

**GROW. PRAY. STUDY.**  
**First United Methodist Church - Weekly Study Guide**  
*“Equipping people in becoming deeply committed Christians ”*

***Five Simple Truths About LIFE***  
***“The Gold Standard for Living”***

**January 4-9**

*“So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.” Matthew 7:12*

Today we are beginning a new sermon series, “Five Simple Truths About LIFE.” In this series we will look at five lessons you already know.....they come right out of the scripture....but somehow knowing and living them are two different things. We were designed by God to live out these truths and when we don’t, well, our life just isn’t what it was suppose to be. When we fail to live out these simple lessons, these basic truths, we lack the joy and happiness we were meant to have in life.

We begin our series by looking at “The Gold Standard for Living.” If there is one lesson we all learned as children it was this one: “Do unto others as you would have them do to you.” This is the basic standard for living.....but did you know it came directly from the mouth of Jesus? Jesus set this standard for us and he tells us when we live it out life is full of joy and peace. This week we are going to look at some other biblical images of “the Gold Standard.” Spend some time this week thinking about your standard for living. Are you holding others to standard you are unwilling to keep?

**MONDAY- Read Colossians 3:8-10**

Today our reading comes from Paul’s letter to the Colossians. This particular passage is known as Paul’s “Rules for Holy Living.” In it he is reminding us what our standard for living as Christians ought to be. He tells us we can not do these things if we hope to consider ourselves people of faith. Spend some time today reflecting on your life. Do you have any of these things Paul outlines in your heart? If so, how are you going to rid yourself of them? ***Pray the Wesley Covenant Prayer***

**TUESDAY - Read Philippians 2:1-4**

Today’s reading comes from Paul’s letter to the Philippians. In this particular passage Paul reminds us there are expectation for those who claim to have Christ in their heart. If we have this love within us then it should shine through in how we treat others. In other words, if we truly love Christ then we should constantly try to be like him. If so, we must rid ourselves of these things Paul list. Are you hoarding any of these selfish feelings in your heart? How would remembering what Christ has done for you change your attitude? ***Pray the Wesley Covenant Prayer***

### **WEDNESDAY– Read I John 3:16-18**

Today our reading comes from I John and it reminds us what “loving one another” should look like. What does it mean to you to love someone with actions and in truth? Christ loved you by laying his life down so you might have life and life abundant? Can you remember a time when you sacrificed something personally so that someone might know of your love? When have you been willing to lay aside your own wants, needs or even ego so that someone else might feel your unconditional love?

*Pray the Wesley Covenant Prayer*

### **THURSDAY - Read Luke 6:27-37**

Today’s reading comes from Luke and it is a portion of the Sermon on the Mount. In this particular passage Jesus calls us to offer love even to those whom we do not think “deserve” our love. This, of course, is the hardest love to give. Can you think of a time when you have refused to love someone or show kindness to them because you thought they did not deserve it? Do you think you deserve the love that Christ offers you? Love, Christ says, is never about “deserving,” but is at its purest when given without condition. When is the last time you loved unconditionally?

*Pray the Wesley Covenant Prayer*

### **FRIDAY– Read I Corinthians 13:1-7**

Today’s reading comes from Paul’s letter to the Corinthians. It is the “Love” chapter. We have read this on numerous occasions in our study guide, but it is worth reading again as we think about our “standard for living.” We are called, as Christians, to be defined by love. We can not just accept Christ’s love...but we must share it with others. As Paul says “if we have not love we are a noisy gong or a clanging symbol.” In other words, our life makes meaningless noise without love. What are some areas in your life where you could do a better job of showing love to others?

*Pray Wesley Covenant Prayer*

### **SATURDAY - Read Matthew 5:23-24; Colossians 3:8-10**

Today we will be reading the passage we will use in worship tomorrow. As you read it, begin to prepare yourself for a true worship experience.

*I invite you to pray the following prayer:*

*Dear God,*

*As I read this passage today help me do so with an open heart, sincerely listening for your voice in my life. Use this passage to prepare me for worship tomorrow. As I read it help me to set aside my own agenda and my own desires so that I may come to worship tomorrow prepared to be molded by you as I continue my journey to becoming a deeply committed disciple of yours. In Christ’s name I pray. AMEN*

Here at FUMC we believe part of becoming a Deeply Committed Christians is praying daily. If you find yourself struggling with what to say, we suggest you try praying Wesley's Covenant Prayer.

*A Covenant Prayer in the Wesleyan Tradition*

I am no longer my own, but thine.  
Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt.  
Put me to doing, put me to suffering.  
Let me be employed by thee or laid aside for thee,  
exalted for thee or brought low by thee.  
Let me be full, let me be empty.  
Let me have all things, let me have nothing.  
I freely and heartily yield all things to thy pleasure and disposal.  
And now, O glorious and blessed God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit  
thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it.  
And the covenant which I have made on earth,  
let it be ratified in heaven. AMEN  
(United Methodist Hymnal, p. 607)