

5. Note which verse from each day's readings made the most impact on you:

- Day 15: \_\_\_\_\_
- Day 16: \_\_\_\_\_
- Day 17: \_\_\_\_\_
- Day 18: \_\_\_\_\_
- Day 19: \_\_\_\_\_
- Day 20: \_\_\_\_\_
- Day 21: \_\_\_\_\_

6. What is one thing you learned from your readings, reflections, discussions and prayer this week?

7. What one thing do you most need to do to experience joy in all circumstances as you live each day?



## New Life Christian Ministries

Fruit of the Spirit Series—Daily Readings  
LOVE, JOY & PEACE

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### Questions to think about or discuss

1. When was the time in your childhood when you felt the most at peace? What was the source of that peace?
2. Which of the themes for the week (the heading for each day's reading) impacted you the most? Why?
3. What do you think Jesus meant when He said that He came to bring us a peace of mind and heart that the world cannot give?
4. How is peace "more than the absence of war"?

# Day 21

## Blessings of Peace!

*Think about, discuss or pray about the verse that relates most to your life right now...*

*Numbers 6:24-26* <sup>24a</sup>May the LORD bless you and protect you.

<sup>25</sup>May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you. <sup>26</sup>May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.” NLT

*2 Kings 5:19* <sup>19a</sup>Go in peace,” Elisha said. So Naaman started home again.” NLT

*Isaiah 26:3* <sup>3a</sup>You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you!” NLT

*Mark 5:34* <sup>34a</sup>And He said to her, ‘Your faith has made you well. Go in peace. Your suffering is over.’” NLT

*Acts 10:36* <sup>36a</sup>This is the message of Good News for the people of Israel—that there is peace with God through Jesus Christ who is Lord of all.” NLT

*Romans 1:7b* <sup>7b</sup>May God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.” NLT

***It isn't enough to talk about peace, one must believe it. And it isn't enough to to believe in it, one must work for it. - Eleanor Roosevelt***

***Worry is like a rocking chair, it gives you something to do, but it doesn't get you anywhere.***

## *The Fruit of the Spirit is ...*

*love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control.  
Against such things there is no law.*

*Galatians 5:22-23*

*Welcome to this nine week journey to discovering how the Fruit of the Spirit “grows” in our lives! As you will see, each day of the journey offers you the opportunity to dig into God’s word, as you read and reflect on specific Scriptures dealing with a particular aspect of the fruit each day for a week. The Scriptures for each day have been grouped by categories, so you will be able to refer back to them in the future, and find not only a verse that teaches about “love” for example, but also a verse that teaches about “God’s unfailing love.” In this way, the Fruit of the Spirit booklets (There will be one for every three aspects of the Fruit of the Spirit!) will serve as a reference guide to the Fruit of the Spirit! **At the end of each week’s readings there are “Points to Ponder” pages. It will be most helpful if you look at those pages DAILY rather than waiting until the end of the week to review them.***

*You’ve probably noticed by now that we’ll be studying the “Fruit” (singular), not the “Fruits” (plural) of the Spirit. While many see nine characteristics in Galatians 5:22-23 and assume they’re nine different “fruits,” the Apostle Paul recognized that the FRUIT of the Spirit, or the outcome of a life lived in the power of the Holy Spirit is multifaceted, but it is one fruit or outcome. Thus, when we think that we need more patience, for example, what we need to do is pray for a fresh filling or anointing with the Holy Spirit, not just for more patience. In that way, when the Spirit fills us, we will gain a new measure of ALL the facets of the fruit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. In fact, when any ONE of the facets grows in our lives they are ALL strengthened.*

*My prayer is that this study will provide each of us with a deeper understanding of God’s character AND of the character that God desires to form in us by His Spirit. Just as Jesus reflected the image of His Heavenly Father, we also are to “grow up” into the fullness of Jesus in our lives. Remember, as with all Bible study—only when we APPLY what we read does transformation take place! God’s blessings to you as you embark on this journey of growing the Fruit of the Spirit in your life!*

*Grace and peace,  
Pastor Chris*

# Week 1-Love

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*22 But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. James 1:22 NLT*

# Day 20 Working for Peace!

*Think about, discuss or pray about the verse that relates most to your life right now...*

*Proverbs 12:20* <sup>20</sup>Deceit fills hearts that are plotting evil; joy fills hearts that are planning peace." NLT

*Romans 12:18* <sup>18</sup>Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone." NLT

*Romans 14:17* <sup>17</sup>For the Kingdom of God is not a matter of what we eat or drink, but of living a life of goodness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." NLT

