

# SUMMER HARVEST

## *Reflecting on the Fruit of the Spirit*



*These late-Summer Daily Devotions will focus on God's Word regarding the Fruit of the Spirit. Each week we will observe specific fruit as we read God's Word, apply it to our lives, and pray for the sweet Fruit of the Spirit to grow in our hearts and outward in our habits.*

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- Observe:**
1. Observe the battle between the flesh and spirit.
  2. Observe the difference between the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit.

## Scripture Reading:

## Galatians 5:16-24

16But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. 18But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. 19Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, 21envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. 24And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

**Application:** Which one fruit of the nine do you believe the Lord wants to produce more of in your life? What is one step you can take today to work with the Holy Spirit to produce that fruit?

**Prayer:** Dearest Lord, Too often we fail to walk by the Spirit, and instead, gratify the desires of the flesh. We desperately need Your forgiveness, and thankfully receive it through the grace of our Savior, Jesus. Help us each day to recognize the battle between flesh and spirit that we face. Enable us walk by the Spirit, and to produce the fruit that You desire for us. Through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

- Observe:**
1. Observe what the vinedresser does to enable more fruit.
  2. Observe why abiding in Christ is necessary to produce fruit.

### Scripture Reading:

**John 15:1-8**

1“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. 2Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. 4Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. 5I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. 6If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. 7If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

**Application:** This week, be aware of where you are abiding: in worldly things and in the flesh, or are you abiding in Christ and His word?

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thank You for cleansing our hearts and attaching us to You, as branches to the Vine. We know our Vinedresser has already been at work pruning us, that we may produce fruit for Your kingdom. Keep our hearts, minds and lives abiding in You, through worship, through Your word, through prayer; through fellowship, service and witness. We welcome Your continued pruning, so we produce even more fruit that will glorify our Father. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

- Observe:**
1. Observe the concern of the vinedresser (Jesus).
  2. Observe the warning from the vinedresser.

### Scripture Reading:

**Luke 13:6-9**

6And he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. 7And he said to the vinedresser, ‘Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?’ 8And he answered him, ‘Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and put on manure. 9Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’”

**Application:** Don’t just “use up the ground.” Make it your aim today, with the Spirit’s power, to produce good fruit!

**Prayer:** Merciful Lord Jesus, we thank You for Your loving concern for us as we live under Your care. Thank You for Your patience and Your careful nurturing each day. By the power of the Holy Spirit, may we not take for granted the life You’ve given us, but work faithfully to produce a harvest of good and healthy fruit for Your kingdom. In Your Holy name we pray. Amen.

- Observe:**
1. Observe the greatness of Jesus' love for you.
  2. Observe what Jesus wants us to do with His love.

## Scripture Reading:

**John 15:9-17**

9As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. 10If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. 11These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

12"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. 13Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. 14You are my friends if you do what I command you. 15No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. 16You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. 17These things I command you, so that you will love one another.

**Application:** In order to love others greatly, we need to receive the great love of Jesus. Think about the greatness of Jesus' love for you. Allow Jesus' great love to come to you and through you to others.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, we can barely fathom the greatness of Your love, in laying down Your life for us. Yet we receive it with great joy. We are honored to be called Your friends, chosen to go and bear the fruit of Your love in our lives. May Your love flow through us each day, in our words and in our deeds. We pray Your name, Jesus. Amen.

- Observe:**
1. Observe God's demonstration of love for you.
  2. Observe how that love is to impact our lives.

## Scripture Reading:

**1 John 4:7-12**

7Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. 8Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. 9In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. 10In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 11Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

**Application:** Who is one person in your life that God is leading you to show more love to? How can you do so today?

**Prayer:** O Lord God, Your love for us was made known through Jesus and His death on the cross for our sins. As you did not hold back Your love from us, may we not hold back either, in showing love for one another. Help us, empower us, to go out of our way to love others, that You may abide in us and Your love be perfected in us. In Jesus' name. Amen.

- Observe:**
1. Observe the ultra-importance of love.
  2. Observe the characteristics of love.

