



MON 2-28

- ✓ SCRIPTURE Luke 8:15
- ✓ THOUGHT "The seed that fell on good soil are those who hear the word and commit themselves to it with a good and upright heart. Through their resolve, they bear fruit." [CEB] For us to see fruit come from our faith, we must commit to working on it! We must hear *and* commit ourselves to growth as we practice the teachings of Jesus!
- ✓ PRAYER Loving God, help me to prioritize my spiritual growth so that my faith is evident in the way that I live each day. I want to do more than just hear your teaching, I want to put it into action in my life. Amen.

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TUES 3-1

- ✓ SCRIPTURE Romans 5:3-4
- ✓ THOUGHT "We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation." [NLT] Maturity comes over time as we work through challenges. We can choose to see our challenges as negative or as opportunities to strengthen our character!
- ✓ PRAYER Almighty God, change my perspective. I am sorry for the times I have focused on the difficulties in my life in a negative way. Help me to use each opportunity I am given to positively change my character so I am always growing to become more like Jesus. Amen.

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WED 3-2

- ✓ SCRIPTURE Ephesians 4:12-13
- ✓ THOUGHT "to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." [NIV] Our works of service can help each other reach maturity and unity. Consider looking for a new opportunity to serve within the church with the dual purposes of learning from others and lending your experience.
- ✓ PRAYER Loving God, I want to be a contributor. I value your church and thank you for the people you have placed around me whom I can learn from and whom I might be able to help. Help me say "yes" without hesitation! Amen.

NOTES: _____



THURS 3-3

- ✓ SCRIPTURE Hebrews 12:2
- ✓ THOUGHT "We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne." [NLT] Take a moment to identify something that may be distracting you or shifting your focus away from pursuing the love of Jesus in your life.
- ✓ PRAYER Loving God, I need to shift my eyes back to Jesus. Help me to push the reset button and renew my focus. Amen.

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FRI 3-4

- ✓ SCRIPTURE 1 John 4:12
- ✓ THOUGHT "No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us." [NIV] God's love is displayed in us when we love one another. Who is someone you could show love to today? Maybe it is a phone call, a hand-written note, or a helpful act of service, but commit to doing one thing to tangibly show love.
- ✓ PRAYER Loving God, help me today to be sensitive to those around me so I can meet a need by showing someone love. Thank you for your love and guidance in my life. Amen.

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SAT 3-5

- ✓ SCRIPTURE Ephesians 4:23-24
- ✓ THOUGHT "Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes. Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy." [NLT] What a great picture--we have to intentionally put on our new self who looks like Jesus! What if you began each day with this picture in your mind? As you move through your day, visualize what your new self would do in each situation you encounter. Allow this to shape your thoughts and grow in love toward the people in your life.
- ✓ PRAYER Gracious God, sometimes I move through my days without even thinking about how I want my behaviors to change. Guide me and show me how I can reflect your goodness more and more. 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 depends on maturity. Our individual spiritual growth must become a priority so that we develop a maturity that brings us together in love even when we disagree.**

- ✓ **DISCUSS**
 - Think of someone you know who embodies maturity and wisdom. Share with the group why this person has made this impression on you.
 - Read Mark 14:66-72 aloud. Now, read Acts 4:1-14 aloud. What a transformation! Name a few characteristics Peter demonstrates in the second passage.
 - Take a moment and think about your spiritual growth. Share with the group a way that you have changed since you first decided to follow Christ.
 - What has helped you grow the most in your faith?
 - Maturity and wisdom are things we can actively foster in our lives. As we grow in these qualities, we become more able to show love even when we don't agree. 2 Peter 1:5-7 says, "This is why you must make every effort to add moral excellence to your faith; and to moral excellence, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, endurance; and to endurance, godliness; and to godliness, affection for others; and to affection for others, love." [CEB] We are told to "make every effort" to pursue this personal growth and the end result is love. What can you make a greater effort to do that will lead you down this path? Share some ideas as a group.

- ✓ **Pray** **Gracious God, we thank you for sharing with us the characteristics we should be pursuing in order to become wise, loving followers of Christ. These things are not easy but we know you have called us to be persistent as we learn more about your ways and grow in our love for each other. Help us to encourage each other as we grow closer together and unite in bringing your love to others. Amen.**



DIGGING DEEPER

✓ What did I learn? _____

✓ How might it apply in my life? _____

✓ What is a next step I can take? _____

