

## WEEK 5

### DAY 1 – READ Ephesians 5:19.

**Worship** is about centering ourselves on God. One of the best ways to connect with Him is through music. It lifts our spirits and breathes truth into our lives. Just as it connects us to God, there's a beautiful spiritual unity when we make music together. **REFLECT** about how worshiping with others has been uplifting to you.

**DAY 2 – READ** 1 Peter 5:14, Romans 16:16, Romans 14:19, 1 Peter 4:9. When we're able to welcome others into our presence, whether at home or elsewhere, we build community. We find a place to **belong** - a place to love and be loved. Small groups at Jacob's Well are little places of community. Places to build each other up and **grow** to become like Jesus. Are you in a small group? Do you help build others up? **MAKE** it a point to **GREET** someone new this week, even if it means stepping out of your comfort zone.

### DAY 3 – READ Galatians 5:13, 1 Peter 4:10.

Just as Jesus came to serve, so should we. How can you **serve** someone this week? Whom can you ask to help? Are you comfortable learning something new in order to serve/help/encourage someone? How do you think Jesus will change your heart through helping others? **TALK** to a friend about your ideas.

**DAY 4-5 –** Love is one of the greatest topics. Libraries have been written on this one subject. Songs have been sung throughout the centuries. So what can we learn about love? **LOOK** at the Greek words in Scripture.

### READ 1 Peter 4:8.

**AGAPE** – love, love feasts, beloved. During the first couple of centuries, agape was the communal meal that Christians ate together in the evenings. Other versions of the Bible use different terms to describe this type of love: intense, unfailing, fervent, earnest, deep.

### READ Hebrews 13:1, 1 Thessalonians 4:9, 1 Peter 1:22.

**PHILADELPHIA** – brotherly love, brotherly kindness, love of the brethren.

### READ John 13:34, 1 John 3:11; 3:23; 4:7; 4:11-12.

**AGAPAO** – to welcome, to entertain, to be fond of, to love dearly, beloved.

What can we learn about these different terms as the New Testament writers used them? How would you use them to describe the different types of relationships you have? How are they similar to each other? How do they differ from each other? This week, **FIND** a way to **share** love with others.



## COMMUNITY: JESUS' VISION

For five weeks, we're taking a look at Scriptures which speak about how we should treat **one another** in community. We recommend you read and meditate on these **one another** verses using the methods below and journaling. **CHOOSE** the method you think fits best for each verse.

### PRONOUNCE IT

Read a verse over and over, emphasizing different words, then write down your thoughts.

### PICTURE IT

Put yourself in the story, thinking through each person that's present. What do you see, feel, hear, taste, and smell?

### PARAPHRASE IT

Read the passage over and over. Think about what God is saying to you. Put it into your own words. Search your heart to see how the passage may apply to your life and talk to God about it.

### PROBE IT (Use the S.P.A.C.E.P.E.T.S. acronym)

- S – Is there a sin to confess?**
- P – Is there a promise to claim?**
- A – Is there an attitude to change?**
- C – Is there a command to obey?**
- E – Is there an example to follow?**
- P – Is there a prayer to pray?**
- E – Is there an error to avoid?**
- T – Is there a truth to believe?**
- S – Is there something to praise God for?**

### PERSONALIZE IT & PRAY IT

Put your name in the place of pronouns or nouns used in the Scripture. (Instead of **our** Father, say **my** Father. Instead of the word **us**, use the word **me** or insert your name). Then verbally pray the text back to God as an act of worship. Praise Him for the truths He's sharing with you.



## WEEK 1

**READ** Deuteronomy 30:19 (NLT)

**CONSIDER** the hundreds of choices you make each day. From the moment your eyes open to when they close at night, you choose blessings or curses for yourself and others. **LOOK** at how we bless and curse **one another** with our thoughts, words, and actions. What will you choose today?

### Curses

God is kind enough to give warnings so we may avoid curses and death.