## Scripture Reading:

## 1 Corinthians 13

1If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. 4Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant 5or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; 6it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. 7Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. 9For we know in part and we prophesy in part, 10but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. 11When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. 12For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known. 13So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

**Application:** Read again the characteristics of love in verses 4-8. Which one characteristic of love will you be certain to demonstrate today?

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, through these beautiful words describing what love is, we see how completely we fail at living it. Yet, out of Your perfect love, we receive Your merciful forgiveness. So we ask that by the power of that same love, You would enable us to walk in faith, hope and love - in our lives, in our relationships. Through our Loving Lord, Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

- Observe:**
1. Observe the source of temporary sorrow is the death of Jesus.
  2. Observe the source of lasting joy is His resurrection.

### Scripture Reading:

**John 16:16-24**

16“A little while, and you will see me no longer; and again a little while, and you will see me.” 17So some of his disciples said to one another, “What is this that he says to us, ‘A little while, and you will not see me, and again a little while, and you will see me’; and, ‘because I am going to the Father?’” 18So they were saying, “What does he mean by ‘a little while’? We do not know what he is talking about.” 19Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him, so he said to them, “Is this what you are asking yourselves, what I meant by saying, ‘A little while and you will not see me, and again a little while and you will see me’? 20Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy. 21When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. 22So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. 23In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. 24Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

**Application:** Ponder the resurrection of Jesus and allow the lasting joy to fill you today.

**Prayer:** Gracious Heavenly Father, While we may experience times suffering, grief and loss, we are grateful for Your comforting promise that You will never leave us nor forsake us. As You have said in Your Word, “weeping may remain for the night, but joy will come in the morning.” Help us cling to the Joy-Bringer, Jesus, our risen Lord and Savior, who transforms our temporary sorrows into a joyful celebration of a life now and through eternity with Him.  
In the Name of Jesus, the Resurrection and the Life, Amen

**Observe:** 1. Observe that Paul is in prison awaiting the possibility of death.  
2. Observe what Paul says to rejoice in.

### **Scripture Reading:**

**Philippians 3:1, 4:4**

1Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you. 4Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.

**Application:** Think of two blessings that you have from your faith relationship with the Lord Jesus. Let those blessings travel 12 inches from your head to your heart and rejoice in the Lord!

**Prayer:** Most merciful Lord and Savior, in You is fullness of joy. You are my All in All. There is nothing that I desire more than being in Your presence, following Your will and walking in Your way. Give me a grateful heart, that I might rejoice in all circumstances, knowing that You will indeed work out everything for my good, according to Your divine plan. Through it all, I give You praise and honor. In Jesus Name, Amen

- Observe:**
1. Observe John's joy is complete when Jesus begins His ministry.
  2. Observe that as we decrease and Jesus increases in our lives, our joy increases.

### Scripture Reading:

**John 3:25-30**

25Now a discussion arose between some of John's disciples and a Jew over purification. 26And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, he who was with you across the Jordan, to whom you bore witness—look, he is baptizing, and all are going to him." 27John answered, "A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven. 28You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, 'I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before him.' 29The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is now complete. 30He must increase, but I must decrease."

**Application:** For today, let go of some of your desires, and hold on to what Jesus desires for you. Say to yourself: I must decrease and He must increase.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thank You for Your powerful work among us. Forgive me for times that I have made my life more about myself than about You. May You be magnified and reflected in and through my life. I know that I cannot do that on my own, so come Holy Spirit and flow through me, allowing the joy of Jesus to permeate every area of my life. May others see Jesus in me! In His most precious and powerful Name. Amen.

- Observe:**
1. Observe how the Father and the Son makes their home with us.
  2. Observe the difference between worldly peace and the peace of Jesus.

### Scripture Reading:

**John 14:22-27**

22Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, “Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?” 23Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. 24Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father’s who sent me.

25“These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. 26But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. 27Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

**Application:** Think about what gives you peace in your heart: family, money, schooling or job, house, retirement plan or alcohol. If it is any of these, your heart will be troubled. Take seriously the peace that Jesus leaves with you.

