

Leader Guide

Simple Gospel

Fall 2025 | Week 7

Message Date 10/26/2025

THE GOAL

It's hard to believe we're nearing the end of our Fall Life Group quarter. I'm so grateful for the way you've led, encouraged, and prayed for your group this season. These conversations have been shaping us more and more into the image of Jesus. This week, Dr Jackson taught us that real strength is found not in payback but in grace. He taught us that Jesus calls us to a higher way—the way of mercy, generosity, and love that mirrors the heart of our Father. The goal this week is to let His love mature us so deeply that forgiveness becomes our default and peace becomes our posture.

MY STORY

- 1) What animal would make the worst motivational speaker, and why?
- 2) Which everyday item would cause the most chaos if it suddenly became self-aware?

QUICK REVIEW

- 3) What caught your attention from Sunday's message?

DIGGING DEEPER / TAKING IT HOME

Matthew 5:38–42 (NLT)

38 "You have heard the law that says, 'The punishment must match the injury: 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.'" 39 But I say, do not resist an evil person! If someone slaps you on the right cheek, offer the other cheek also. 40 If you are sued in court and your shirt is taken from you, give your coat, too. 41 If a soldier demands that you carry his gear for a mile, carry it two miles. 42 Give to those who ask, and don't turn away from those who want to borrow."

- 4) What principle is Jesus teaching through these examples?

Jesus is teaching that love goes beyond fairness—it gives generously, even when wronged. He calls us to respond with grace, not revenge, showing the selfless heart of God in every situation.

Proverbs 19:11 (NLT)

“Sensible people control their temper; they earn respect by overlooking wrongs.”

- 5) What is this proverb teaching us about controlling our temper, and how does that align with the principle of what Jesus taught us about turning the other cheek?

The word sensible means that people who control their temper are people who use their minds. Overlooking wrong is very similar to what God does when we ask for forgiveness. When we are forgiven, He overlooks our wrongs. This doesn't mean that we give people a blank check when it comes to the wrongs that they've done us, but when people are repentant, we overlook them.

Hebrews 12:15 (NLT)

“Look after each other so that none of you fails to receive the grace of God. Watch out that no poisonous root of bitterness grows up to trouble you, corrupting many.”

- 6) What does this verse warn us about bitterness?

Bitterness spreads like a root—it not only poisons our hearts but affects others around us. Grace is the antidote; forgiving quickly keeps our hearts pure.

Matthew 5:43–48 (NLT)

43 “You have heard the law that says, ‘Love your neighbor’ and hate your enemy. 44 But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! 45 In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike. 46 If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that? Even corrupt tax collectors do that much. 47 If you are kind only to your friends, how are you different from anyone else? Even pagans do that. 48 But you are to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.”

- 7) What does it mean to love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you? What's a way we can start to do that?

Loving your enemies is one of the most challenging things that we can do. Yet it absolutely reflects the heart of God. The Bible teaches us that He makes the sun rise on the good and evil. Years ago, I had a person that really hurt me deeply. I thought that I had healed and had forgiven this person. Overtime I realized that didn't actually happen and I allowed bitterness to grow. So, I began praying for this person. I began praying all the things that I wanted that were good in my life for this person; God's blessings, His favor, kindness, grace, mercy, love, all of the things that I wanted to experience I was praying for them. What I found was that my heart changed. If you're feelings are telling you that you can't forgive, just start by praying for them through clenched teeth and keep doing it.

- 8) What does Jesus mean when He says to 'be perfect' like our heavenly Father?

Jesus isn't demanding flawlessness but completeness—mature love that mirrors the Father's. God's love extends even to His enemies, and ours should too.

Romans 15:13 (NLT)

"I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit."

- 9) How does hope through the Holy Spirit empower us to live out Jesus' call to radical love?

Hope from the Spirit fuels perseverance. When we're filled with His peace and joy, we can love generously, forgive freely, and reflect God's nature in every response. It's greater than my feelings. Radical love comes with action.

CHAIR TIME TOOLS

Think about the following questions and pray through them with Jesus.

- 1) Is there someone you need to forgive or release to God this week?
- 2) Is there an offense or hurt you have been holding that's hindering peace in your heart?
- 3) Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you with love for those who are hard to love, and to remind you of the grace you've received.