



MON 2-14

- ✓ SCRIPTURE Proverbs 18:2
- ✓ THOUGHT "Fools find no pleasure in understanding, but only in expressing their opinion." [CEB] When you feel like someone isn't trying to understand your point of view, it can feel dismissive. This week, increase your awareness in your discussions and make sure you are seeking to understand others. This is a great way to show respect and love!
- ✓ PRAYER Almighty God, give me the self-discipline that it takes to open my mind to the viewpoints of others. Thank you for teaching me your loving ways. Amen.

NOTES: _____

TUES 2-15

- ✓ SCRIPTURE Matthew 22:37-39
- ✓ THOUGHT "Jesus replied, 'You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" [NLT] When you have a disagreement with someone, showing love for them can be difficult. Ask God for help with a specific situation with which you are struggling.
- ✓ PRAYER Loving God, I want to change the tone of this relationship. Help me to change my actions so I am loving _____ like you would. Guide me and give me strength. Amen.

NOTES: _____

WED 2-16

- ✓ SCRIPTURE Luke 6:27-28
- ✓ THOUGHT "But to you who are willing to listen, I say, love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you." [NLT] Sometimes, we make up our minds ahead of how we are going to deal with difficult people, based on past experiences with them. We are called to love those who mistreat us, so we must open our hearts to treating them in a loving way even when it is hard!
- ✓ PRAYER God, sometimes I do things because in my mind they are justified by mistreatment I have experienced in the past. Help me to think differently and respond in difficult situations as Jesus would. Amen.

NOTES: _____



THURS 2-17

- ✓ SCRIPTURE 1 Corinthians 16:14
- ✓ THOUGHT "And do everything with love." [NLT] Even in our toughest relationship moments, God's love is with us. Because we have been shown such great love in Christ Jesus, we are able to dig deep and find love for others no matter the situation. Love must influence every choice we make!
- ✓ PRAYER Gracious God, your love has changed my life. Help me to remember that gift of love when I am interacting with others. Amen.

NOTES: _____

FRI 2-18

- ✓ SCRIPTURE Proverbs 17:27
- ✓ THOUGHT "A truly wise person uses few words; a person with understanding is even-tempered." [NLT] To truly understand, we must listen and control our tongue. Do you find it difficult or easy to be a good listener? Ask God to help you with this!
- ✓ PRAYER Loving God, help me to be genuinely interested in and respectful of the people you have placed in my life. I want to be someone who is known as a good listener, who makes people feel valued. Amen.

NOTES: _____

SAT 2-19

- ✓ SCRIPTURE Galatians 2:20
- ✓ THOUGHT "My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." [NLT] Praise God, we don't have to be controlled by our old self. When you find yourself wrestling with old patterns of behavior, ask God to renew your mind and help you to trust the Spirit of God to guide you down a new path.
- ✓ PRAYER God, I want to be responsive to your Spirit. Sometimes I fall back into my old ways. Help me give up my ways for the sake of love and harmony in my life. Amen

NOTES: _____

DIGGING DEEPER

- ✓ **PRAYER** God, we acknowledge that you are already here. May our hearts be open to your presence and direction. Amen.
- ✓ **BIG IDEA** During this series, we could easily spend small group time debating the hot topics; however, since our goal is to build unity, the group discussion guides are centered around that concept. Unity requires that we practice the Golden Rule. When we engage with someone with whom we disagree, we want them to truly consider our point of view. That means we must be willing to do the same!
- ✓ **DISCUSS**
 - Discuss necessary qualities of someone who can fully explore and entertain an opposing viewpoint. Do you struggle to do this when you are engaged in a disagreement? Can you pinpoint why?
 - If each party involved in a discussion was assured that the other party would fully consider both sides of the argument, how might that change the tone of the discussion?
 - In the Sermon on the Mount found in Matthew 7:12, Jesus says, "Therefore, you should treat people in the same way that you want people to treat you; this is the Law and the Prophets." [CEB] Why do you think these words of Jesus are often referred to as "The Golden Rule"?
 - There is a small but impactful distinction worth discussing. How often do we default to treating others the way we *have been* treated, instead of the way we *would like to be* treated? Do you struggle with this?
 - Why do you think we find it difficult to base our actions on the "desired future" as opposed to the "experienced past"? How could each choice impact unity in your personal relationships and within the church?
- ✓ **Pray** Loving God, we thank you for the wisdom you give to us about relationships. Help us to grow in love for one another and to always keep in mind that you taught us to love even when we feel mistreated or misunderstood. Strengthen us as we treat others like we want to be treated. Amen.



DIGGING DEEPER

✓ What did I learn? _____

✓ How might it apply in my life? _____

✓ What is a next step I can take? _____

