



As you begin your journey through the Virtues journal, consider these two simple steps to set yourself up for success as you meet with God in His Word and in the pages of this journal.

Find a time

When you set a consistent time to invest in each day's entry, you build a consistent rhythm that can long outlast this journal. Avoid choosing a time that is too disruptive to your current routine. Often in our zeal to begin a healthy new habit, we overshoot our ability and fizzle out quickly.

What are natural fits to spend time working through this journal? Consider first thing in the morning to start your day, over your lunch break, or as a way to wrap up your day. Morning, afternoon, or evening doesn't matter—just focus on finding a time that works for you.

Find a place

When you study in a consistent place, you help the habit of studying God's Word stick. Choosing a spot to study doesn't need to be complicated—just look for a place that will be consistently available.

Over the	e next five weeks of this study, I believe God can do
	in my life.

Start I	Date:	/	//	/



What is Virtue?

Week 1 | Day 1

Read 2 Peter 1:3-12

As Christians, our definition of moral excellence does not come from what feels good, right, or true to us, but rather from what God says is good, right, and true. In our passage, Peter said God has called us to "his own glory and excellence" (which is the same Greek word for "virtue") and has granted to us to "become partakers of the divine nature."

What an incredible gift!

When we become Christians, we are brought into fellowship with God, into communion with Him. We get to take part in His divine nature, becoming like Him in character and morality. He rescues us from the "corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire."

This is a huge shift in thinking, and a change of heart, too. Instead of pursuing our own ideas of virtue, God gives us the desire and ability to do what He tells us is good, right, and true. God gives us a new nature, making us a new creation, putting His Holy Spirit in us. So, instead of our sinful human nature, we partake in His divine nature, which is the very essence of virtue. Because we have His Spirit in us—the Spirit of virtue—we can know what is good and pursue what is right.

In what ways h					
How has your	desire to pu	irsue virtu	e grown as	you have w	alked with
Jesus?					

	What might it look like to supplement your faith with virtue in your day-to-day life? How can the list of qualities found in this passage				
guide and h			1		1 8

Dear Lord, thank you so much for the incredible gift of making us new creations and filling us with your Spirit, making us partakers in your divine nature! As we walk by your Spirit, help us to understand virtue—what is good and true and right—and empower us to live it out. Give us the desire to do what is really good, not just what is good for us. In Jesus's name, Amen.



Virtue Comes from God

Week 1 | Day 2

Read 2 Peter 1:3-5 and 1 Peter 2:9

Note: In today's passages, the same Greek word (arete) is translated "virtue" in 2 Peter 1:5, "excellence" in 1 Peter 1:3, and "excellencies" in 1 Peter 2:9.

As Christians, we are a chosen people for God's own possession. And, as his people, we are given the privilege of proclaiming His excellencies. His virtue. We are no longer living in the darkness, no longer living a life pursuing our own fleshly passions, but now we have been called into a life where we can see clearly what is good and right and true.

A life where we want to honor God and demonstrate His goodness to those around us. To do so, we must look to His Word, because it is God who determines what is moral, excellent, and virtuous. And He clearly communicates to us what that virtue looks like in the pages of the Bible.

Scripture tells us to be "above reproach" in our ethics and to not be a "lover of money" or "pursue dishonest gain" (1 Timothy 3:1–7; Titus 1:6–8). To do nothing out of "selfish ambition" or vain conceit but instead to value others above ourselves in humility (Philippians 2:1–8). In reading God's Word and spending time in prayer, living in fellowship and communion with God as we abide in Christ and walk by the Spirit, we will grow in virtue.

Studying God's Word to learn more about virtue is important. It's crucial. But it is just as important to grow in your personal relationship with God.

What is one aspect of God's character you would like to learn more about? Write down some thoughts on how you can go about learning and growing in this area, and commit to doing so.					
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Dear Lord, we praise you because you are true, you are good, you are loving, and you are righteous. We admit that in our own human hearts we do not know what is good, what is right, and what is true. Our minds and hearts often want to pursue fleshly desires instead of what is truly good. God, fill us with your Spirit, show us your truth, and guide us in the way of virtue. Thank you for wanting to be in fellowship with us. Help us grow in communion with you. In Jesus's name, Amen.



