



THIS IS US

grace | community | authenticity | mission | family

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This Is Us: A Church Family

Devotional

At Avenue, we believe being part of the family of God means we live out certain values and traits that reflect who Jesus is and who we are becoming, together. The early church in Acts provides us with a powerful picture of what that kind of life looks like—lives marked by grace, community, authenticity, mission, and generosity. If you're part of God's family, these are the rhythms we hope will shape you and our church family consistently.

This devotional is designed to help us dive deeper into this series and prepare our hearts and lives to look different by the end of it. Our prayer is that each week, God would transform us to more fully reflect Christ, not just in what we believe, but in how we live, serve, and love one another. Together, we're asking God to refine us into a church family that points the world to the new life, the best life that only Jesus can offer.

Generosity is one of the clearest ways this transformation takes shape. The early church lived open-handedly with their possessions, time, and energy, impacting not only their immediate community but also generations of church families for over 2,000 years. In the same way, when we step into generous, sacrificial living, our impact will stretch far beyond what we can see. This is about more than today—it's about blessing our Avenue family and paving the way for future generations to experience new life in Jesus Christ!

How to Use This Devotional

Set aside 10-15 minutes, three times each week to read the devotional and answer the questions.

For each week, you will be reading the same Scripture passage each day. Re-reading and meditating on a passage like this is called “Lectio Divina.” This is a contemplative practice of “divine reading” that involves slowly and prayerfully reading a passage of Scripture to listen for and respond to God’s Word. The practice is traditionally structured into four stages: lectio (reading), meditatio (meditation), oratio (response), and contemplatio (rest).

Lectio (Reading): Read the passage of scripture slowly and repeatedly. The goal is not to speed read, but to listen attentively for a word or phrase that stands out to you.

Meditatio (Meditation): Reflect on the passage and the word or phrase you heard. Ponder how it might apply to your life and consider the feelings it evokes.

Oratio (Response): Respond to God based on your reflection. This is a conversation where you open your heart to God, sharing your thoughts and feelings inspired by the text. Feel free to use the response questions and write down your thoughts to help with your response.

Contemplatio (Rest): Rest in God’s presence. Let go of your thoughts and words, and simply be with God in silent, loving attention. You are resting in the word of God, not trying to achieve anything specific.

Week 1

Acts 2:36–41 – Grace Received, Grace Proclaimed

Big Idea: We’ve received grace to proclaim grace.

Day 1

Grace That Cuts to the Heart

God’s grace reached even those who crucified Jesus, offering forgiveness and transformation.

When Peter preached in Acts 2, the people were “cut to the heart” by the reality that Jesus, whom they crucified, was both Lord and Messiah. Yet instead of condemning them forever, God extended grace through the cross and resurrection. Grace met them at their lowest point of guilt and offered them forgiveness and new life. This is the miracle of the gospel: undeserved mercy for people who had no claim on it.

That same grace is extended to us. Even when our sin placed Jesus on the cross, He chose love over condemnation. Grace doesn’t just cover our past—it compels us to live differently in the present. Just as the early believers turned from their old ways and embraced Jesus fully, we too are called to let grace reshape every aspect of our lives.

Reflection Questions:

1. How does recognizing your role in Jesus' crucifixion make His grace more powerful?

2. In what ways is God calling you to let His grace transform your daily life?

Day 2

Acts 2:36–41

Grace That Compels Generosity

Grace freed believers to share openly, with generosity flowing from gratitude.

The people who experienced grace in Acts 2 didn't just accept forgiveness and move on with life as usual. They opened their hands and hearts, sharing their possessions and meeting the needs of others. Grace freed them from clinging to what was “theirs,” because they realized everything was a gift from God. Their generosity wasn't duty—it was an overflow of gratitude.

In the same way, we are called to be generous with the blessings God has entrusted to us. Every physical resource, every talent, every dollar in our accounts, and every spiritual gift is undeserved. When we give freely, we reflect the God who gave everything for us. Generosity is not about abundance—it's about God's abundance flowing through us to others.

Reflection Questions:

1. How have you experienced God's generosity undeservedly at Avenue?

2. What step of generosity can you take this week to those inside and outside our church family?

Day 3

Acts 2:36–41

Grace That Changes Everything

Grace demands total surrender and reorients life around Jesus.

The 3,000 who responded to Peter's message in Acts 2 didn't make a small adjustment to their schedules—they surrendered their entire lives. Grace doesn't invite half-hearted commitment; it compels total surrender. They were baptized, lived in community, devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and embraced a completely new way of life. Grace was not just something they received; it was something they embodied.