**DAY 1 – READ** James 4:11; 5:9.

All of us have had people speak against us, and we've grumbled about others. What kinds of feelings do these things evoke in us? Anger? Pain? Guilt?

**JOURNAL** about an experience you've had. **CHOOSE** the words which have been a curse to you or others.

**DAY 2 – READ** Colossians 3:9.

Have you ever thought about the different types of lies there are?

Cruel lies told from anger, cowardly lies told from fear, conceited lies told in insecurity, convenient lies told from laziness, or calculated lies told from greed. What kinds of lies have you told and why? In what kinds of lies have you been caught? How did/does that affect your relationships? What do you think would have happened if you'd told the truth?

**DAY 3 – READ** Galatians 5:26.

Different Bible versions provide us with vivid words – conceited, challenging, provoking, competitive, irritating. **REFLECT** on the feelings they produce and how these words become a curse to others.

**TAKE** time today to look at yourself and **PRAY** about the times you've spoken against, lied to, challenged, or envied others.

**The good news:** God's willing to forgive us when we come to Him.

### Blessings

Most of this summer's study time focuses on what God has said about blessing others. Let's study the results we wish to see from our blessings – **kindness, harmony, and peace.**

**DAY 4 – READ** 1 Thessalonians 5:15 & Ephesians 4:32a.

**LIST** some ways people have shown kindness to you. **THANK** God for those who have blessed you. **THINK** of one person you can bless today in word or deed. What would happen if you went out of your way to intentionally bless one person every day? How would you change? How would the community change?

**DAY 5 – READ** Romans 12:16, 15:17, Mark 9:50, 1 Corinthians 1:10.

**JOURNAL** about what it would be like to live in harmony and peace with one another. What kinds of thoughts would you think about other people? How could your thoughts become spoken words? How would you treat others, work with them, and live alongside them? **PRAY** about how God could make this a reality. **THANK** Him for giving us Jesus so one day we'll live in total peace and harmony.

## WEEK 4

**DAY 1 – READ** John 13:14, Colossians 3:13, Ephesians 4:32b.

The Greek word for wash is described as a *ceremony to perform ablution*. Just as God washes us clean through salvation and baptism, so we wash others clean through forgiveness.

**PICTURE** someone who needs your forgiveness. **IMAGINE** washing his/her feet as a way to grant a favor or graciously give of yourself.

**ASK** God to help you forgive him/her as God has forgiven you.

**DAY 2 – READ** Ephesians 4:2.

Patiently enduring other humans is no easy task, but in doing so we build and strengthen relationships with one another. **FORGIVE** quickly and don't keep a record of wrongs. Remember... no one is perfect. **PRAY** for God to show you His love for others. **LIST** the good qualities of those whom frustrate you. **REFLECT** on those good qualities during times you find your heart hardening.

**DAY 3 – READ** 1 Corinthians 12:25, Romans 12:10a.

What is care and devotion, really? Maybe you grew up in a difficult home and you're not quite sure. How do you actively cherish one another? Do you recognize strengths of others? Do have others' best interests in mind? Are you loyal and faithful? Do others know **you've got their back?** Do you express care and love for others? **FIND** a way to improve one of these areas.

**DAY 4 – READ** 1 Corinthians 1:10, Ecclesiastes 4:12.

We can't always agree with one another, but we can choose to focus on our foundational qualities rather than minor details. How can you seek to be a peacemaker? Can you work toward common goals with others? Try to keep Jesus at the center of your relationships - a three-strand cord is not easily broken. **IMAGINE** the strength of a cord and how much weight it can hold. Jesus is strong enough to hold together your relationships through great tension. Will you let Him?

**DAY 5 – READ** 1 Corinthians 11:33.

In today's world, waiting is one of the hardest things to do. **LIST** some circumstances in which it's hard to wait for others. How's your attitude while waiting in those situations? What makes it so hard? How can you learn to be more patient? How can waiting for one another be a blessing in our lives? **PRAY** for the strength to endure and for patience to endure those times of waiting.