*2 Corinthians 13:11* <sup>11</sup>Dear brothers and sisters, I close my letter with these last words: Be joyful. Grow to maturity. Encourage each other. Live in harmony and peace. Then the God of love and peace will be with you." NLT

*Colossians 3:15* <sup>15</sup>And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful." NLT

*Hebrews 12:14* <sup>14</sup>Work at living in peace with everyone, and work at living a holy life, for those who are not holy will not see the Lord." NLT

*1 Peter 3:11* <sup>11</sup>Turn away from evil and do good. Search for peace, and work to maintain it." NLT

***"I like to believe that people in the long run are going to do more to promote peace than our governments. Indeed, I think that people want peace so much that one of these days governments had better get out of the way and let them have it." Dwight D. Eisenhower -29-***

# Day 19

## God Blesses Those Who Make Peace!

*Think about, discuss or pray about the verse that relates most to your life right now...*

**1 Chronicles 22:9** <sup>9</sup>”But you will have a son who will be a man of peace. I will give him peace with his enemies in all the surrounding lands. His name will be Solomon, and I will give peace and quiet to Israel during his reign.” NLT

**Isaiah 52:7** <sup>7</sup>”How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of the messenger who brings good news, the good news of peace and salvation, the news that the God of Israel reigns!” NLT

**Matthew 5:9** <sup>9</sup>”God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God.” NLT

**James 3:18** <sup>18</sup>”And those who are peacemakers will plant seeds of peace, and reap a harvest of righteousness.” NLT

***“If the human race wishes to have a prolonged and indefinite period of material prosperity, they have only got to behave in a peaceful and helpful way toward one another.” -- Winston Churchill***

***“This is the way of peace: Overcome evil with good, falsehood with truth, and hatred with love.”  
-- Peace Pilgrim.***

# Day 1

## God’s Love Comes First!

*Think about, discuss or pray about the verse that relates most to your life right now...*

**John 3:16** <sup>16</sup>”For God so loved the world, that He gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.” NLT

**Romans 5:8** <sup>8</sup>”But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.” NLT

**Romans 8:38-39** <sup>38</sup>”And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God’s love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—or even the powers of hell can separate us from God’s love. <sup>39</sup>No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.” NLT

**Ephesians 3:18-19** <sup>18</sup>”And may you have the power to understand, as all God’s people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep His love is. <sup>19</sup>May you experience the love of Christ, thought it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God.” NLT

**1 John 3:16** <sup>16</sup>”We know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters.” NLT

**1 John 4:10** <sup>10</sup>”This is real love—not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.

# Day 2

## Our “First Love” is for the Lord!

*Think about, discuss or pray about the verse that relates most to your life right now...*

**Deuteronomy 6:4-5** <sup>4</sup>“Listen, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD alone. <sup>5</sup>And you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength.” NLT

**Deuteronomy 30:6** <sup>6</sup>“The LORD your God will change your heart, and the hearts of all your descendants, so that you will love Him with all your heart and soul and so you may live.” NLT

**Matthew 6:24** <sup>24</sup>“No one can serve two masters. For you will hate the one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.” NLT

**Matthew 22:37-40** <sup>37</sup>Jesus replied, “You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.” <sup>38</sup>This is the first and greatest commandment. <sup>39</sup>A second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ <sup>40</sup>The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments.” NLT

**Revelation 2:4** <sup>4</sup>“But I have this complaint against you. You don’t love me or each other as you did at first!” NLT

*What is love if not costly? Real love demands sacrifice that can't be found in self-centeredness. You can give without loving, but you can never love without giving. Sacrificial love requires that we give what we value most: our hearts, minds, souls, and strength. Real love does not always follow our natural inclinations; it is not an impulse from feelings.*

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# Day 18

## Peace as the Absence of War!

*Think about, discuss or pray about the verse that relates most to your life right now...*

**Leviticus 26:3-6** <sup>3</sup>“If you follow my decrees and are careful to obey my commands, <sup>4</sup>I will send you the seasonal rains. The land will then yield its crops, and the trees of the field will produce their fruit. <sup>5</sup>Your threshing season will overlap with the grape harvest, and your grape harvest will overlap with the season of planting grain. You will eat your fill and live securely in your own land. <sup>6</sup>I will give you peace in the land and you will be able to sleep with no cause for fear. I will rid the land of wild animals and keep your enemies out of the land.

**Judges 3:30** <sup>30</sup>“So Moab was conquered by Israel that day, and there was peace in the land for eighty years.” NLT

**1 Kings 5:4** <sup>4</sup>“Solomon’s dominion extended over all the kingdoms west of the Euphrates River, from Tiphah to Gaza. And there was peace on all his borders.

