

MON 5-1

"O LORD, if you heal me, I will be truly healed; if you save me, I will be truly saved. My praises are for you alone!" [Jer. 17:14, NLT] Our God heals and restores. Is there something specific that you are struggling with right now? Take a few moments for an honest look at areas of your life that need to be addressed. Ask God to help you grow more like Christ.

PRAY: Loving God, open my eyes to see the things in my life that could interfere with my growth as a Christ-follower. Melt my defenses and give me courage to confront my struggles. Amen.

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TUES 5-2

"You'll receive the same judgment you give. Whatever you deal out will be dealt out to you." [Matthew 7:2, CEB] We are told to remove any wrongdoing of our own before we call out the faults of others. Humility is crucial to being able to spot our own faults--ask God for help being humble.

PRAY: Almighty God, please forgive me for the times when I have been far more critical of others than I should be. Grow within me the humility to be gracious toward others. Amen.

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WED 5-3

"With their words, the godless destroy their friends, but knowledge will rescue the righteous." [Proverbs 11:9, NLT] Our words have power to heal or to hurt. When we allow our hearts to be transformed, our mouths follow suit. The growing knowledge of Christ is key!

PRAY: Gracious God, stoke in me a passion to know Christ more, changing me on the inside. May what is good and kind on the inside radiate out to bless others. Amen.

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THURS 5-4

"So then, let's work for the good of all whenever we have an opportunity, and especially for those in the household of faith." [Galatians 6:10, CEB] Paul teaches that we are to be inclusive with our kindness--showing love to all. He also implies that we have an even greater responsibility to care for our brothers and sisters in Christ. It's not either/or but both/and when it comes to being a "do-gooder"!

PRAY: Loving God, you have shown me immense kindness, and I need your help and the inspiration of your spirit so I know how to show kindness to the people you have placed in my life. Amen.

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FRI 5-5

"Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless." [James 1:26, NIV] Ouch--no wiggle room there! James gives us direct instruction, and it isn't easy--but with the Holy Spirit alive in us, there is hope!

PRAY: Holy Spirit, I need your help. On my own, my words can wreak havoc. Please strengthen me to make tough choices regarding my words in every single interaction that I have. Amen.

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SAT 5-6

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against things like this." [Galatians 5:22-23, CEB] Memorize this verse and meditate on a few questions: What about my countenance? What about my conduct? Do others see these qualities in me? Exhibiting these traits is only possible with God's help!

PRAY: Great God, may these qualities be more evident in my life today than they were yesterday. Help me to recognize and remove any barriers that stand in the way. Amen.

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Intro We all have people in our lives who are difficult in different ways. At times, we all are *those people!* Thankfully, God loves us even when we aren't at our best. This week our focus is on when it is appropriate and loving to confront hypocrisy and in a way that brings healing and restoration. We also must be self-aware to spot hypocrisy in us!

Reflect

- The word *hypocrite* comes from the Greek word *hypokrites*, which literally means "an actor wearing a mask." Who is one of your favorite actors or actresses? What is it about this person's acting ability that you enjoy so much?
- Read Matthew 15:1-8. Jesus confronts the hypocrisy of the Pharisees in this passage.
 - What are some examples of hypocrisy that you've seen?
 - How have you been impacted by the hypocrisy of others?
 - Why is it so important that we strive to remove any hint of hypocrisy from our lives?
- Read Galatians 6:1-6, 2 Samuel 12:1-7, and Psalm 51:10-12. These verses show us how to prayerfully confront hypocrisy in both our lives and in the lives of others.
 - Why is it important that we approach confrontation with the goal of restoration?
 - Describe what it looks like to confront in a loving way.
 - Why do many of us find confronting hypocritical people so difficult?
- Being transparent about personal struggles is hard for some, but we are stronger when we can lean on a trusted person to hold us accountable. When you think about your greatest struggles and temptations, have you ever been vulnerable to share them with another believer? What is your greatest fear in doing so?

Pray **Holy God, create in me a clean heart. Help me to let my defenses down so I can clearly see my actions for what they are. Thank you for the ways you lovingly restore me and I pray for courage to be an agent of restoration for my fellow believers. Guide me with your spirit of love in everything I say and do. Amen.**

What did I learn?

How might it apply in my life?

What is a next step I can take?