Thoughts Lead to Action

Week 1 | Day 3

Read Philippians 4:8 and 2 Peter 1:3-5

Today's passage shows us just how much our thoughts matter. As successful businessman Frank Outlaw said, "Watch your thoughts, they become words. Watch your words, they become actions. Watch your actions, they become habits. Watch your habits, they become character. Watch your character, for it becomes your destiny."

Studies from The Mayo Clinic, Johns Hopkins, Harvard Health, and more all tell us that positive thinking not only improves our mental health, but it also improves our physical health. We can lower blood pressure, risk of heart disease and stroke, and so much more just by changing the way we think.

But this passage is about more than the power of positive thinking. Paul was telling us to think about what is good, what is virtuous. When Paul wrote Philippians, he was on house arrest in Rome, awaiting the death penalty. Yet he wrote of rejoicing in the Lord and about his thankfulness that God was able to use him to advance the gospel, even from prison. He said he had learned that being in relationship with Jesus was the secret of being content in any circumstance.

Paul didn't just "think positively," he dwelled on the things of God. He set his mind on "things above" (Colossians 3:2). He asked the Holy Spirit to teach him spiritual wisdom, to give him "the mind of Christ" (1 Corinthians 2:10–16). Paul knew the battle begins in our minds. The first step to living virtuously is to think about virtuous things—whatever is true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, commendable, excellent.

our day?			

What are some practical ways you can change your thoughts to focus				
the things o	f God?			

Dear Lord, we confess that we struggle with keeping our thoughts focused on virtuous things. We want to follow you, we want to do what is right, but sometimes our thoughts get away from us. Our minds can feel like a battlefield. Fill us with your Holy Spirit. Give us the mind of Christ. Help us to control our thought life. To dwell on things above and think about what is good. Thank you for the gift of your Spirit, who speaks to our hearts and teaches us. Help us grow in communion with you. In Jesus's name, Amen.



Walking in the Light Grows Virtue

Week 1 | Day 4

Read Ephesians 5:8-10 and 2 Peter 1:3-5

In Ephesians, Paul gave us a stark contrast—darkness and light—between walking in the ways of the world and walking in the ways of the Spirit.

Walking in darkness means we can't see where we're going, but when we walk in the light, we can see everything around us, where to go safely and what areas to avoid. We can see our destination and the clear path to get there.

Scripture tells us Jesus is the light of the world and following Him is the way to walk in the light (John 8:12). Psalm 119:105 tells us God's Word is a "lamp to my feet and a light to my path." When we follow Jesus, it's like shining a flashlight on our path!

What does it look like to walk in the light, day-by-day? It is making the choice to study the Word, pray, practice spiritual disciplines, and set our thoughts on virtuous things. It is making the choice to do what's right and good and true. As we walk in the light, following Jesus day-by-day, over the years the Spirit develops in us the fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22–23). The more we follow Jesus, the more the Spirit helps us to look like him.

Think about your day-to-day lifestyle, your daily choices, even the things that seem small. How can you make sure each of these choice reflects following Jesus?				

How is walking by the Spirit like walking in the light in a dark world?				
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Dear Lord, thank you for bringing us out of darkness and into your wonderful light. Thank you for opening our eyes to see what is good, right, and true. Help us to make the hard choices to follow your ways in our day-to-day lives. Show us the path of righteousness—what it looks like to follow Jesus, not only in the big ways but in every little decision we make. Fill us with your Spirit, let your Word be a light to our path, and guide us in the way of virtue. In Jesus's name, Amen.



Living Virtuously Gives Us a Good Reputation

Week 1 | Day 5

Read Matthew 5:14-16

When we walk in the light and live virtuously, in the ways of Jesus, our lives will shine brightly to the world around us. In the ancient world, cities were places of refuge for the weary traveler. When they saw those city lights burning off in the distance, they knew they would have a safe place to rest that night.

When our church communities live in the ways of Jesus, we become a place of refuge from the world. The world around us is full of anger, division, and hurt, but when people see our church communities being places of love, support, encouragement, and healing, those living in darkness will be drawn to our "city lights." Godly churches are outposts of His kingdom of light in the middle of this dark world.

When Christians demonstrate kindness, integrity, and love, the world gets to glimpse Jesus through us. The light of Christ will shine through us. This doesn't mean we can't ever make mistakes. No one is perfect, and we all need Jesus. But it does mean we put in the effort to live lives that honor God and show our world how much He loves them.

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How can you, personally, demonstrate God's love and light to the people in your world? List a few specific ways you can shine God's light						
to someone who is hurting, and then follow through on those plans.						