**Psalms 37:9-11** <sup>9</sup>“For the wicked will be destroyed, but those who trust in the LORD will possess the land. <sup>10</sup>Soon the wicked will disappear. Though you look for them, they will be gone. <sup>11</sup>The lowly will possess the land and will live in peace and prosperity.” NLT

**Proverbs 17:1** <sup>1</sup>“Better a dry crust eaten in peace than a house filled with feasting—and conflict.” NLT

**Ecclesiastes 3:8** <sup>8</sup>“A time to love and a time to hate. A time for war and a time for peace.” NLT

**“War is cruelty and you cannot refine it.”**

**--Gen. William T. Sherman**

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# Day 17

## God Promises to Give Us Peace!

*Think about, discuss or pray about the verse that relates most to your life right now...*

*Psalms 4:7-8* <sup>7</sup>“You have given me greater joy than those who have abundant harvests of grain and new wine. <sup>8</sup>In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, O LORD, will keep me safe.” NLT

*Psalms 29:11* <sup>11</sup>“The LORD gives his people strength. The Lord blesses them with peace.” NLT

*Isaiah 14:30* <sup>30</sup>“I will feed the poor in my pasture; the needy will lie down in peace.” NLT

*Jeremiah 33:6* <sup>6</sup>“Nevertheless, the time will come when I will heal Jerusalem’s wounds and give it prosperity and true peace.” NLT

*Ezekiel 37:24-26* <sup>24</sup>“My servant David will be their king, and they will have only one shepherd. They will obey my regulations and be careful to keep my decrees. <sup>25</sup>They will live in the land I gave my servant Jacob, the land where their ancestors lived. They and their children and their grandchildren after them will live there forever, generation after generation. And my servant David will be their prince forever. <sup>26</sup>And I will make a covenant of peace with them, an everlasting covenant.” NLT

*Hosea 2:18* <sup>18</sup>“On that day I will make a covenant with all the wild animals and the birds of the sky and the animals that scurry along the ground so they will not harm you. I will remove all weapons of war from the land, all swords and bows, so you can live unafraid in peace and safety.” NLT

# The FOUR Loves

The Greeks used four different words for love. They are listed below with their common usage:

**Philos “Brotherly Love; Friendship”** This word for love and its variations are found frequently in the New Testament. As we seek to follow Jesus, we will do well to find those with whom we may bond in a relationship of “philos.” This brotherly or sisterly affection was often seen as one of the clear evidences of Jesus’ presence in the early church.

**Eros “Passionate Love”** Commonly refers to sexual “love,” this word for love is found only in Proverbs 7:18 (In the Septuagint, the Greek version of the Old Testament) in the Bible. The English word “erotic” derives from this word, and as such is appropriate only between a husband and wife.

**Storge “Instinctive Love”** This usage of the word love is not found in the Bible at all. It was used to refer to the instinctive care of a mother animal for her young.

**Agape “Self-giving Love”** This use of the word love is by far the most common in the New Testament. Jesus love for us is agape. God’s love for the world is agape. When Jesus tells us that greater love has no one than this that one lays down one’s life for a friend, it is agape love of which He speaks. As we live in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, agape will be one of the evident aspects of the “fruit” of the Spirit in our lives. As Jesus said, “By this will all know that you are my disciples that you have love (agape) for one another.

## Day 3

### God's Love is Unfailing!

*Think about, discuss or pray about the verse that relates most to your life right now...*

*Psalms 23:6* <sup>6</sup> Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me all the days of my life, and I will live in the house of the LORD forever." NLT

*Psalms 48:9* <sup>9</sup> O God, we meditate on your unfailing love as we worship in Your Temple." NLT

*Psalms 63:3* <sup>3</sup> Your unfailing love is better than life itself; how I praise You!

*Psalms 86:15* <sup>15</sup> But You, O Lord, are a God of compassion and mercy, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love and faithfulness." NLT

*Psalms 103:11* <sup>11</sup> For His unfailing love toward those who fear Him is as great as the height of the heavens." NLT

*Psalms 147:11* <sup>11</sup> No, the LORD's delight is in those who fear Him, who put their hope in His unfailing love." NLT

*Isaiah 54:10* <sup>10</sup> For the mountains may move and the hills disappear, but even then I faithful love for you will remain. My covenant of blessing will never be broken, says the LORD, who has mercy on you." NLT

***The greatest happiness in life is the conviction that we are loved, loved for ourselves, or rather loved in spite of ourselves. –Unknown***

