaningful connections with others?

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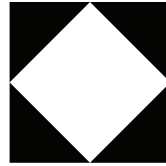
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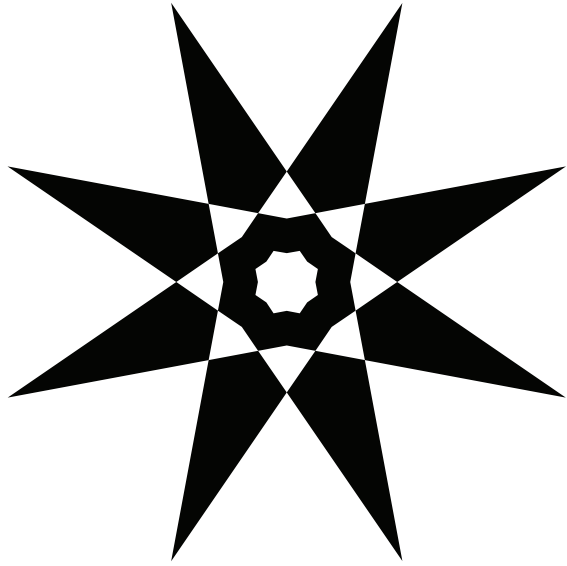
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my home, my life, and my community reflect the welcoming nature of your love. Amen.



**Prayer Prompt:**

Father, thank you for the gift of hospitality. Thank you for welcoming me into your family, for showing me kindness and love when I was a stranger. Help me open my heart to others and cultivate a spirit of welcome in a world that often feels isolating. Give me eyes to see those around me who are lonely, disconnected, or in need of your love. Empower me to be the hands and feet of Jesus, offering more than just a meal or a place to stay, but the gift of presence and genuine care. May



# HOSPITALITY

## DAY 2

### **Practice - The Table**

Hospitality is more than entertaining guests or having a Pinterest-worthy meal presentation. At its core, it is the art of making room for others, both in our physical spaces and in our lives. The table becomes a sacred place where relationships are built, burdens are shared, and grace is extended. When we invite someone to share a meal with us, we're saying, "You are welcome here. You matter."

The table has always been at the heart of the Church's story. For centuries, this is where followers of Jesus gathered. The gospel spread from one table to another, one home to the next, over the simple act of sharing a meal.

The table is such an ordinary place—so every day and routine that we can miss its significance.

But when we set a table and share a meal, we create space for people to feel seen, loved, and heard—a space where God's Spirit can work. Eating and drinking together isn't just practical; it's central to the kingdom of God.

The simple act of eating and drinking has always held a sacred place in the story of God's people. From the feasts of Israel to the Lord's Supper, the table is a recurring setting where God reveals his presence and his heart for humanity. In our fast-paced, take-out culture, we often miss the profound spiritual opportunity that eating and drinking can offer—not just as acts of sustenance, but as practices of hospitality that mirror the heart of God.

Jesus understood this deeply. Throughout the Gospels, we see him using meals as opportunities for ministry and connection. He ate with tax collectors and sinners (Mark 2:15-17), fed multitudes with a few loaves and fish (John 6:1-14), and broke bread with his disciples as a symbol of his sacrificial love (Luke 22:19). The table was where Jesus often met people in their need, offered them grace, and pointed them toward God's kingdom.

When we make eating and drinking a spiritual discipline, it shifts

the focus from the food itself to the people gathered around it. It's less about what we serve and more about who we serve. It's about being present—offering our time, our attention, and our hearts. In a world filled with distractions, sitting down for a meal can be a radical act of presence, both with God and with others.

Think of the power of the table in today's culture of isolation and busyness. By inviting someone to eat with us, we create a space where God's love can be experienced in tangible ways. A simple meal can become a divine appointment.

At its best, hospitality through eating and drinking reflects the heart of God. In the parable of the great banquet (Luke 14:15-24), Jesus illustrates the generosity of God's kingdom—a place where everyone is invited, and no one is turned away. When we open our tables to others, especially those who are lonely, marginalized, or in need, we reflect this same kingdom generosity.