Today, grace still calls us into that same kind of transformation. It means we no longer live for ourselves but for the One who died and rose again for us. It's not just about Sunday worship, but about everyday choices, generosity, kindness, and sacrifice. Grace demands change—but it's the kind of change that brings life, joy, and freedom.

Reflection Questions:

1. How has God's grace changed your life's trajectory?

2. What area of your life needs to come under His grace?

Week 2

Acts 2:42–47 – When Community Becomes Family

Big Idea: Our community becomes family when we bless our community.

Day 1

A Devoted Community

Believers devoted themselves to teaching, fellowship, prayer, and breaking bread.

The early church devoted themselves to teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer. This wasn't casual participation—it was a deep commitment to God and one another. Their devotion created a rhythm of life where spiritual growth and relational connection went hand in hand. They didn't separate faith from community; both were essential to following Jesus.

For us, the same devotion is key to experiencing real community. When we prioritize gathering, praying, and growing with others, we find encouragement, accountability, and joy. True community is not just received—it's built through consistent presence and participation. It transitions the community from people you know to people you love. God blesses us as we give ourselves fully to Him and to His people.

Reflection Questions:

1. What does your devotion to community at Avenue look like?

2. How can you strengthen others in our church family?

Day 2

Acts 2:42–47

A Generous Community

They shared possessions freely, ensuring no one lacked anything.

In Acts 2, the believers shared their possessions and gave to anyone who had need. Their generosity wasn't forced; it was a natural response to the grace they had experienced in Christ. They understood that everything they owned ultimately belonged to God, so they freely blessed others. This radical sharing created a community where no one was left behind.

We too are called to live with open hands, ready to bless others with what God has entrusted to us. Generosity—whether it's financial, relational, or simply giving time—creates life-giving community. It shifts our perspective from “mine” to “ours,” reminding us that in Christ we are one family. When we bless others, we often discover that we are the ones most deeply blessed.

Reflection Questions:

1. How has someone's generosity blessed you? How did it make you feel?

2. What step of generosity could you take towards someone in your community this week?

Day 3

Acts 2:42–47

A Joyful Community

Unity and love produced joy and favor among all people.

The description in Acts 2 ends with a picture of joy: believers praising God, sharing meals, and enjoying the favor of all people. Their unity and love for one another became a powerful testimony to the watching world. The Lord added to their number daily—not through clever strategies, but through a community marked by joy, generosity, and grace.

When we live selflessly, joy naturally follows. Joy is found not in hoarding but in giving, not in isolation but in togetherness. A life-giving community becomes a light in the darkness, showing others what it means to be transformed by Christ. As we bless our community, God blesses us with joy and expands His kingdom through us.

Reflection Questions:

1. How and when have you experienced joy in Christian community at Avenue? Somewhere else?

2. How can you encourage your church family this week?

Week 3

Acts 3:1–16 – Open-Hearted, Open-Handed

Big Idea: We are open-handed because we live open-hearted.

Day 1

Authentic Living, Authentic Witness

Peter gave what he had—Jesus. Authenticity allowed God’s glory to shine.

When Peter and John encountered the lame man at the temple gate, Peter didn’t pretend to have what he didn’t. He honestly said, “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you” (Acts 3:6). That authenticity allowed the power of Jesus to shine through him. Peter wasn’t focused on appearances or trying to impress; he simply pointed the man to Christ.

Authenticity is powerful in our own lives, too. People don’t need a polished performance or a perfect facade—they need the real Jesus. When we live openly and honestly about our own weaknesses and God’s strength, the gospel becomes believable. Authentic living creates space for God’s glory to be displayed.

Reflection Questions:

1. Where do you feel tempted to project strength instead of honesty? Why?

2. How can you point people to Jesus by being authentic?

Day 2

Acts 3:1–16

Open-Hearted, Open-Handed

An open heart leads to open hands. Willingness, not wealth, allowed Peter to bless others.

Peter didn't give the lame man money, but he gave something far greater—the healing power of Jesus. His open heart led to open hands, ready to serve with whatever he had. That posture of availability allowed God to work miraculously through him. It wasn't about wealth, but willingness.

We are called to the same openness. An open heart toward God naturally produces open hands toward others. We may not always have financial means, but we can give our time, encouragement, prayers, or presence. When our lives are surrendered, God uses even the smallest acts of generosity to make a big impact.

Reflection Questions:

How has God blessed you with gifts to bless others?

2. What is one way you can live more open-handedly this week towards your neighbors and friends?

Day 3

Acts 3:1–16

Jesus at the Center

Peter redirected attention away from himself and back to Christ. Authenticity magnifies the gospel, not self.