## Day 16

### Jesus Gives Us Peace Through His Death!

*Think about, discuss or pray about the verse that relates most to your life right now...*

*Isaiah 9:6* <sup>6</sup> For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. The government will rest on his shoulders. And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." NLT

*Romans 5:1* <sup>1</sup> Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us." NLT

*Galatians 6:14-16* <sup>14</sup> As for me, may I never boast about anything except the cross of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Because of that cross, my interest in this world has been crucified, and the world's interest in me has also died. <sup>15</sup> It doesn't matter whether we have been circumcised or not. What counts is whether we have been transformed into a new creation. <sup>16</sup> May God's peace and mercy be upon all who live by this principle. They are the new people of God." NLT

*Ephesians 2:4* <sup>4</sup> For Christ himself has brought peace to us. He united Jews and Gentiles into one people when, in his own body on the cross, he broke down the wall of hostility that separated us." NLT

*Colossians 1:19-20* <sup>19</sup> For God in all his fullness was pleased to live in Christ, <sup>20</sup> and through him God reconciled everything to himself. He made peace with everything in heaven and on earth by means of Christ's blood on the cross." NLT

# Peace Is More Than the Absence of War

Given the condition of the world in which we live, many of us would settle for a world with the “absence of war.” But that is not peace, by Jesus definition. In fact in John 14:27, our last reading for Day 15, **Jesus said, “I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don’t be troubled or afraid.”** NLT Peace of mind and heart. That is the goal of our lives in Jesus Christ, to be at peace in our minds, in our hearts, in our spirits, and our souls. Only one thing can make it happen: The Holy Spirit! As we study the Fruit of the Spirit on Sunday mornings, in our daily bible readings, and in LIFE home groups, we must constantly remind ourselves: **WHEN WE HAVE THE HOLY SPIRIT, WE WILL BEAR THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT!**

Please remember that while we are breaking the nine characteristics of the Holy Spirit’s fruit down into individual characteristics for the sake of our study, they are a “package.” If we have peace of mind and heart, we will undoubtedly have love, joy, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. That’s because the peace, (and all the other characteristics!) the Spirit gives us are far beyond the world’s imitations of them. An absence of war is not peace. You and I may go sit under separate trees and “be at peace,” by that definition. But true peace means that in our interactions with one another we seek the best for one another and ourselves under the control of Jesus! Peace is not an abstract ideal, or a “pipe dream.” Peace is a daily reality for us when Jesus is in control by the reigning presence of the Holy Spirit. When the Spirit fills and empowers us the circumstances around us do not dictate our response—He does! That means that peace is a reality regardless of what someone else says or does. As we read, reflect and pray about each aspect of the Fruit of the Spirit may we also invest time in prayer asking God to fill us and re-fill us with the Spirit that we may LIVE in the Spirit and demonstrate His fruit daily in our lives!

# Day 4 Obedience=Love to God!

*Think about, discuss or pray about the verse that relates most to your life right now...*

*Exodus 20:6* <sup>6</sup>”But I lavish unfailing love for a thousand generations on those who love me and obey my commands.” NLT

*Deuteronomy 11:1* <sup>1</sup>”You must love the LORD your God and obey all His requirements.” NLT

*1 Kings 8:22-23* <sup>22</sup>”Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in front of the entire community of Israel. He lifted his hands toward heaven, <sup>23</sup>and prayed, ‘O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like you in all of heaven above or on the earth below. You keep your covenant and show unfailing love to all who walk before you in wholehearted devotion.’” NLT

*Psalms 25:10* <sup>10</sup>”The LORD leads with unfailing love and faithfulness all who keep His covenant and obey His demands.” NLT

*John 14:15* <sup>15</sup>”If you love Me, obey My commandments.” NLT

*1 John 2:5* <sup>5</sup>”But those who obey God’s word truly show how completely they love Him. That is how we know we are living in Him.” NLT

***It is not how much you do, but how much Love you put into the doing that matters.--Mother Teresa***

## Day 5

### Loving Others is Second Only to Loving God!

*Think about, discuss or pray about the verse that relates most to your life right now...*

**Leviticus 19:18** <sup>18</sup>“Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against a fellow Israelite, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD.”