The table is a sacred place, but it doesn't have to be fancy or formal. It could be takeout pizza with a neighbor, coffee with a coworker, or a home-cooked meal shared with friends. What matters is the intentionality behind it—the will-

ingness to open our lives and invite others in.



Read Luke 15:1-7:

“Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

Then Jesus told them this parable: “Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’ I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.”

**Reflection Questions:**

1. How can you intentionally create space at your table for someone who might be feeling isolated or overlooked?

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2. In what ways can the simple act of sharing a meal reflect God's love and kingdom values in your life?

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3. What distractions or barriers might be preventing you from practicing hospitality through eating and drinking, and how can you overcome them?

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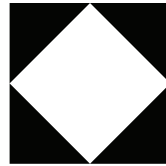
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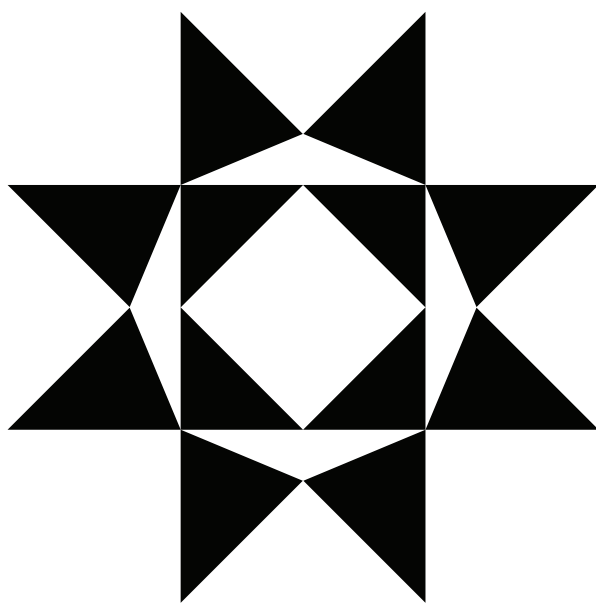
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those who feel forgotten or alone. Guide me in participating in your kingdom work, knowing that by embracing others, I am reflecting your love. May my actions mirror your heart for all people. Amen.



**Prayer Prompt:**

Jesus, I reflect on your radical hospitality—the way you welcomed sinners, shared meals with outcasts, and made room for everyone at your table. You showed us what true love and acceptance look like. I ask you to open my heart to the people around me, showing me how to offer the same grace and welcome you did. Help me to see the opportunities to open my home, my life, and my time to others, especially



# HOSPITALITY

## DAY 3

### Practice – Witness

Evangelism has taken some hits over the years. Oftentimes, when it comes to sharing our faith and the gospel of Jesus, many of us cringe. The words evangelism and witness conjure up images of street preachers and awkward conversations we've had with people when we tried to share our faith and they looked at us like we're trying to sell them a timeshare in Mexico.

When we think of witnessing we think of trying to have all the right answers to any questions someone might have about God or the Bible. But that's a misunderstanding of what witnessing is. Witnessing is not about answering someone's every question or shouting Bible verses from street corners. It's much more simple than that. Witnessing is about bearing witness.

Think about a witness in a courtroom. Their job isn't to know every

detail or argue the case; their job is to tell what they saw, what they experienced. That's the heart of witnessing for Jesus. Witnessing is about sharing what we've experienced and seen in our own lives. It's about telling the story of how God has worked in us—how his love has transformed us, how his grace has met us in our brokenness, and how his presence sustains us.

When we live as witnesses, we're not trying to convince someone with eloquent arguments or theological expertise. We're simply inviting them into the story God is writing in our lives.

