

## **How We Deal with Others:** *Finding a Middle Way with the Fruit of the Spirit*

### **Week 1: The Fruit of Peace**

*Each day mark off 15-30 minutes (or more if you have the time) to pause, say the opening prayer, then read the passage and reflect on the questions. You are encouraged to write your responses that come to mind. Be as specific as your thoughts are. You will find that capturing your honest, unfiltered thoughts will lead you to actions that become transformative. This is how the Holy Spirit grows within us.*

**Opening Prayer** (to be said each day): *Lord, thank you for being with me right now. Settle my thoughts. Speak to me. I am open to whatever you say and however you direct me. And I trust that you want only what is best for me. Amen*

**Monday:** Read all of John 14:25-27.

Reflection: Jesus makes a connection between sending the Holy Spirit and leaving the disciples with peace. He says, "My peace I give to you." How do you experience Jesus giving you peace?

What are ways, do you think, we can experience more of Jesus' peace?

Based on how you answered the above questions, do you feel called to do anything in order to experience more of the peace of Christ? If so, what?

**Tuesday:** Read Philippians 4:8-9

Reflection: What is the connection between peace and the qualities Paul implores people to "think on?"

Write each of these on a piece of paper: things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, praiseworthy, virtuous (you may even check other translations to see if different words are used which you relate to better). Now list things that come to you as you think on these. Does this exercise build a sense of peace within you?

*(Another way to do this exercise is to focus on just one word at a time, perhaps one per day. Use the steps described for centering prayer at [www.contemplativeoutreach.org](http://www.contemplativeoutreach.org))*

**Wednesday:** Read Psalm 85:10

Reflection: What do you think it means where the writer says “peace and righteousness have kissed?”

Read the verse again, slowly several times. Be still and ask God, “What do you want to say to me through these words?”

**Thursday:** Read Luke 19:41-42

Reflection: Jesus spoke these words while looking over Jerusalem, which means “city of peace.” What do you think Jesus meant when he said, “you do not know the things that make for peace?”

What do you think that means for us today?

**Friday:** Read Matthew 5:9

Reflection: What does it mean to be a peacemaker?

What does this verse mean for you personally? Ask God, “Where and how can I be your peacemaker?”

**Saturday:** Reflect on your reflections this week. Are there any action steps you feel God would want you to take?