



MON 9/13

- ✓ **SCRIPTURE** Matthew 9:36
- ✓ **THOUGHT** Jesus shows us compassion. "Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he had compassion for them because they were troubled and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd." [CEB] As Jesus traveled during his ministry, he noticed the needs of the people and cared about them. Start this week with a prayer to remind you to be a person who notices and cares.
- ✓ **PRAYER** Loving God, I am so grateful that you care so deeply about my needs. Change my heart so that I can be attentive to the hurting people around me this week and help me to offer them hope. Amen.

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TUES 9/14

- ✓ **SCRIPTURE** Matthew 7:16-17
- ✓ **THOUGHT** We can be fruitful. "By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit." [NIV] Jesus taught that there will be evidence of our faith in the things that we do. That we can be recognized "by our fruit." Take inventory today of recent evidence that you can see that points to the love of God in your life.
- ✓ **PRAYER** God, I want my life to make a difference. Help me be more intentional about showing my faith in tangible ways. Amen.

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WED 9/15

- ✓ **SCRIPTURE** Galatians 6:9-10
- ✓ **THOUGHT** Keep on! "Let's not get tired of doing good, because in time we'll have a harvest if we don't give up. So then, let's work for the good of all whenever we have an opportunity, and especially for those in the household of faith." [CEB] Sometimes we can feel like it is more work to be kind. Love perseveres and so must we!
- ✓ **PRAYER** Loving God, strengthen me. I sometimes feel tired and need encouragement to do the right thing. Amen.

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THURS 9/16

- ✓ **SCRIPTURE** Romans 12:9-10
- ✓ **THOUGHT** Devote yourself to others. "Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves." [NIV] When we honor each other, there is no room for apathy! Devotion requires us to care deeply for one another. Think of someone you could reach out to today to show that you care.
- ✓ **PRAYER** God of grace, grow compassion for others in me. Help me to think of others' needs and to put other people in a place of importance in my life. Amen.

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FRI 9/17

- ✓ **SCRIPTURE** 1 John 3:17
- ✓ **THOUGHT** Love requires action. "But if someone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but refuses to help—how can the love of God dwell in a person like that?" [CEB] Can you think of ways you have met someone's tangible needs recently? Before the week is up, find an opportunity at a local volunteer organization and sign up for it. You can be a light!
- ✓ **PRAYER** Light of the world, I am so grateful for the ways you provide. Help me to be willing to pass it on! Amen.

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SAT 9/18

- ✓ **SCRIPTURE** John 15:12-13
- ✓ **THOUGHT** We have a great example! "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends." [NIV] We were given the best example of how much we are supposed to care for others in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. Take a few moments to reflect and give thanks for such great love.
- ✓ **PRAYER** Loving God, help me change more and more each day so that my life can look more like Jesus. I give you praise for loving me so perfectly and completely. Amen.

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GROUP GUIDE – GOOD SAMARITAN

- ✓ **PRAYER** **God, we acknowledge that you are already here. May our hearts be open to your presence and direction. Amen.**
- ✓ **BIG IDEA** **For us to help others, we must accept God's help ourselves. When we accept God's grace and forgiveness, we then have something incredible to offer. We can become an unexpected light for those who need God's love.**
- ✓ **READ** **Luke 10:25-37**
- ✓ **DISCUSS**
 - Jesus told the story of the Good Samaritan in response to the following passage: from Luke 10:25-29 [NIV]: On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?" He answered, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live." But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" [NIV] After reading the parable, who comes to mind as someone you might struggle to consider your neighbor? What are some modern-day examples of characters who might stereotypically have relational conflict that you could insert into this story to make it more relevant?
 - "Treat people in the same way that you want them to treat you." [CEB] This is the "Golden Rule" that comes from Matthew 7:12 and it seems simple enough, right? It is simple, but can be very difficult to remember to put into practice. Do you ever find yourself treating others the way you *think* they will treat you rather than the way you *want* them to treat you? Discuss the differences in those two approaches.
 - It can be hard for us to show mercy and love to others when we feel we haven't received it ourselves. Rather than waiting to receive it from people who may never give it, we can receive it from God who freely offers it. Are there things you have trouble feeling forgiven for? How might this impact your relationships?
 - James 2:14-17 says, "My brothers and sisters, what good is it if people say they have faith but do nothing to show it? Claiming to have faith can't save anyone, can it? Imagine a brother or sister who is naked and never has enough food to eat. What if one of you said, 'Go in peace! Stay warm! Have a nice meal!?' What good is it if you don't actually give them what their body needs? In the same way, faith is dead when it doesn't result in faithful activity." [CEB] Sometimes our tendency is to remain uninvolved when difficult, inconvenient, or messy situations present themselves. In what ways have you shown your faith by going out of your way to lend a hand to someone?
- ✓ **Pray** **Compassionate God, help us this week to look for unexpected ways to be a light to others. Give us a flexibility that allows space for helping other people in our day-to-day routines, even if it might feel like an inconvenience. We are grateful for the way you show us extravagant love in Christ. Amen.**