Jesus is the true example of love, inclusion, and acceptance. In him, we see a constant welcoming of those who are excluded or rejected by others. His hospitality is a model of kindness and openness that is rarely seen in our world today. When Jesus welcomed others, he created spaces of welcome where strangers, enemies, outsiders, and others can become our friends. The primary purpose of the type of hospitality Jesus displayed is to create a safe and welcoming place where a stranger can be converted into a friend.

The Greek word for "hospitality" is *philoxenia*: a compound word combining the word friend (*philos*)

and foreigner (*xenos*). Hospitality is the love of people who are different from us. In a world torn apart by fear of those who are different than us, we are in desperate need of *philoxenia*.

Witnessing is about living authentically, letting the light of Jesus shine through how we love, how we serve, and how we speak with grace and truth. It's about expressing Jesus' love for the lost, as we've experienced it ourselves. Jesus himself told his disciples, "You will be my witnesses" (Acts 1:8). He didn't say they had to have all the answers. He didn't say they had to convince everyone. He just called them to share what they had seen and heard—to let others know the good news of the gospel through their words and actions.

When witnessing feels overwhelming, remember that it's not about being perfect. It's about being real. It's about showing up, sharing your story, and trusting God to do the rest. The Holy Spirit is the one who changes hearts; we're simply called to bear witness to his power and love.

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"No life of faith can be lived privately. There must be overflow into the lives of others." Eugene Peterson<sup>13</sup>

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**Reflection Questions:**

1. What ways have you seen and experienced the love of Jesus in your life? Who is someone you could share that with that doesn't know the love of Jesus?

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2. How is God calling you to be a witness today? Whose life might you impact by sharing your story, offering a kind word, or living out the love of Jesus in an ordinary moment?

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**Prayer Prompt:**

Sit in contemplative silence for a moment. Ask God to bring someone to mind who needs to experience the love of Jesus? How might you create time and space to demonstrate Jesus' love to them?





# HOSPITALITY

## DAY 4

### **Practice – Demonstrate the Gospel**

Along with eating and drinking, and witnessing, one of the ways we practice hospitality is through demonstrating the goodness of the gospel. Jesus began his ministry in the Gospel of Luke by declaring:

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the op-

pressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” Luke 4:18-19

The gospel Jesus preached has very real-world applications. He never said it was just about getting to heaven when we die. He was far more focused on getting heaven into us than getting us into heaven. His kingdom was an invasive force, breaking through the gates of hell, shining light into darkness, and pushing back evil with love.

The same power that was alive in Jesus is alive in you.

Truly.

This means we have been empowered by God’s Holy Spirit to proclaim the good news of Jesus, heal the sick, cast out demons, give sight to the blind, and prophesy too. Sound a bit too, radical? Maybe it is. But we see followers of Jesus throughout history make themselves available to the Spirit and God uses them to do wonders.

Demonstrating the gospel doesn’t only happen in the grandiose. It also happens in the mundane: in the simple acts of taking out a grieving widow’s trash, painting a shelter for the homeless or welcoming a foster child into your home for respite care.

The opportunities for us to demonstrate the gospel are truly endless and always before us. Do we have the eyes to see?



Read 2 Corinthians 5:17-21:

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

**Reflection Questions:**

1. How does understanding that the gospel has both eternal and real-world implications change the way you view your role in demonstrating it to others?

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2. What are some simple, everyday ways you can embody the love of Jesus and bring light into the darkness in your community?

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3. In what areas of your life might God be calling you to rely on the Holy Spirit more fully to proclaim and demonstrate the good news of his kingdom?

