



WEEK 3 DEVOTIONAL
GENEROUS SERVICE & LIFE-CHANGING LOVE

RECEIVE

Read the passages on the following page. **Matthew 7:12; John 13:34–35 (ESV & TPT); 1 Corinthians 13:4–7; Matthew 25:31–46; Isaiah 58:6–9.** Read them slowly, thoughtfully, prayerfully. Read them knowing the Holy Spirit is trying to speak to you. As you read, circle or journal words or phrases that stand out to you. Then go back and consider why those words and phrases caught your attention. Read the passage again imagining motivations and emotions of the characters. What are your emotions as you read? Finally, read and consider what these verses might imply about *generous service* and *life-changing love* in your life here and now and as you live into this new year.

REFLECT

1. **Matthew 7:12** is said to be the crown of the sermon on the mount. What do you think of when you read it—what comes to mind? Would it be easier if it were negative “Don’t do to others what you

would not want done to you?" Why do you think that is? Journal through it.

2. **John 13:34–35** is given in two different translations. What is the purpose of the command? Talk or journal about what that would look like today and how it might be done. What do you see that looks like this in your experience? What was Jesus' example for the disciples?
3. **1 Corinthians 13** is a famous passage on love. It is easy to get lost in the excessive completeness of the words. Take a piece of paper and write each phrase out and then think of an example that illustrates that phrase. It can be from a movie or a book or your personal experience...anything. But make the effort to see the words come to life. Then talk or journal about it—see it live.
4. **Matthew 25:31–46** is often read in the context of the final judgement for indeed that is what it points to. Read vs 35–36. How does this define *generous service*? Is it significant to you that those who did the good did not realize they had done it? What do you think that means?
5. In **Isaiah 58:6–9** how would you put into your own words what Isaiah is trying to communicate?

RESPOND

6. As you contemplate *generous service* what emotions do you sense as you think about applying Matthew 7:12 to your life? What is the role of the Holy Spirit in this pursuit?

7. Do you pursue the purpose Jesus gave in John 13:34–35? Is being identified as a disciple, a loving disciple, even on our radar? How can we realize that in a way that changes our *attractive witness* and *genuine community*? Talk about that or journal, including some actions. If you find it difficult to journal through, what gets in the way? What can be done to remove those barriers?
8. If **Matthew 25:35–36** is our goal, how does that impact your Christian idea of what is important? What other Christian values come to mind that are important? Does Jesus really mean this attitude, this motivation for the others good, is the most important thing? Talk or journal about how you might find ways to do this in the every day moments of your life this year. Pray that God would lead you into situations where you have a chance to “do unto others” if I were in that situation I would like someone to “do unto me”.
9. Memorize **Isaiah 58:6–9**.

RESOURCES

Download and take the **Spiritual Health Assessment**. Share your results and plan with a trusted Christian friend.

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 7:12 | New International Version

¹² Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you. This is the essence of all that is taught in the law and the prophets.

John 13:34–35 | English Standard Version

³⁴ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.³⁵ By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

John 13:34–35 | The Passion Translation

³⁴ So I give you now a new commandment: Love each other just as much as I have loved you.³⁵ For when you demonstrate the same love I have for you by loving one another, everyone will know that you're my true followers.

1 Corinthians 13:4–7 | New International Version

⁴ Love is very patient and kind, never jealous or envious, never boastful or proud,⁵ never haughty or selfish or rude. Love does not demand its own way. It is not irritable or touchy. It does not hold grudges and will hardly even notice when others do it wrong.⁶ It is never glad about injustice, but rejoices whenever truth wins out.⁷ If you love someone, you will be loyal to them no matter what the cost. You will always believe in them, always expect the best of them, and always stand your ground in defending them.



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