



MON 5-9

- ✓ SCRIPTURE Philemon 1:6
- ✓ THOUGHT "I pray that your partnership with us in the faith may be effective in deepening your understanding of every good thing we share for the sake of Christ." [NIV] We can partner with others in our faith to encourage and refresh one another. Consider the relationships in your life. Are you connected with someone you can encourage? Are you connected with someone who can be an encourager for you?
- ✓ PRAYER Lord Jesus, give me the confidence to reach out and build intentional relationships that lead to mutual support and affirmation. Thank you for the community of believers you have provided. Amen.

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TUES 5-10

- ✓ SCRIPTURE 1 Peter 3:15
- ✓ THOUGHT "But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, ..." [NIV] Sharing the hope that we have makes it easy for others to move toward God. We can do this verbally, and we can do this with our actions and behavior. How can you *show* hope today?
- ✓ PRAYER Lord Jesus, I want to be a source of hope because of the way I live. Help me to show this by being kind, flexible, willing to help, and an encourager. Give me a spirit of gentleness when I talk about the reason for my hope. Amen.

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WED 5-11

- ✓ SCRIPTURE Luke 12:12
- ✓ THOUGHT "for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say." [NIV] Have you ever been at a loss for words when someone expresses their concerns or doubts about God? Sometimes we simply need to listen. Other times God's spirit can nudge us with words to say that might provide insight or hope. Staying connected through regular prayer can help us be responsive to God's spirit working in us.
- ✓ PRAYER God, I want to stay connected with you. Sometimes I forget to pray throughout my day. Help me to remember! Help me become a better listener for others and to your spirit inside me. Amen.

NOTES: _____



THURS 5-12

- ✓ SCRIPTURE Romans 1:16
- ✓ THOUGHT "It's news I'm most proud to proclaim, this extraordinary Message of God's powerful plan to rescue everyone who trusts him, starting with Jews and then right on to everyone else!" [MSG] Do you feel proud to proclaim the powerful plan of God to rescue everyone? Sometimes we have to recognize the way we have been rescued to remember why the news of Jesus is important to share!
- ✓ PRAYER Lord Jesus, you have rescued me from so much. Thank you for the ways you have worked in my life. Help my gratitude inspire me to share about it with the people around me. Amen.

NOTES: _____

FRI 5-13

- ✓ SCRIPTURE Proverbs 16:24
- ✓ THOUGHT "Pleasant words are flowing honey, sweet to the taste and healing to the bones." [CEB] The way we speak can be very attractive to those who need the hope of Christ in their lives. Are your words inviting to someone who might be seeking to understand more about God? Do they represent the perfect love of God well?
- ✓ PRAYER God, I want the things I say to help people understand your love more clearly. Help me to be someone who makes it easy for others to experience what you are like because of the things I say and do. Thank you for using me to help bring others nearer to you. Amen.

NOTES: _____

SAT 5-14

- ✓ SCRIPTURE Psalm 103:1-2
- ✓ THOUGHT "Let all that I am praise the LORD; with my whole heart, I will praise his holy name. Let all that I am praise the LORD; may I never forget the good things he does for me." [NLT] How do we praise the Lord with all that we are? It includes how we spend our time, who we pay attention to, what we spend our money on, the things we say, our attitudes--all of it matters and can speak to the goodness of God!
- ✓ PRAYER Loving God, help me to remember that my whole life matters to you. I want every choice that I make to fit into my larger purpose of displaying your love and goodness. Thank you for the compassion you have shown me. Amen.

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DIGGING DEEPER

✓ **Intro** While Christianity draws many roots from the Old Testament, the early days of the New Testament church were marked by radical decisions that would set it on a new trajectory. These decisions continue to shape and challenge the church today.

✓ **Reflect**

- Share a time when you wanted to do something but you gave up because it was unnecessarily difficult. Was the difficulty caused by someone in particular? Why do you think that was the case?
- What was the first Bible lesson or Bible concept you learned? Have you ever disagreed with or had difficulty accepting a lesson or concept you were taught?
- Read Acts 15:1-5. For those who were holding on to the law of Moses (specifically circumcision), what was their biggest concern in leveling the playing field to become a Christian? Why didn't they want to give in on this rule?
- Read Acts 15:9. In what ways do Christians make it difficult for others to turn to God? In what ways can the church move in the direction of those seeking God rather than requiring them to move in the church's direction?
- Is there a way that Christians can appreciate the Old Testament while still living by the values and imperatives of the New Testament?
- For some, the message in Acts 15 is very liberating. For others, it can be incredibly challenging. In order for you to apply this message, what does God need to help you with?

✓ **Consider** We should not make it difficult for those who are turning to God. The faith of the next generation may depend on it. Your neighbor's faith may depend on it. Someday, *your* faith may depend on it.



DIGGING DEEPER

✓ What did I learn? _____

✓ How might it apply in my life? _____

✓ What is a next step I can take? _____