Dear Lord, we confess that we don't always shine your light to the world. There are times we hide your light under a basket and blend in with the darkness around us. Lord, give us the desire to pursue virtue in every area of our lives. Give us the discernment to see what things need to change in our lives. Give us the boldness to want to stand out from the crowd and live in your light. Fill us with your Spirit, who grows His fruit in us and empowers us to follow you. In Jesus's name, Amen.



K

Knowledge & Self-Control

Week 2 Day 1

Read 2 Peter 1:3-6

We live in a time of information overload. Whether it be through academic pursuits or casual media consumption, information is available at our fingertips at all hours of the day. But there is a difference between information and knowledge.

Biblical knowledge is not just gathering intellectual or academic information about God or the Bible or spiritual things. It's about knowing God, not just knowing about God. True knowledge comes from an intimate relationship with God, as we abide in Christ and walk by the Spirit.

We also live in a time where the human idea of "mind over matter" is prevalent. Whether we are trying to build new habits, or let go of habits that we no longer want in our lives, we typically believe that if we work hard enough at it, we can make it happen. And sometimes, we can.

We may be able to lose some weight, give up a bad habit, or implement something positive in our routines. But this kind of self-control doesn't give us the power to overcome sin. Only the Holy Spirit can do that. The fact that self-control is a fruit of the Spirit shows us that the strength to have self-control comes from the Spirit.

So, when Peter told us to supplement our virtue and knowledge with self-control, he wasn't talking about working hard. He was talking about submitting ourselves to God and asking the Spirit to take control so the Spirit can grow the fruit of self-control in our lives.

In what ways has the Spirit empowered you to overcome struggles with sin?					

Dear God, thank you for the gift of your Holy Spirit, who grows your spiritual fruit in us as we abide in Christ. Thank you for the self-control your Spirit can give us to overcome temptations to sin. Help us to continue to submit ourselves to your will. Thank you for the knowledge you give us to understand your Word and walk in your ways. Help us to continue to deepen our relationship with you, to know you better. In Jesus's name, Amen.



Knowing Jesus Changes Everything

Week 2 | Day 2

Read Philippians 3:7-14 and 2 Peter 1:5-6

Biblical knowledge is not only intellectual knowledge but relational knowledge. Relational knowledge involves both knowing about someone and knowing them personally. Like any relationship, it does involve knowing about God.

When we first meet someone, we make an effort to get to know them. When we get to know God, we talk to Him in prayer and search His Word diligently to find out what He is like. As we grow deeper in our relationship, we learn more and more about Him.

But it's not just learning about Him, it's also about knowing Him personally. The apostle Paul experienced this in a dramatic way. Before he met Jesus, Paul arrested and killed Jesus's followers because he believed following Jesus was blasphemous. Then Jesus spoke to him supernaturally from heaven, blinded him, and then restored his sight, giving him completely new vision both physically and spiritually (Acts 9). Paul did a complete 180. His life's mission changed from destroying the church to growing the church. All because he came to know Jesus personally.

Knowing Jesus became the most important part of his life. All of the accomplishments and priorities he had before knowing Christ were no longer important to him. Knowing Jesus personally, not just knowing about Him, changes everything in our lives.

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How have your mission, purpose, and goals changed since you	met
Jesus?	
•	

Dear God, we are so thankful that you want to have a real, personal relationship with us. Help us to truly understand what it means to know you. Give us a passion for knowing you like Paul had. Help us to want to know you more. In Jesus's name, Amen.



Saying No to Worldly Passions

Week 2 | Day 3

Read Titus 2:11-14, Colossians 3:1-10, and 2 Peter 1:5-6

If we want to grow in our spirituality and in our godliness, we must devote our time to the things of God and learn to say no to "worldly passions." This doesn't mean we can no longer enjoy things like food, music, and traveling. God created the world, filling it with His beauty and creativity, and He invites us to marvel at the wonders of His hands with thanksgiving (1 Timothy 4:4). But what we are to say no to are the lusts that pull us away from God.

When we pursue our own carnal desires we dishonor God and invite destructiveness into our lives and our relationships. As Christians, we are to turn away from these earthly, sinful, behaviors and turn toward Jesus.

Is there anything in your life that you need to turn away from? What measures can you put into place to help you do so?						