**Prayer:** Lord God, Giver of all good and perfect gifts, Grant us Your peace - a peace that surpasses all human understanding. Help us rest in You alone, secure in Your loving arms. May we serve as ambassadors of Your peace in this troubled world, assuring others of Your boundless grace and compassion, where the only true peace can be found. To You, Lord Jesus, my Prince of Peace, be all praise and glory. Amen

- Observe:**
1. Observe the results of letting your anxious requests and thankfulness be known to God.
  2. Observe the results of thinking about what is true and honorable, just and pure.

### Scripture Reading:

### Philippians 4:6-9

6Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

8Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. 9What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

**Application:** Pray to God about your anxieties, but for every anxious prayer, include two prayers of thankfulness.

**Prayer:** Dear Heavenly Father, I confess that I am often filled with anxiety, focusing on my circumstances rather than looking to You, the Rock of my salvation. Give me a fresh awareness of Your bountiful blessings, so that my mind and my mouth are filled with expressions of gratitude for Your grace and Your goodness. In the name of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior. Amen

## SATURDAY WEEK 2

## THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS PEACE

- Observe:**
1. Observe where the disciples were and why.
  2. Observe the first words of the risen Jesus to the fearful and guilt-ridden disciples.

### Scripture Reading:

**John 20:19-23**

19 On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." 20 When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. 21 Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." 22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld."

**Application:** Hear in your fearful or guilt-ridden heart the risen Lord's words for you: "Peace be with you."

**Prayer:** Dear Lord Jesus, Thank You for freeing me from my fears by filling my life with the peace of Your presence. Continue, O Lord, to remind me that my guilt and shame have been removed by Your suffering, death and triumphant resurrection. May I come out of hiding and enter into the light of Your love, proclaiming the victory You have won for all of us. In Your holy Name, Jesus, my risen Lord and Savior.

Amen

## MONDAY WEEK 3

## THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS PATIENCE

- Observe:**
1. Observe the selfishness of all the disciples.
  2. Observe the patience of Jesus as He teaches them and gives His life for many.

### Scripture Reading:

**Matthew 20:20-28**

20 Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came up to him with her sons, and kneeling before him she asked him for something.

21 And he said to her, "What do you want?" She said to him, "Say that these two sons of mine are to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom." 22 Jesus answered, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am to drink?" They said to him, "We are able." 23 He said to them,

"You will drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father." 24 And when the ten heard it, they were indignant at the two brothers. 25 But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. 26 It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, 27 and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, 28 even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

**Application:** As you see the patience of Jesus in teaching us and giving His life as a ransom for us, let him enter the impatient places in your heart.

**Prayer:** Dear Jesus,

Thank you for not only being patient with your disciples when they put themselves first, but for also being patient with us each day. Please show us where we need to practice patience and strengthen us as we take on this task of striving to be patient with others, just as you are patient with us. Thank you again for taking the time to hold our hand as we grow in patience; please continue to walk beside us as we make the conscious effort to extend patience to others. Amen

- Observe:**
1. Observe Jesus' patience with His sleepy disciples.
  2. Observe Jesus' patience in praying that His Father's will be done.

### Scripture Reading:

**Matthew 26:36-46**

36 Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, "Sit here, while I go over there and pray."

37 And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to be sorrowful and troubled. 38 Then he said to them, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me." 39 And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will." 40 And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping. And he said to Peter, "So, could you not watch with me one hour? 41 Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." 42 Again, for the second time, he went away and prayed, "My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done." 43 And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. 44 So, leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words again. 45 Then he came to the disciples and said to them, "Sleep and take your rest later on. See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. 46 Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand."

**Application:** As you think about places where you are impatient, pray as your Savior did, "Not as I will, but as You will."

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, Thank you for always knowing what is best for us. Please help us to keep your will central to our desires, especially as we pray. Thank you for Jesus' example of patience in the most troubling of circumstances. Forgive us for giving in to our own sinful desires when our patience is tested because we are worn out; help us to rely on you to rejuvenate us and to sow patience in our lives. Amen

- Observe:**
1. Observe how Paul describes his sin.
  2. Observe the perfect patience of the Lord in dealing with Paul.