**John 13:34-35** <sup>34</sup>“So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. <sup>35</sup>Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.” NLT

**John 15:12-13** <sup>12</sup>“This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you. <sup>13</sup>There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”

**Romans 12:9** <sup>9</sup>“Don’t just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good.” NLT

**Romans 13:8** <sup>8</sup>“Owe nothing to anyone—except for your obligation to love one another. If you love your neighbor, you will fulfill the requirements of God’s law.” NLT

**1 Corinthians 13:1** <sup>1</sup>“If I could speak all the languages of the earth and of angels, but didn’t love others, I would only be a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.” NLT

**1 John 3:18** <sup>18</sup>“Dear children, let’s not merely say that we love each other, let us show the truth by our actions.”

***Love fails, only when we fail to love.-- J. Franklin***

## Day 15 True Peace!

*Think about, discuss or pray about the verse that relates most to your life right now...*

**Exodus 18:23** <sup>23</sup>“If you follow this advice, and if God commands you to do so, then you will be able to endure the pressures, and all of these people will go home in peace.” NLT

**Psalms 119:165** <sup>165</sup>“Those who love your instructions have great peace and do not stumble.” NLT

**Zechariah 1:11** <sup>11</sup>“Then the other riders reported to the angel of the LORD, who was standing among the myrtle trees, ‘We have been patrolling the earth, and the whole earth is at peace.’” NLT

**Luke 2:14** <sup>14</sup>“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased.” NLT

**Luke 10:5-7** <sup>5</sup>“Whenever you enter someone’s home, first say, ‘May God’s peace be on this house.’ <sup>6</sup>If those who live there are peaceful the blessing will stand; if they are not, the blessing will return to you. <sup>7</sup>Don’t move around from home to home. Stay in one place, eating and drinking what they provide. Don’t hesitate to accept hospitality, because those who work deserve their pay.” NLT

**Luke 19:38** <sup>38</sup>“Blessings on the King who comes in the name of the LORD! Peace in heaven and glory in highest heaven!” NLT

**John 14:27** <sup>27</sup>“I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don’t be troubled or afraid.” NLT

# Week 3-Peace

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# Day 6 Love is a Family Matter!

*Think about, discuss or pray about the verse that relates most to your life right now...*

**Genesis 22:2** <sup>2</sup>Then God said, “Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about.” NIV

**Proverbs 5:15** <sup>15</sup>”Drink water from your own well—share your love only with your wife.” NLT

**Isaiah 49:15** <sup>15</sup>”Can a mother forget her nursing child? Can she feel no love for the child she has borne? But even if that were possible, I would not forget you!” NLT

**Ephesians 5:25** <sup>25</sup>”For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up His life for her.” NLT

**Colossians 3:19** <sup>19</sup>”Husbands love your wives and never treat them harshly.” NLT

**1 John 4:20-21** <sup>20</sup>”If someone says, ‘I love God,’ but hates a Christian brother or sister, that person is a liar; for if we don’t love people we can see, how can we love God, whom we cannot see?  
<sup>21</sup> And He has give us this command: Those who love God must also love their Christian brothers and sisters. NLT

**He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God. God is love. Therefore love. Without distinction, without calculation, without procrastination, love. Lavish it upon the poor, where it is very easy; especially upon the rich, who often need it most; most of all upon out equals, where it is very difficult, and for whom perhaps we do the least of all. -Henry Drummond**

***<sup>8</sup> And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. <sup>9</sup> Keep putting into practice all you learned and received from me—everything you heard from me and saw me doing. Then the God of peace will be with you—Philippians 4:8-9***

# Day 7

## Love is an Action!

*Think about, discuss or pray about the verse that relates most to your life right now...*

*Psalms 33:5* <sup>5</sup>“He loves whatever is just and good; the unfailing love of the LORD fills the earth.” NLT

*John 21:15* <sup>15</sup>“After breakfast Jesus asked Simon Peter, ‘Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?’ ‘Yes, Lord,’ Peter replied, ‘You know I love You.’ ‘Then feed my lambs,’ Jesus told him.” NLT

*1 Corinthians 16:13-14* <sup>13</sup>“Be on guard. Stand firm in the faith. Be courageous. Be strong. <sup>14</sup>And do everything with love. NLT

*Ephesians 4:15* <sup>15</sup>“Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of His body, the church.” NLT

*Colossians 3:14* <sup>14</sup>“Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony.” NLT

***Do not waste time bothering whether you “love” your neighbor; act as if you did. As soon as we do this we find one of the great secrets. When you are behaving as if you loved someone you will presently come to love him.***

***-- C. S. Lewis***

***There is no love which does not become help. --Paul Tillich***

5. Note which verse from each day’s readings made the most impact on you:

- Day 8: \_\_\_\_\_
- Day 9: \_\_\_\_\_
- Day 10: \_\_\_\_\_
- Day 11: \_\_\_\_\_
- Day 12: \_\_\_\_\_
- Day 13: \_\_\_\_\_
- Day 14: \_\_\_\_\_

6. What is one thing you learned from your readings, reflections, discussions and prayer this week?

7. What one thing do you most need to do to experience joy in all circumstances as you live each day?

## *Week 2-Joy* Points to Ponder...

Questions to think about or discuss

1. What brings happiness to your life? What brings joy?
2. Which of the themes for the week (the heading for each day's reading) impacted you the most? Why?
3. Who is the most joy filled person you have ever known personally? Was he or she a follower of Jesus? What was evident in his or her life as the source of joy?
4. The Bible tells us to rejoice in (not for) all circumstances. What does that mean to you?