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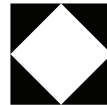
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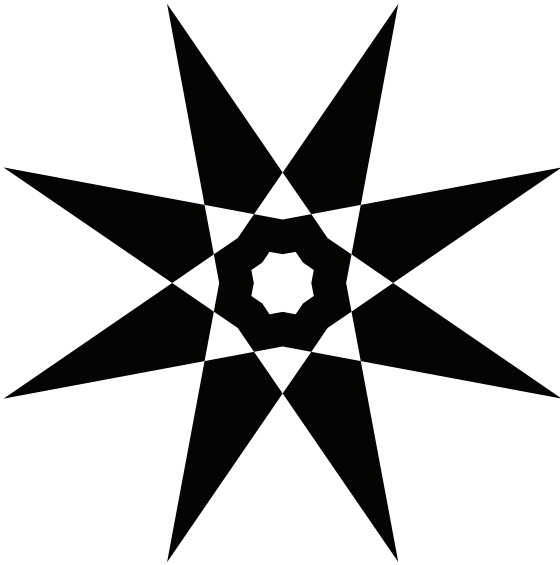
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**Prayer Prompt:**

Make this your daily prayer this week: “Holy Spirit, wherever you see fit, use me today for your glory and your kingdom.”







**WEEK NINE**

# LIFE TO THE FULL

Become like Jesus and live for others.

The reality that “Jesus changes everything” is not just a theological statement—it is the heart of the Christian life. When we truly understand who Jesus is and what he has done for us, it transforms the way we live, the way we interact with others, and the way we see the world. Through him, the practices of presence, community, simplicity, generosity, and hospitality become more than mere disciplines; they become the very expression of his love and grace working in and through us.

When we practice these disciplines, we are not just going through motions or following rules. We are allowing Jesus to change everything in our lives. We are becoming more

like him, reflecting his love and grace to a world in desperate need of both. Jesus’ presence in our lives invites us into a new way of living—a life that is marked by love, sacrifice, and joy.

Let this truth sink in: Jesus changes everything. And as we walk with him, our lives become a living testimony of that transformation. Let us continue to live out these practices, not in our own strength, but empowered by the Holy Spirit, who makes all things new.



Read 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.”

### Reflection Questions:

1. As you worked through these practices and this devotional, how have you experienced the reality that Jesus changes everything?

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2. Where have you experienced growth in becoming more like Jesus and living for others?

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3. As you reflect on the journey of discipleship towards Jesus, what areas do you feel Jesus is calling you to become “more dusty” as you follow him?

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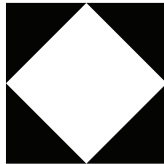
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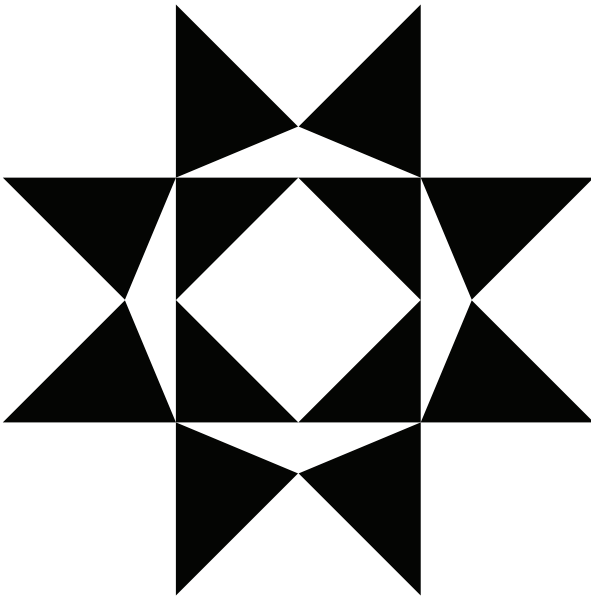
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Note: Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture references throughout this book are from the New International Version (NIV).

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## FURTHER RESOURCES

### BOOKS

- *Practicing the Way* by John Mark Comer
- *The Prayer Course* by Peter Grieg
- *Pray Like Monks, Live Like Fools* by Tyler Staton
- *Sacred Rhythms* by Ruth Haley Barton
- *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction* by Eugene Peterson

### APPS

- Lectio 365
- Read Scripture

### PODCASTS

- Practicing the Way Podcast by John Mark Comer
- The Bible Project
- Become New by John Ortberg