### Scripture Reading:

### 1 Timothy 1:12-17

12I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, 13though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, 14and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 15The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. 16But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life. 17To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

**Application:** God is perfect in His patience toward you. Take that patience to your heart and you will find the patience to deal with another rather difficult person.

**Prayer:** Dear God, Thank you for accepting us as we are, but loving us enough to not leave us that way. Please help us to show others the patience and mercy that you so freely show to us. Grant us the patience we need to exemplify your Son so others can experience his patience and love through us. In your holy name we pray, Amen.

- Observe:**
1. Observe how kind Jesus is to Martha.
  2. Observe how kind Jesus is to give Mary the one thing needed.

### Scripture Reading:

**Luke 10:38-42**

38Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. 39And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. 40But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me." 41But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, 42but one thing is necessary.

Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her."

**Application:** Be kind today to someone who is anxious and troubled: share the one thing necessary, the promises of God.

**Prayer:** Dear God, Thank you for showing kindness to us when we get caught up in something and fail to see what is truly important—being in your presence & trusting in your promises. Please help us accept your kindness and draw us closer to you in the process, so that we can extend your kindness to others in return. Amen.

- Observe:**
1. Observe the ungodly heartlessness of the disciples.
  2. Observe the kindness of the Savior to the parents and the children.

### Scripture Reading:

**Mark 10:13-16**

13And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. 14But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. 15Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it." 16And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them.

**Application:** Is there a child in your life that could use some kindness of the Lord through you? Bless them with the kindness of Jesus.

**Prayer:** Dear Jesus, Thank you for your kind spirit and your love for children. Please bless the children in our lives and help us to extend kindness to them just as you did in this passage. Help us to care for the vulnerable by approaching them with kindness as your presence shines through us. Amen.

- Observe:**
1. Observe how the Lord has forgiven you.
  2. Observe how forgiveness is a part of being kind and compassionate.

### Scripture Reading:

### Colossians 3:12-17

12Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, 13bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. 14And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. 15And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.

16Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. 17And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

**Application:** Think of the Lord's kindness in forgiving you. This day, give the same forgiving kindness to someone else.

**Prayer:** Gracious Father, Thank you for having compassion on us even when we do not deserve such kindness. Please help us to graciously accept your kindness and to let it overflow in our earthly relationships, that those around us would be drawn to your presence by our love for them through you. In your holy name. Amen.

- Observe:**
1. Observe the Pharisee's contempt of Jesus and the sinful woman.
  2. Observe the goodness of the Lord to the sinful woman in bringing her forgiveness and peace.

### Scripture Reading:

**Luke 7:36-50**

36 One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at table. 37 And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, 38 and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment. 39 Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner." 40 And Jesus answering said to him,

"Simon, I have something to say to you." And he answered, "Say it, Teacher."

41 "A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. 42 When they could not pay, he cancelled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?" 43 Simon answered, "The one, I suppose, for whom he cancelled the larger debt." And he said to him, "You have judged rightly." 44 Then turning toward the woman he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. 45 You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet. 46 You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment.

47 Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little." 48 And he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." 49 Then those who were at table with him began to say among themselves, "Who is this, who even forgives sins?" 50 And he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

**Application:** There is someone in your life who has lost their way. Reach out to them and show them the goodness of the Lord.

**Prayer:** Dear loving Father, For our sins that others judge, You see past them to our hearts that need cleansing. Your love is so great that it washes away our past and gives us new life. Only through Your goodness can we recover from our sins. We pray that You remove the judging scales from our eyes so that we may love those who have lost their way and show them Your goodness. In Jesus name we pray.

Amen

- Observe:**
1. Observe how Jesus did good in His earthly ministry.
  2. Observe the goodness of Jesus for us today.

### Scripture Reading:

**Acts 10:34-43**

34So Peter opened his mouth and said: “Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, 35but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. 36As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all), 37you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: 38how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. 39And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, 40but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear, 41not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. 42And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. 43To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

**Application:** Think of a way to celebrate the Lord’s goodness to you. Then do it.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, help us to see those who need Your love; those oppressed by loss of jobs, the chaos of poverty, the evils spirits of addiction, and the judgment of other people who see them as different. Help us bring Your healing love and goodness to them. Thank You for showing us how to treat people in our lives and give us the strength and discernment to treat others with the goodness that You would. In Jesus name we pray. Amen

- Observe:**
1. Observe what the goodness and loving kindness of God did for us.
  2. Observe the words used to describe how He saved us.