## *Week 1-Love* Points to Ponder...

Questions to think about or discuss

1. What is your earliest remembrance of the word "love"? What is your earliest remembrance of being loved?
2. Think of all the ways the word "love" is used in everyday life. Refer to "The FOUR Loves" on page 3, and see how our use of the word fits in the four categories. (For example, Where does the statement "I love pizza!" fit in or does it?)
3. Which of the Scriptures from each day made the greatest impact on you?

Day 1: \_\_\_\_\_  
Day 2: \_\_\_\_\_  
Day 3: \_\_\_\_\_  
Day 4: \_\_\_\_\_  
Day 5: \_\_\_\_\_  
Day 6: \_\_\_\_\_  
Day 7: \_\_\_\_\_

4. When is it the easiest for you to love others? When is it the most challenging? Why?

5. What aspects of Jesus' life make it clear to you that John 3:16 is true? (That is when we are told that God so LOVED the world that He gave His one and only Son.....how do we see God's love in Jesus words and actions?)

6. What is one new thing that you learned this week?

7. What one thing do you most need to do to see the Fruit of LOVE in your daily life?

## Day 14

### Joy in Building Projects for the Lord!

*Think about, discuss or pray about the verse that relates most to your life right now...*

**Deuteronomy 16:13-15** <sup>13</sup>”You must observe the Festival of Shelters for seven days at the end of the harvest season, after the grain has been threshed and the grapes have been pressed. <sup>14</sup>This festival will be a happy time of celebrating with your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, and the Levites, foreigners, orphans, and widows from your towns. <sup>15</sup>For seven days you must celebrate this festival to honor the LORD your God at the place He chooses, for it is He who blesses you with bountiful harvests, and gives you success in all your work. This festival will be a time of great joy for all.” NLT

**2 Samuel 6:13-15** <sup>13</sup>”After the men who were carrying the Ark of the LORD had gone six steps, David sacrificed a bull and a fattened calf. <sup>14</sup>And David danced before the LORD with all his might, wearing a priestly garment. <sup>15</sup>So David and all the people of Israel brought up the Ark of the LORD with shouts of joy and blowing of rams’ horns.” NLT

**1 Chronicles 29:9** <sup>9</sup>”the people rejoiced over the offerings, for they had given freely and wholeheartedly to the LORD, and King David was filled with joy.” NLT

**Ezra 6:16** <sup>16</sup>”The Temple of God was then dedicated with great joy by the people of Israel, the priests, the Levites, and the rest of the people who had returned from exile.” NLT

**Nehemiah 8:10** <sup>10</sup> And Nehemiah continued, ‘Go and celebrate with a feast of rich foods and sweet drinks and share gifts of food with gifts of food who have nothing prepared. This is a sacred day before our Lord. Don’t be dejected and sad, for the joy of the LORD is your strength!’” NLT

# Day 13

## Joy in Trial and Sorrow!

*Think about, discuss or pray about the verse that relates most to your life right now...*

*Isaiah 29:18-19* <sup>18</sup>“In that day the deaf will hear words read from a book, and the blind will see through the gloom and darkness. <sup>19</sup>The humble will be filled with fresh joy from the LORD.” NLT

*Luke 15:7* <sup>7</sup>“In the same way, there is more joy over one lost sinner who repents and returns to God than over ninety-nine others who are righteous and haven’t strayed away!” NLT

*Hebrews 12:2* <sup>2</sup>“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

*James 1:2* <sup>2</sup>“Dear brothers and sisters, when trouble comes your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy.” NLT

*1 Peter 1:6* <sup>6</sup>“So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you have to endure many trials for a little while.” NLT

*Jude 1:24* <sup>24</sup>“Now all glory to God, who is able to keep you from falling away, and will bring you with great joy into His glorious present without a single fault.