How have you seen God's creativity, beauty, or goodness, in your life or in His creation? Take a moment to respond with gratitude.						

Dear God, thank you for the good gifts you have given us to enjoy. Please forgive us for the times we have turned away from you and pursued our own sinful desires. Please grow self-control in us by the power of your Holy Spirit to help us say yes to the things that honor you, and no to the sin that pulls us away from you. In Jesus's name, Amen.



Putting Our Knowledge to Work

Week 2 | Day 4

Read James 1:22-25, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, and 2 Peter 1:5-6

There are many resources available to us that can help us learn about the Bible. Books, apps, podcasts, sermons, and more are readily available and can often be wonderful tools to aid us in our study of God's Word. But we must remember that our purpose in studying God's Word isn't just to accumulate theological information.

When we read the Bible, we are training and equipping ourselves to live out His Word, with the help of the Holy Spirit. God's Word shows us how great God's love is for us, and it teaches us how to share that love with the people in our lives.

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How are you using what you know about God, Scripture, and theology to love and serve others?					

Dear God, thank you for giving us your Word, theological books, classes, Bible studies, podcasts, etc. so we can learn more about you. Help this knowledge sink deep into our hearts and minds so that we are ready and eager to live out your Word in our lives, by the power of your Holy Spirit. In Jesus's name, Amen.



Self-Control and Courage

Week 2 | Day 5

Read Proverbs 25:28, 2 Timothy 1:7, and 2 Peter 1:5-6

The book of Proverbs is a collection of short sayings that give us practical godly wisdom for how to live. It takes the spiritual knowledge we have from studying God's Word and living in fellowship with Him, and applies it to our everyday lives in a practical way.

This particular saying gives us vivid imagery about what it's like to live without self-control. It's like a city without walls; broken down and left vulnerable. Thankfully, as Christians, we have the Holy Spirit working in us, developing this fruit. Helping us have the courage to say no to "worldly passions" that lead us into trouble, and giving us the insight and ability to show God's love to the people in our lives.

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How does knowing that the Holy Spirit is with you, helping you, change your perspective about having courage and self-control?						

Dear God, thank you for giving us your Holy Spirit to help us grow in self-control, so that we are not left vulnerable like a broken city. Help us to walk closer with you, finding comfort and courage in your presence. In Jesus's name, Amen.



K

Steadfastness

Week 3 | Day 1

Read 2 Peter 1:3-6

The Greek word for steadfast is a combination of meno, which means to remain or abide (the same word "abide" found in John 15) with the prefix hupo, which means "under." It means to "remain under" a heavy load, to stand firm, or to endure under suffering.

When struggles seem overwhelming, and fear finds its way into our minds and hearts, steadfastness continues to trust in the Lord (Psalm 56:3). When doubt creeps in, we ask God to help our unbelief (Mark 9:24). When worry and anxiety show up, we turn to God in prayer (Philippians 4:6-7).

Steadfastness is not about being able to take everything on our own shoulders, in our own strength. It's about standing firm on Christ, turning to Jesus when things get hard. Leaning on Him when we can't stand on our own. Building our lives on Christ as our foundation so when the rains and the winds come, our house will stand firm (Matthew 7:24–27).

Each time we go through something hard and turn to Jesus, God builds steadfastness in us. Steadfastness = "under" + "remain." The key is to remain in Jesus when we're under pressure..

how did He	Looking back on times you struggled and turned to Jesus in the past now did He come through for you? How did that give you spiritual trength to trust in Him the next time things became difficult?						

How have you seen Jesus give you strength when you felt weak?					

Dear God, thank you for the power of your Holy Spirit who gives us the strength to stand firm on Christ in times of struggle, suffering, or pain. Help us to continue to turn to Jesus when we feel worry, doubt, or fear. Show us how we can grow steadfastness in our lives through spiritual disciplines and practices. Thank you for continuing to show up for us every time we turn to you. In Jesus's name, Amen.



Steadfastness Comes through Suffering

Week 3 | Day 2

Read 2 Peter 1:5-6, James 1:2-4, and Romans 5:3-5

Pain, hurt, and heartache are made bearable when we lift our eyes off of our surroundings and fix them on Jesus. That doesn't mean we ignore grief or sidestep sadness. But it does mean we remember that our God is bigger than our current situation, no matter how difficult it might be.