### Scripture Reading:

**Titus 3:4-8**

4But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, 5he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, 6whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. 8The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people.

**Application:** If you believe in the goodness of what God has done to save you, be careful to devote yourself to good works! These good works are excellent and profitable for the doer and the receiver.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, keep us ever mindful that we are not saved or justified by our puny works. Through Your love we have been cleansed, renewed, forgiven and set back on our feet, so that we can devote ourselves to the good works You would have us do. Help us to be Your hands and feet here for the works You have planned for us. In Jesus name we pray. Amen

- Observe:**
1. Observe how faithful Jesus is to the repentant thief on the cross.
  2. Observe how faithful Jesus is to His Father.

### Scripture Reading:

**Luke 23:39-46**

39One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!" 40But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? 41And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." 42And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." 43And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise." 44It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, 45while the sun's light failed. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. 46Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last.

**Application:** Where do you need to be more faithful to the Lord? In your worship? In your prayers? In your Bible reading? In your witnessing? In your good works? Choose one and be faithful today!

**Prayer:** Our Lord of love, even in Your pain and suffering on the cross, You brought people to saving life in you. Open our eyes to the areas of our lives where we need to be more faithful. Are we spending time with You or on the world's priorities? Are we listening to Your Word, sitting quietly during our prayer time so that we may truly hear You? We ask You to help us grow in faithfulness. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

- Observe:**
1. Observe the faithfulness of the two servants and the unfaithfulness of the last one.
  2. Observe the faithfulness of the master.

**Scripture Reading:****Matthew 25:14-30**

14“For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. 15To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. 16He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. 17So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. 18But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master’s money. 19Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. 20And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.’ 21His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ 22And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.’ 23His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’

24He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, 25so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.’ 26But his master answered him, ‘You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? 27Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. 28So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. 29For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. 30And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

**Application:** Choose faith in the Savior and act faithfully today, so that as you place your head on a pillow tonight, God would be able to say to you, “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

**Prayer:** Dear Lord and Master, help us to use the gifts that You have given us to reap souls for Your church. We each have a story of what You have done in our lives, how You have healed and renewed us and given us new lives in You. Please help us have courage to use these gifts to go out without fear to tell others about You. Forgive us for burying our stories in our hearts and not using these talents to show others Your healing goodness. In the name of our Lord and Savior, we pray. Amen.

- Observe:**
1. Observe the meaning and vital importance of faith.
  2. Observe the phrase “by faith” - that faith always leads to actions.

## Scripture Reading:

## Hebrews 11:1-9

1Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. 2For by it the people of old received their commendation. 3By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

4By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks. 5By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and he was not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken he was commended as having pleased God. 6And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. 7By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

8By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. 9By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise.

**Application:** What, today, is the Lord calling you to do BY FAITH in Him? Do it, BY FAITH!

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, when we walk with you, we trust that You know the way. We know that You equip us, protect us and show us the way we should go. We put our faith in You, knowing that You see where we do not, You understand where we do not. As we look for the doors that You open, give us the faith to walk through them. Help us obey You even when it's hard. Help us to go Your way so that, like Abraham and Sarah, we may receive the inheritance You have planned for us. We will walk by faith, not sight. In the name of our all-knowing Lord, Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

## MONDAY WEEK 5

## THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS GENTLENESS

- Observe:**
1. Observe how the Father gifts His servant, His Son.
  2. Observe how gentle Jesus is with “bruised reeds” and “smoldering wicks.”

### Scripture Reading:

**Matthew 12:15-21**

15 Jesus, aware of this, withdrew from there. And many followed him, and he healed them all 16 and ordered them not to make him known. 17 This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: 18 “Behold, my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved with whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit upon him, and he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles. 19 He will not quarrel or cry aloud, nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets; 20 a bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not quench, until he brings justice to victory; 21 and in his name the Gentiles will hope.”