**“He who has not looked on Sorrow will never see Joy.”  
Kahlil Gibran**

# Week 2-Joy

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*<sup>4</sup> Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice! <sup>5</sup> Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do. Remember, the Lord is coming soon.  
Philippians 4:4-5NLT*

## Day 8

### Joy Comes from the Lord!

*Think about, discuss or pray about the verse that relates most to your life right now...*

**Nehemiah 8:12** <sup>12</sup>“So the people went away to eat and drink at a festive meal, to share gifts of food, and to celebrate with great joy because they had heard God’s words and understood them.” NLT

**Matthew 28:8** <sup>8</sup>“The women ran quickly from the tomb. They were very frightened but also filled with great joy, and they rushed to give the disciples the angel’s message.” NLT

**John 15:11** <sup>11</sup>“I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow.” NLT

**John 20:20** <sup>20</sup>“As He spoke, He showed them the wounds in His hands and His side. They were filled with joy when they saw the Lord!” NLT

**Acts 2:46** <sup>46</sup>“They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord’s Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity.” NLT

**Philippians 2:18** <sup>18</sup>“Yes, you should rejoice, and I will share your joy!” NLT

**Philippians 4:4** <sup>4</sup>“Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice!” NLT

***Joy is prayer - Joy is strength - Joy is love - Joy is a net of love by which you can catch souls—Mother Teresa***

## Day 12

### Even the “World” is filled with God’s Joy!

*Think about, discuss or pray about the verse that relates most to your life right now...*

**1 Chronicles 16:31-32** <sup>31</sup>“Let the heavens be glad, and the earth rejoice! Tell all the nations, ‘The LORD reigns!’” <sup>32</sup>Let the sea and everything in it shout His praise! Let the fields and their crops burst out with joy.” NLT

**Psalms 65:12-13** <sup>12</sup>“The grasslands of the wilderness became a lush pasture, and the hillsides blossom with joy.” <sup>13</sup>The meadows clothed with flocks of sheep, and the valleys are carpeted with grain. They all shout and sing for joy!” NLT

**Psalms 100:1-3** <sup>1</sup>“Shout with joy to the LORD, all the earth! <sup>2</sup>Worship the LORD with gladness. Come before Him, singing with joy.” <sup>3</sup>Acknowledge that the LORD is God! He made us and we are His.” NLT

**Isaiah 44:23** <sup>23</sup>“Sing, O heavens, for the LORD has done this wondrous thing. Shout for joy, O depths of the earth! Break into song, oh mountains and forests and every tree! For the LORD has redeemed Jacob and is glorified in Israel.” NLT

**Isaiah 49:13** <sup>13</sup>“Sing for joy O heavens! Rejoice, O earth! Burst into song O mountains! For the LORD has comforted its people and will have compassion on them in their suffering.” NLT

***Joy is a net of love by which you can catch souls.***  
**—Mother Teresa**

# Day 11

## The Joy of Knowing God's Forgiveness!

*Think about, discuss or pray about the verse that relates most to your life right now...*

*Psalms 30:4-5* <sup>4</sup>“Sing to the LORD, all you godly ones! Praise His holy name. <sup>5</sup>For His anger lasts only a moment, but His favor lasts a lifetime! Weeping may last for the night, but joy comes with the morning.” NLT

*Psalms 32:1-2* <sup>1</sup>“Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight! <sup>2</sup>Yes, what joy for those whose record the Lord has cleared of guilt, whose lives are lived in complete honesty.” NLT

*Psalms 51:7-8* <sup>7</sup>“Purify me from my sins, and I will be clean; wash me and I will be whiter than snow. <sup>8</sup>Oh, give me back my joy again; you have broken me—now let me rejoice.” NLT

***When we truly love God, joy can only be known when we are right with Him. When we have sinned, repentance is the only cure for the absence of joy we will experience in that state. Of this we may be sure—when we turn to God from our sin, He is always waiting with open arms to receive us back to Himself!***

***Happiness depends on what happens; Joy does not.***  
~ Oswald Chambers

# Day 9

## Let God's People Sing for Joy!

*Think about, discuss or pray about the verse that relates most to your life right now...*

*Psalms 5:11-12* <sup>11</sup>“But let all who take refuge in you rejoice; let them sing joyful praises forever. Spread your protection over them, that all who love your name may be filled with joy. <sup>12</sup>For you bless the godly, Oh, LORD; you surround them with your shield of love.” NLT

*Psalms 33:2-3* <sup>2</sup>“Praise the Lord with melodies on the lyre; make music for Him on the ten stringed harp. <sup>3</sup>Sing a new song of praise to Him; place skillfully on the harp, and sing with joy.” NLT