This hope and faith in our good and loving God can help us endure and remain steadfast as we trust our Heavenly Father. When we allow suffering to draw us closer to the Lord, we see that even though we are hurting, we can rejoice because the Holy Spirit is at work in us, growing the fruit of joy (Galatians 5:22-23).

And so we can welcome whatever suffering may come our way, seeing it as an opportunity to learn, be refined, and grow in faith.

Describe how you have experienced God in times of suffering. Ho did God give you strength? How did He grow you and mold yo through the process?						

How have you seen growth in your ability to endure suffering? Wha						
xperiences helped you grow in steadfastness?						

Dear God, thank you for the gift of suffering—yes, the gift.
Thank you for the ways you use suffering to teach us, mold us, and strengthen us in our faith. Help us to remember to lean on you when we experience suffering. Thank you for the gift of your Spirit of comfort, wisdom, strength, and joy. Keep us steadfast no matter what comes our way. In Jesus's name, Amen.



Steadfastness Grows Faith and Love

Week 3 | Day 3

Read 2 Peter 1:5-6 and 2 Thessalonians 1:3-4

The Thessalonians endured a lot of persecution and suffering, like many of the early churches. And yet they had such steadfastness in their suffering that Paul bragged about them to all the other churches. He was amazed not only by their ability to endure under pressure but by how much their persecution had grown their faith in Jesus and their love for one another.

Faith that is deep and lasting sustains us through our sufferings. And, if we'll allow it to, the suffering we experience can foster compassion and empathy for others who are struggling. Having experienced God's comfort in our own times of suffering, we are then prepared and equipped to comfort others with patience and understanding (2 Corinthians 1:3–5).

Think of a friend, family member, coworker, or other person you know who is going through a difficult time right now. How can you share the comfort, love, and grace of God with them? How can you pray for						
them? How else can you help them?						
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Dear God, thank you for comforting us when we are suffering. Thank you for the supernatural gift of growing our faith, wisdom, and love through suffering. Help us to not only remain steadfast through suffering but to use our experience to love and comfort others who are suffering. Give us eyes to see the suffering of those around us and a heart of compassion to care for them. In Jesus's name, Amen.



Steadfastness Leads to Eternal Life

Week 3 | Day 4

Read Hebrews 12:1-2 and James 1:12

When we run a race and exhaustion sets in, it can be tempting to give up. When this happens, experts say one of the best things we can do is focus our gaze on someone running ahead of us. Keeping our eyes focused on them will make our bodies naturally pace themselves to their pace.

Similarly, when life gets hard, we don't have to manufacture our own strength, we just have to look to Jesus. We just have to keep running with Him.

Our race as Christians is loving Christ with faithful perseverance, even when trials come and exhaustion shows up. And when we cross that finish line, we'll receive the greatest prize we could ever imagine, eternal life in heaven.

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What would it look like to fix your eyes on Jesus when things get hard					
What practical steps can you take to focus on Him?					

Dear God, thank you for the reward of eternal life. Thank you that the reward is for everyone who finishes the race, not just for the "winners." Thank you for giving us Jesus to fix our eyes on, to pace our race, and to give us the strength to finish. When things get hard and we feel like giving up, give us the strength to hold on to You. In Jesus's name, Amen.



Steadfastness as a Witness

Week 3 | Day 5

Read 2 Peter 1:5-6 and Philippians 1:12-13

When Paul was in prison in Rome, awaiting the death penalty, he told the Philippians that it was this very situation that allowed for the advance of the gospel, throughout the whole imperial guard. With steadfast devotion to Jesus, he continued to proclaim the good news of the gospel wherever he went, even while imprisoned. Paul took advantage of every opportunity to share the gospel, and we can, too.

The difficulties and suffering we experience can be a catalyst for us to show God's love and tell of His mercy and grace to the people who are present in our lives. When we are steadfast through suffering, when we overflow with love, peace, joy, kindness, and generosity even in hard times, we can be a powerful witness to the goodness of God.

Reflection Questions: Steadfastness in My Life						
How can you use your current situation to share the gospel with th						
people in your life?						

How can you respond with steadfastness, joy, peace, kindness, generosity and faith to your particular struggles right now?					

Dear God, thank you for all the ways you can use our suffering for good in this world. Help us to shift the way we think about suffering to align with Your Word and Your purposes. Give us the strength and wisdom to respond to suffering with joy, patience, generosity, kindness, and faith. Show us how you can use us for the gospel in every circumstance in our lives. In Jesus's name, Amen.