**Application:** There are many who are “bruised reeds” and “smoldering wicks.” Today, how will you gently brace up a “bruised reed” or revive a “smoldering wick”?

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, you sent your only Son to proclaim justice and victory in gentleness and humility. By your Holy Spirit, guide us according to Your will, that we may not quarrel or fight, but rather encourage one another in the hope of the cross. Unite us in Christ! In the holy name of Jesus. Amen.

- Observe:**
1. Observe the command to count others as more significant than ourselves.
  2. Observe the power to count others as more significant than ourselves.

### Scripture Reading:

### Philippians 2:3-11

3Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. 4Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. 5Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, 10so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

**Application:** JOY – Jesus – Others – You. Aim to live the JOY formula today, letting the gentleness of Jesus show.

Prayer: Mighty God, in your mercy, empty us of sin and pride, and fill us with your Spirit. Help us not to succumb to conceit; bend our knees, that we may concede to the wisdom of Your Way – to live as selfless servants in gentleness and righteousness. In the holy name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

- Observe:**
1. Observe what the spirit of gentleness does.
  2. Observe that Jesus carried our burdens and thus, established the law of Christ.

### Scripture Reading:

### Galatians 6:1-3

1Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. 2Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. 3For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

**Application:** With the spirit of gentleness, seek to fulfill the law of Christ today.

**Prayer:** Gracious God, though we deserve nothing, You have given us everything. Daily lead us to Christ, and cause us to reflect His light, His law, His life, and His love in all we think, say, and do. May we be gentle toward all, in faithfulness to You. In the holy name of Jesus, we pray.  
Amen.

- Observe:**
1. Observe the powerful self-control of Jesus.
  2. Observe that He did not lash out, but He prayed for the forgiveness of His enemies, including you and me.

### Scripture Reading:

**Luke 23:33-38**

33And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. 34And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." And they cast lots to divide his garments. 35And the people stood by, watching, but the rulers scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!" 36The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine 37and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" 38There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews."

**Application:** We are certainly on holy ground in our lesson. How will you respond to the holy moment described?

**Prayer:** Precious Jesus, in the face of our abuse, you turned your cheek. On the cross - You stayed for us who left you, You prayed for us who mocked you, and You died for us who killed you - that we may live and live for you. Help us too, to love our enemies, and by Your grace to show restraint in the freedom of Your forgiveness. In Your holy name, we trust and pray. Amen.

- Observe:**
1. Observe that we are to be quick to listen to others, slow to speak and slow to action.
  2. Observe that we are not only to hear God's saving word, but to be quick to do His word.

**Scripture Reading:****James 1:19-27**

19 Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; 20 for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. 21 Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. 24 For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. 25 But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

26 If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless.

27 Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

**Application:** Listening to others enables us to be self-controlled in our speech and actions. Who do you need to be quick to hear today?

**Prayer:** Holy God, we thank you for your presence, and we praise you for your patience in our lives. Send us Your Spirit, to stir our hearts to self-control - that we may be slow to sin and quick to forgive. Open our ears that we may hear Your Word, and open our eyes that we may see and seize every opportunity you grant us to do Your will and live Your love. In the holy name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

- Observe:**
1. Observe what Jesus does not say to Peter who had denied Him three times.
  2. Observe that Jesus restores Peter with His three questions.

**Scripture Reading:****John 21:15-19**

15When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Feed my lambs.” 16He said to him a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Tend my sheep.” 17He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” and he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep. 18Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go.” 19(This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, “Follow me.”

**Application:** Jesus tenderly forgives and restores us. Empowered by His Spirit, will the fruit of self-control be evident as you follow Him today?

**Prayer:** Good Shepherd, we confess that we too often stray from your side, only to find ourselves in danger of sin and death. Without Your guidance, our lives are hopelessly out-of-control. Save us, Jesus; Daily call us back to your fold, and lead us in the way You desire us to go, that we may graze in the pastures of your grace forever. In Your loving name, we pray. Amen.