*Psalms 59:16* <sup>16</sup>“But as for me, I will sing about your power. Each morning I will sing with joy about your unfailing love.” NLT

*Psalms 63:3-5* <sup>3</sup>“Your unfailing love is better than life itself; how I praise you! <sup>4</sup>I will praise you as long as I live, lifting up my hands to you in prayer. <sup>5</sup>You satisfy me more than the richest feast. I will praise you with songs of joy.” NLT

*Psalms 67:4* <sup>4</sup>“Let the whole world sing for joy, because you govern the nations with justice and guide the people of the whole world. NLT

*Psalms 98:4-6* <sup>4</sup>“Shout to the LORD, all the earth; break out in praise and sing for joy! <sup>5</sup>Sing your praise to the LORD with the harp, with the harp and the melodious song. <sup>6</sup>With trumpets and the sound of the ram's horn.” NLT

*Isaiah 26:19* <sup>19</sup>“But those who die in the LORD will live; their bodies will rise again! Those who sleep in the earth will rise up and sing for joy! For your life-giving light will fall like dew on your people in the place of the dead.” NLT

# Joy or Happiness?

In English we often use joy and happiness as synonyms, but in the Bible, joy (*χαρά* or *chara*) is closing connected with grace (*χάρις* or *charis*). That's because joy is related to our salvation, and it is by the grace of God in Jesus Christ that we obtain salvation. Happiness is related to the "happencence." Thus, we see that while happiness is based on positive circumstances. Joy may be experienced in ALL circumstances. On Day thirteen we'll focus on Scriptures that demonstrate our joy in times of sorrow and trial. It would be absurd for any of us outside of the grace of God in Jesus to be "happy" in the midst of pain and suffering. Yet, as followers of Jesus we can know joy in pain and suffering. What's the difference? The difference is that true joy means maintaining a sense of well being based on Jesus' presence in us, rather than on what's taking place at the moment.

If we examine the Apostle Paul's life, we see an excellent example of joy in suffering, of maintaining joy in all circumstances. Paul endured great hardship and punishment after becoming a follower and "slave" of Jesus. Before his conversion, Saul (as he was known), was a "rising star" in the Jewish world. He may well have become chief priest at some point, but after meeting Jesus on the road to Damascus that "happy" course changed forever. From that moment, Saul, who would take the Gentile name, Paul, gave up worldly comfort, status and position in order to know the joy of serving Jesus Christ.

As we go about our days suffering inevitably comes to us. Whether through illness, or loss, or aging, or difficult circumstances, each of us experiences pain. Whether we maintain joy in all of that depends on whether we keep Jesus at the center of our lives. The world tells us to go after all the pleasure we can, to live the "good" life, not worry, but to be happy. Jesus tells us that if we are to be His followers we must deny ourselves, take up our crosses daily and follow Him. That is the path of true joy, even though it may not seem like it at first glance. The key is for us to remember that joy is eternal, while happiness is fleeting. We are eternal beings, whether we recognize it or not, so investing in joy is so much more reasonable, than spending ourselves in the pursuit of happiness. The end result of knowing and trusting Jesus is joy-here and now, and forever!

# Day 10 Joy in Following the Lord's Commands!

*Think about, discuss or pray about the verse that relates most to your life right now...*

**Job 5:17-18** <sup>17</sup>But consider the joy of those corrected by God! Do not despise the discipline of the Almighty when you sin. <sup>18</sup>For though He wounds, He also bandages. He strikes, but His hands also heal." NLT

**Psalms 40:8** <sup>8</sup>"I take joy in doing your will, my God, for your instructions are written on my heart." NLT

**Psalms 84:11-12** <sup>11</sup>"For the LORD God is our Sun and our shield. He gives us grace and glory. The LORD will withhold no good thing from those who do what is right. <sup>12</sup>Oh LORD of Heaven's Armies, what joy for those who trust in you."

**Psalms 97:11-12** <sup>11</sup>"Light shines on the godly, and joy on those whose hearts are right. <sup>12</sup>May all who are godly rejoice in the LORD and praise His holy name!" NLT

**Jeremiah 15:16** <sup>16</sup>"When I discovered your words, I devoured them. They are my joy and my heart's delight, for I bear your name, Oh LORD God of Heaven's Armies." NLT

**Malachi 4:2** <sup>2</sup>"But for you who fear my name, the Sun of Righteousness will rise with healing in His wings. And you will go free, leaping with joy like calves let out to pasture." NLT

**3 John 1:4** <sup>4</sup>"I could have no greater joy than to hear that my children are following the truth." NLT