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Godliness

Week 4 | Day 1

Read 2 Peter 1:3-6

The word "godliness" is sometimes used to describe someone who acts like God; someone who does godly, good, or moral things. But the biblical definition of the Greek word we translate as godliness isn't just about our actions. It's about the attitude of our hearts toward God, and it means piety or devotion toward God. It comes from a combination of two words in the original language, "well" and "revere" (or "pay homage to" or "worship").

At its core, godliness is about who we worship and serve with our lives. We can do a lot of good things without a heart of worship, without the motivation of wanting to honor God with our lives. But it is only godliness if we do godly things with the purpose and intention of worshiping and honoring God with our lives.

Godliness is a heart of worship and a life that lives it out.

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Does your lifes	style reflect	a heart of	worship?	How can y	ou make
decisions that b	oring glory t	o God?			
	00 7				

Dear God, we want to honor you not only with our words but with our whole lives, but sometimes it's hard. Sometimes our actions don't match our words. Give us a heart of worship that desires to honor you in everything we think, say, and do. In Jesus's name, Amen.



Knowledge of the Truth Leads to Godliness

Week 4 | Day 2

Read Titus 1:1-3

Paul opens this letter to Titus, one of his "sons" in the faith, by saying that knowledge of the truth leads to godliness. This isn't just knowing the truth about Jesus, although we need informational knowledge about the gospel as well. Biblical "knowledge of the truth" is about knowing Jesus himself, as a person. Because Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6).

Knowing Jesus leads to godliness because when we really know Jesus and how incredible He is, we want to worship and honor Him with our lives. We want to be like Him. And as we walk in fellowship with Him, we grow more and more like Him.

The key to godliness is knowing Jesus. And the more we spend quality time with Jesus, the more deeply we will know Him and grow in godliness.

Reflect on your i	ith Him?	with jesu	s right no	w. I low arc	you waikiii

How do you see the character of Jesus reflected in your life? In what ways are you living like Him? In what ways do you need to grow to
be more like Him?

Dear God, thank you for wanting to know us personally. Thank you for the incredible gift of intimate relationship and fellowship with you through Jesus. Help us to see how we can grow deeper in our relationship with Jesus and give us the strength and desire to pursue it. In Jesus's name, Amen.



For God's Glory, Not Ours

Week 4 | Day 3

Read 2 Peter 1:5-6 and Acts 3:1-16

In the New Testament, Jesus did all kinds of miracles—healings, casting out demons, walking on water, and more. This kind of power proved to people He was sent from God (John 3:2).

He also gave His disciples supernatural power when He sent them out to share the gospel so people would believe they were sent from God (Matthew 10:1).

Then in Acts, after the Holy Spirit was poured out on them, the disciples did all kinds of miracles. But they always pointed back to the power coming from God, not their own power or godliness.

They didn't manufacture this power on their own, through their godliness. It was given to them as a gift by the Holy Spirit for the purpose of honoring God, bringing glory to His name, and helping people believe the truth of the gospel.

When Peter healed the lame man in this story, he did it "in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth." When people wondered at how he was able to do it, he pointed directly to Jesus.

As Jesus himself and his apostles demonstrated, true godliness desires for God to be glorified.

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How can you listen for the guidance of the Holy Spirit and follov however He leads like the apostles did in Acts?					follow	

Dear God, thank you for giving us your supernatural power through the Holy Spirit. Give us wisdom to know how to bring honor to your name and accomplish your mission of sharing the gospel with the world. Show us how you want us to live and give us the wisdom to follow the guidance of your Holy Spirit. In Jesus's name, Amen.



Godliness and Contentment

Week 4 | Day 4

Read 2 Peter 1:5-6 and 1 Timothy 6:3-12

Paul describes those who don't align with sound teaching and godliness as full of themselves but understanding nothing, lacking contentment. When we try to find our value, hope, purpose, and happiness in the way we look or what we have or anything else about our circumstances, we will never be truly content, because those things can shift at any moment.

But Jesus never changes. Godliness is the only path to contentment because godliness is finding our hope, joy, value, and purpose in Jesus.

Paul told the Philippians he had learned the secret of being content no matter what his circumstances were, and the secret was Jesus (Philippians 4:11-13).

Like Paul, we can be content no matter our circumstances, if we look to God rather than our situation for our strength and hope.