### WEEK 3

**DAY 1 – READ** Colossians 3:16, Romans 15:14.

Depending on the version of Scripture you use, this verse may use the words **teach, admonish, caution, or warn**. It's not easy or comfortable to confront others, but often it's necessary to restore relationships. But confrontation rarely works if you don't have a friendship with the person you're trying to instruct. **Always** pray for the Holy Spirit's help.

**MAKE** sure your motives are pure. **SPEAK** the truth in love.

**WATCH** your tone. **BE** encouraging. **IMAGINE** a situation (or recall a memory) in which confrontation has or has not worked. Did you pray first? What were your motives? Did you encourage this person?

**DAY 2 – READ** James 5:16a, Matthew 5:22-25.

Confession is a powerful tool to maintain peace and harmony with one another. None of us will go through life without being offended and offending someone. As Jesus teaches in Matthew 5, the key is to deal with conflict **immediately**.

**TRY** some of these comments the next time you need to apologize.

*"That comment I made has been troubling me."*

*"I'm sorry."*

*"I was out of line."*

*"Are we okay?"*

*"Thanks for calling me out on that."*

*"Let's commit to resolving this."*

**DAY 3-5 – READ** 1 Thessalonians 4:18, 5:11, 2 Corinthians 13:11, Hebrews 3:13; 10:25.

Who doesn't want to receive words of encouragement?

Along this journey, all of us need them to keep running the race.

**LIST** the other instructions given in these verses besides encouragement. How are these related? Which verses could you use to encourage others?

**LOOK** up Joshua 1:9 as an example. Whom could you encourage today?

What actions can you take which would encourage others? At home?

In your neighborhood? In your workplace/school? **SELECT** a few things you can actually do this week.

**Remember...** a smile and a hello mean something to God. It's not always the big things we do which serve to encourage. Usually the small things make the biggest difference. What small things have encouraged you?

**REFLECT** on how someone's words or actions made you feel and helped brighten your day.



### WEEK 2

**DAY 1 – READ** Matthew 18:1 & Philippians 2:3.

Who's the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven? Jesus answers that it's the lowly one. No one wants to be considered lowly. That's like being the servant who empties the bedpan! All of us want to be the rich master!

**THINK** back to a time when you've disagreed with someone. What was it like to be in a lowly position? How did your disagreement affect your attitude?

**DAY 2 – READ** Romans 14:10-13.

**LOOK** up the definition of the word **judge** or **FIND** some synonyms in a thesaurus. This word is frequently misused as a defense to do whatever you want. But even the apostle Paul cautioned us about judging others.

For whom do you have contempt? (v 10). Your spouse? Your kids? Your boss?

Your co-workers? Your classmates? Another group of people?

**WRITE** down those people for whom you have contempt.

**PRAY** that God would give you a heart of kindness and humility for them.

**DAY 3 – READ** 1 Peter 5:5, Ephesians 5:21, Romans 12:10b.

Honor and submission is an attitude of the heart. What is your attitude like today? **ASK** God to reveal areas in your life in which pride keeps you from honoring others. Learn to be teachable. **CHOOSE** someone to **WRITE**

a quick note to or have a honoring conversation. For example: express appreciation, point out a strength, or celebrate success in this person's life.

**DAY 4 – READ** Galatians 6:2, Ephesians 4:2.

How do you view and treat those with little power or low social standing?

How does Jesus treat them? **LIST** one practical way to lift a burden off someone this week. **PRAY** for them, **BE** available to listen, and **ASK** how you can help.

**DAY 5 – READ** 1 Thessalonians 4:18, James 5:16b.

No one knows how much time we have left. God places people in your path each day whom you can comfort and pray for. Pausing our lives to acknowledge each other's struggles is exactly what Jesus did each day.

Whom has God placed in your path this week to comfort and pray for?