After the man was healed, Peter quickly redirected the crowd's amazement back to Jesus. He made it clear that the miracle was not by his own power or godliness, but by faith in Christ (Acts 3:12–16). Peter's humility and authenticity gave all glory to God. This honesty magnified the gospel rather than himself.

Likewise, our lives should be centered on Christ, not our own recognition. When we live open-heartedly and give generously, people may notice—but the glory must always go to Jesus. He is the source of all power, provision, and transformation. The more we open our lives, the more people see Him, not us.

Reflection Questions:

1. How does remembering Jesus as the true source of power shape your generosity?

2. In what situation can you redirect attention back to Jesus this week? How can you do that?

Week 4

Acts 4:1–22, 31 – Bold Mission

Big Idea: We live on mission to primarily proclaim Jesus.

Day 1

Bold in the Face of Opposition

Peter boldly proclaimed salvation in Jesus despite pressure to be silent. The Spirit empowered his courage.

When Peter and John were arrested for healing and preaching in Jesus' name, the religious leaders tried to silence them. Yet Peter declared with boldness that salvation is found in no one else but Christ (Acts 4:12). Their courage came not from human strength but from the Spirit of God working through them. They knew their mission was too important to be quiet.

We often face pressure to stay silent about our faith. Yet the same Spirit that filled the disciples empowers us today to speak truth with love. When we remember that Jesus is the only hope for salvation, we can step out in boldness, even when it's uncomfortable. Living on mission means prioritizing His message above our fears.

Reflection Questions:

1. When have you been tempted to stay silent about Jesus? Why?

2. How can you rely on the Spirit for boldness this week?

Day 2

Acts 4:1–22, 31

More Than Good Deeds

Healing opened the door, but proclaiming forgiveness in Christ remained the mission. Good works matter, but gospel proclamation is primary. Yet, good works are a way we proclaim the Gospel.

The healing of the lame man in Acts 3 was undeniable, yet Peter and John made it clear that their mission was not just physical care but proclaiming forgiveness through Jesus. Good works opened the door, but the message of Christ was central. The disciples understood that meeting earthly needs is important, but eternal salvation is the ultimate goal.

For us, serving others must always point back to Jesus. Acts of kindness and generosity are powerful, but they are incomplete without the message of the gospel. Living on mission means that everything we do—whether it's serving a meal, offering encouragement, or meeting a need—becomes a platform to proclaim Christ.

Reflection Questions:

1. How has someone's good deeds paired with their words about Jesus impacted you?

2. How can you ensure your service points people to Christ?

Day 3

Acts 4:1–22, 31

Praying for Boldness, Living the Mission

Believers prayed for boldness, not safety. God's Spirit empowered them to continue speaking courageously.

After Peter and John were released, the believers gathered and prayed—not for safety, but for greater boldness to proclaim Jesus (Acts 4:29–31). Their focus was clear: the mission was not to avoid hardship but to spread the gospel. God answered their prayer by filling them with His Spirit, enabling them to continue speaking His word courageously.

This same prayer should shape our lives today. Instead of asking God to make life easier, we can ask Him to make us bolder. Living on mission is not about comfort—it's about conviction. When we are filled with the Spirit, we can proclaim Jesus faithfully in both word and action, trusting God to use us for His glory.

Reflection Questions:

1. What keeps you from boldly praying for opportunities to share Jesus?

2. How will you make proclaiming Jesus your focus this week? Who in your life needs to hear from you?

Week 5

Acts 4:32–37; 5:1–11 – Generosity with Integrity

Big Idea: We live generously FOR our Family.

Day 1

Grace–Fueled Generosity

Believers shared everything, ensuring no one was in need. Grace fueled their generosity.

In Acts 4, the early believers were “one in heart and mind,” and no one claimed their possessions as their own. Their generosity flowed naturally out of the grace they had received in Christ. They shared freely, ensuring that no one in their spiritual family was in need. This wasn’t commanded—it was a joyful response to God’s overwhelming generosity toward them.

Generosity is the natural outflow of experiencing grace. When we realize that everything we have is a gift from God, we hold our resources with open hands. Living generously for the family of God means seeing our possessions not as ours to hoard, but as tools for blessing others. Grace always leads to giving.

Reflection Questions:

1. How has God's grace shaped your view of possessions?

2. What is one way you can meet a need in your church family?

Day 2

Acts 4:32–37; 5:1–11

The Danger of Selfish Recognition

Ananias and Sapphira sought recognition rather than God's glory. Their false generosity revealed divided hearts.