How can you learr	n to find yo	our hope,	confidence	e, value, and	strengt
Christ alone?					

Dear God, thank you for the gift of contentment through Jesus. Help us when we struggle with feeling discontent, not good enough, or lacking in comparison to others. Help us to find joy in you even when our circumstances are not ideal by human standards. Show us how to have contentment in every circumstance. In Jesus's name, Amen.



Godliness as a Witness

Week 4 | Day 5

Read 2 Peter 1:5-6 and 1 Timothy 2:1-6

Paul wrote that God desires all people to be saved. As His people, we should have the same heart for unbelievers that He has. Our lives can be a witness to them in a way that draws them to Jesus, as "with all godliness and holiness" we love and care for and pray for them. People are drawn to Jesus when they see our hearts of compassion and lives of service toward those in need.

When they see our godliness—our heart of worship that plays out in the way we live as living sacrifices for Jesus—our lives will look different from the chaos, outrage, discord, gossip, and backbiting that surround us. Like a refuge in a storm.

We draw people to Jesus by creating homes, families, and communities of peace, love, and godliness that can be a refuge from the chaos of the world. True godliness is being for the lost of this world, loving them the way Jesus would and showing them Jesus through how we live.

How were yo in drawing yo	u initially drav	wn to Jesus	? How were	other people	e involved
iii drawiiig ye	ou to jesus:				

for unbelievers from the storm of the world? What specific things can you do to create a peaceful refuge in your life and your home?	In what ways can your family, friends, or church community be a refuge
	for unbelievers from the storm of the world? What specific things car
	you do to creace a peacerul reruge in your me and your nome.

Dear God, thank you for loving us when we were still unbelievers.

Help me have the same heart toward those who don't yet know you. Thank you for the gifts of peace, love, and joy in the midst of this unsettled world. Help my life and my home be a place of refuge in the chaos. In Jesus's name, Amen.



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Affection & Love

Week 5 | Day 1

Affection & Love in God's Word: Read 2 Peter 1:3-7

We've been looking at the same passage in 2 Peter about "life and godliness" for the last four weeks, studying the progression of qualities Peter said we need to supplement our faith with to live a godly life. This week, we reach the pinnacle of the list, the quality all the others lead to, which is "brotherly affection" and "love."

Philia, or brotherly love, is a natural kind of love between close friends or siblings. Human beings are innately capable of philia. These relationships can be invaluable in our lives to support and challenge us and help us grow in our faith. But agape love does not come naturally; it is showing love for someone you do not like. It comes only from fellowship with Jesus and from the Holy Spirit dwelling in our hearts, growing His agape love in us.

This is the kind of love God has for us and therefore the kind of love His people should have for others (1 John 4:7–12). It is demonstrated in the self-sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. Scripture says this is the ultimate expression of love, that even while we were His enemies, Christ laid down His life for us (Romans 5:8).

Agape is listed last in our passage in 2 Peter because it is the highest kind of love. It is the ultimate definition of what it means to be like Jesus. This is what faith, virtue, knowledge, self-control, steadfastness, and godliness lead to—loving other people the way Jesus loves us.

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Reflect on those people who are harder to love, even those you might call your enemies. How is God calling you to agape love them? How
can you show that love in action?

Dear God, thank you for your incredible agape love for us, which you have so graciously shown us through your Son, Jesus. Help us learn to love others the way Jesus loves us. By the power of your Spirit, grow your agape love in us. In Jesus's name, Amen.



Brotherly Love in Action

Week 5 | Day 2

Read Romans 12:9-21

In this passage, we see specific examples of what loving one another in a Christian community looks like: praying together, being patient with one another, sharing resources, inviting one another into our homes, living peaceably and in harmony with one another, and rejoicing with those who rejoice and weeping with those who weep. Instead of competing for honor, it is showing honor to others.

The church community is a family—a healthy family, not a dysfunctional one—where we live life together, share resources, and help one another grow. Instead of competing, we celebrate one another's success, because as one body, when one of us succeeds, we all succeed.

We can create church communities like this today, when we philia love one another the way the Bible describes. The world around us may compete for resources and honor, but in the church we can share them instead so we all flourish.

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Describe your church community and how it operates like a family.

Dear God, thank you for giving us community. Help us to see ways we can better love, help grow, build up, share resources, and speak hard truths with kindness to one another when needed. Help us to show honor to one another and celebrate one another's wins. In Jesus's name, Amen.



