

The background is a textured, light beige surface. It features several stylized, flat-colored hands in red, orange, and maroon, some reaching out. A green vine with small leaves and blue flowers with red centers winds across the composition. A large blue flower with an orange center is positioned in the middle.

A Generous Life

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Session 1 – Everything

To Begin

- If you could acquire anything in the world, what would it be and why?

Digging Deeper

- What stood out most to you from the sermon this past weekend?

Together read Matthew 5:21-24 and then watch Session 1.

Anger is an emotion that we have all experienced before at one time or another. As followers of Jesus, how can we understand and deal with this emotion? In order for us to deal with anger, it is important to understand what types of things make us angry, as well as the different types of responses a person can have to anger. Ultimately, as followers of Jesus we need to approach the Scripture to give us wisdom and guidance on how we can deal with this emotion.

- What have you found that causes you to get angry in life?
- When was the last time you were really angry? How did you respond? How can someone tell when you're angry?
- Is anger itself sinful? Why or why not?
- Why does Jesus treat calling someone a fool in the same classification as murder?
- If you could do this situation over again, what would you do differently?

Read the following passages and discuss any insights:

"People with understanding control their anger; a hot temper shows great foolishness." Proverbs 14:29

"But now is the time to get rid of anger, rage, malicious behavior, slander, and dirty language." Colossians 3:8

"Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry." James 1:19.

- In those situations where you know someone is angry with you, what have you done to make peace and seek forgiveness? How can we learn to live in peace with others in everything?
- How far should we go to bring about reconciliation with someone whom we have offended? Are there any situations that we shouldn't try to resolve? Or that we can't resolve?
- How does the gospel message inform our response of anger?
- What has God revealed to you? What are you going to do about it?

"Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins" (1 Peter 4:8).

Close the small group discussion with a time of praying. Perhaps spend some time praying Paul's prayer in Colossians 1:9-14.

Praise & Prayer Points

Session 2 – Everyone

To Begin

- Have you ever felt like you were someone's enemy? What impact did it have on your life?
- Have you ever treated someone like an enemy? How did that situation turn out?

Digging Deeper

- What stood out most to you from the sermon this past weekend?

Together read Matthew 5:38-48 and then watch Session 2.

Sometimes it seems like it's easier to act first and ask for forgiveness later, however, that's not the attitude we should have as followers of Jesus.

- In what ways have you ever reacted poorly against those who have hurt you?
- How do you respond when you are insulted or taken advantage of? As followers of Jesus, what should our response to these situations be?
- How can we learn to be full of grace with relationships that trouble us?
- Think of the difficult people in your life, what does loving them look like? Do you feel followers of Jesus stand out based on the way we love? If yes, how? If no, what's missing? What are some practical steps we can take to live a grace filled life full of love to those around us?

Together read through Romans 12:17-21 and discuss any insights.

- As followers of Jesus, how can we practice sincerely Jesus' words in verses 38 - 48 and Romans 12:17-21?

Read Matthew 5:38-48 again, while asking God to reveal to you the relationships where you need to extend grace, mercy and forgiveness. Pray for His Spirit to guide you and fill you with strength, love and wisdom to do just that.

This week, commit to praying Psalm 119:33-40 several times throughout the week. Journal about how God is showing up in response to this prayer.

Praise & Prayer Points

[illegible]

Session 3 – Everywhere

To Begin

- Have you ever given a gift anonymously? What was fun or exciting about that experience?

Digging Deeper

- What stood out most to you from the sermon this past weekend?

Together Read Colossians 3:17 and then watch Session 3.

When Paul says “do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus,” he is saying that we should speak and act in full awareness of who Jesus is and what he has done. The thought that underlies Paul's usage of the word “name” implies “something real, a piece of the very nature of the personality whom it designates, expressing the person's qualities and powers.” Everywhere we go, we represent Jesus and his name to the people around us. We have a different standard to live by when we go out into the world. Jesus' Golden Rule helps us evaluate our words and actions to see if they line up with how we should live in our world.

- How was Jesus the greatest example of generosity? What can we learn from him?
- What are some practical ways to model generosity everywhere today?
- What does it mean to be generous with your time? Spiritual gifts? Resources?

The other part of this verse asks us in all our words and deeds to act in a way that we are “giving thanks to God the Father through him.”

The repetition of the theme of “thanksgiving” in this section reminds us that those who have received grace should extend grace out to others generously!

- Are you a naturally grateful and thankful person?
- What would help you be more “naturally” grateful?

This week, let’s live out the truth of Christ and His message where ever God leads us, because He alone is worthy of our praise.

- Do you do everything in the name of Jesus? What would change in your life if you did?
- What would it look like if all believers in your small group or at your church practiced this verse? What would be different?

Praise & Prayer Points

The background is a textured, yellowish-gold fabric-like pattern. Overlaid on this are several stylized elements: a green vine with small green leaves and small blue flowers with red centers, winding across the frame; and several hands in various colors (red, orange, brown) reaching out or holding. A large, stylized blue flower with a red center is positioned behind the text.

First Alliance

a christian & missionary alliance church