Christlike Love in the Church

Week 5 | Day 3

Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-8

This passage about love follows an important lesson, in chapter 12, regarding spiritual gifts in the body of Christ—that we are all members of the body and every part has different gifts, all equally important, and we need each other to function as a whole.

In chapter 13, Paul teaches us that if we use our spiritual gifts but don't do it out of agape love, it's just empty noise. It's meaningless. We are to live out agape love because God is agape love, and we belong to Him (1 John 4:7–8). Agape love is others-focused, not self-focused.

Using our spiritual gifts is not about getting praise for ourselves, but rather it is about serving and giving to others, showing love and kindness through action, speaking truth with grace, and always forgiving. It is loving like Jesus, without selfish motives, always out of compassion, grace, and a desire to see members of the body grow and flourish.

Spend some tin			ring how (God may be	calling you
to serve others	in agape lo	ve.			

Dear God, thank you for loving us with your amazing, unconditional, selfless agape love. Fill us with your Spirit and your wisdom so we can love others the way you love us. Give us your heart for the world around us, especially people we find difficult to love. Help us to see them the way that you see them. In Jesus's name, Amen.



Love in Community

Week 5 | Day 4

Read Acts 2:42-47 and 4:32-35

The early church from these passages was a shining example of what God's kingdom is supposed to look like. Because of the supernatural power of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, they were completely unified, and they shared everything.

The wealthy sold their possessions and gave the proceeds to the apostles to distribute so that no one was in need. They were devoted to the apostles' teaching, worship, and prayer. They lived together in fellowship, ate together, prayed and praised together. God performed many miracles among them and the world around them looked at their community and thought, "that is a community I want to be a part of".

We can be a sanctuary from the world—a safe place where people are valued. To create these kinds of communities, we have to love each other the way Jesus loves. The way the Bible describes, devoted to each other in philia love, in harmony with one another (Romans 12:3–16). We have to put off falsehood and speak truthfully to one another. We have to work hard and all contribute to the community. We have to speak only words that build one another up, not tear one another down. We have to be kind and compassionate and forgive always (Ephesians 4:25–32). This kind of unity in diversity can only be accomplished when everyone in our community submits themselves to the Holy Spirit and comes together in united prayer to seek His will.

When we create communities like this, the world will take notice. People will be drawn to our communities because of the love, light, and refuge offered there.

upporting thos	se in need, a	nd sharing	resources?	

How can your church community be a light to the world through the
way you love? Think of some specific things you can do to help build
community in your church.
community in your charein

Dear God, thank you for the gift of community in the church. Help us to see how we can be a part of building a stronger community in our church. For those who don't have a community to support them and love them well, we pray that our church can be a refuge for them. In Jesus's name, Amen.



Loving Our Enemies

Week 5 | Day 5

Read Romans 12:14-21

We have a natural desire to defend ourselves when we have been wronged, but when we can let go of the anger and the desire for vengeance and rise above it, we will feel a sense of freedom from the hurt in our hearts.

This doesn't mean we should let people mistreat or abuse us. Pursuing justice through the proper channels, such as the court system, human resources department, or academic administration, can be an important step in protecting ourselves and even others. But we are also called to bless those who persecute us, and forego pursuing vengeance on our own terms.

Adding evil to evil only creates more evil. Evil can only be overcome with good. It's a simple, logical concept that is easy to say but hard to do. Thankfully we have the Holy Spirit to help us move past our natural inclination for vengeance, and move into showing love, even toward those for whom showing love can feel difficult.

Read the Lord's prayer (Matthew 6:9-15) and take a moment to reflect on forgiveness. Talk to the Lord about the people and situations in
your life where forgiveness is needed. Ask for help to forgive those
who have hurt you or someone you love. Ask for wisdom in pursuing
justice, if needed, through proper channels.
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Dear God, thank you for loving us when we were still your enemies. Help us to have the same heart toward our enemies that you had toward us. Show us how we can bless them and not curse them. Give us the wisdom to pursue justice in the right ways, not add evil to evil. In Jesus's name, Amen.



Growth Chart

Who was I praying for? When did I study? ☐ Morning ☐ Afternoon □ Evening □ Other Where did I study? ☐ Home ☐ School ☐ Office ☐ Coffee Shop ☐ Other ☐ Church What was happening in my life? What did growth look like for me? Completion Date:

My closing prayer