Ananias and Sapphira remind us of the danger of false generosity. They gave, but their giving was rooted in pride and a desire for recognition rather than love for God and His people. Instead of being transparent, they pretended to be more generous than they truly were. Their dishonesty revealed a divided heart, and it brought devastating consequences.

This passage warns us that generosity is not about appearances. God cares more about the posture of our hearts than the size of our gifts. When we give for recognition, we rob God of His glory and rob ourselves of true joy. Real generosity comes from humility, honesty, and love for God's family.

Reflection Questions:

1. When do you struggle with seeking recognition for generosity? Why?

2. How can you give in a way that honors God rather than yourself?

Day 3

Acts 4:32–37; 5:1–11

A Family Cared For

Barnabas modeled selfless generosity, strengthening the whole community. True generosity blesses the family of God.

The generosity of the early church created a family where everyone was cared for. Barnabas is highlighted as an example, selling land and giving it to the apostles to distribute to those in need. His open-handedness reflected the heart of Christ and encouraged the whole community. This type of sacrificial giving strengthened their unity and witness.

When we live generously for the family of God, we embody the love of Christ. A generous church is a powerful testimony to the world, showing that we belong to one another and to Him. As we care for each other's needs, we display the gospel in action. Living generously for our family is both a privilege and a responsibility.

Reflection Questions:

1. How have you been blessed by your church family's generosity?

2. What step do you sense God is asking you to take to be generous to our church family?

Week 6

Acts 6:1–7 – Future-Focused Generosity

Big Idea: We live future-focused FOR our Future Family.

Day 1

Meeting Needs Today

The church addressed practical needs to stay united and on mission. Generosity met daily needs in love.

In Acts 6, the early church faced a practical challenge: widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. Instead of ignoring the problem, the disciples acted to make sure every need was met. This commitment to caring for their family of faith showed that generosity isn't only financial—it's also about faithfully meeting real, everyday needs.

When we give consistently and serve intentionally, we become part of God's provision for His people. Generosity today strengthens the church for tomorrow. Meeting needs in the present is one of the most powerful ways we can display Christ's love and stay united in our mission.

Reflection Questions:

1. How has the church's generosity met your needs?

2. If you started giving now, what future need in your church family could you help meet?

Day 2

Acts 6:1–7

Generosity That Builds the Future

Meeting needs freed leaders to focus on prayer and the Word. Generosity built the foundation for gospel growth.

The solution in Acts 6 not only met the widows' needs, but it also allowed the apostles to stay focused on prayer and the ministry of the Word. This balance of service and mission led to powerful growth—the Word of God spread, and the number of disciples multiplied. Generosity was the foundation that helped the church move forward in strength.

In the same way, our consistent generosity builds the church for generations to come. Faithful giving allows ministries to thrive, leaders to be equipped, and the gospel to continue advancing. When we give sacrificially, we aren't just investing in the present—we're building a foundation for the future family of God.

Reflection Questions:

1. How does knowing your generosity impacts future believers change your giving?

2. What step of consistent giving can you take to build your church's future?

Day 3

Acts 6:1–7

Passing Generosity Forward

Generosity is a legacy passed to future generations. Our giving today helps tomorrow's family know Christ.

Generosity is not only a practice—it's a legacy. The early church's commitment to care for one another created a culture of generosity that was passed on and multiplied. Their example shows us that when we live open-handedly, we set the tone for those who come after us. Our children, our communities, and even future believers are shaped by the generosity we model today.

When we live future-focused, we see beyond ourselves and remember that God's mission spans generations. Each gift, each act of service, and each sacrifice contributes to a story much bigger than our own. By blessing one another now, we bless the future family of God, keeping the mission of helping people find new life in Jesus Christ alive for generations.

Reflection Questions:

1. Who modeled generosity for you and inspired you to live “open-handedly”?

2. How can you model generosity for the next generation in your church?

Conclusion

As we close this devotional journey, we are reminded that the story of Acts is still being written in us. The early church lived by grace, in community, with authenticity, on mission, and generously. Because of their faithfulness, the Gospel spread to the ends of the earth. Now, it's our turn church family. Avenue Christian Church is part of that story, a family committed to living differently because of Jesus.

The call is simple but powerful: live generously. When we live generously, we show the world the grace of God in action. We meet needs in our church family, proclaim Christ with boldness, and leave a lasting legacy for generations to come. Just as the early church's generosity shaped the world, so too can ours shape the future of Avenue and beyond.

This Is Us: a church family sold out on together, helping people find new life in Jesus Christ. As we live out the values we covered consistently, we won't just impact today—we'll bless our future family in Christ for generations to come.

Concluding Prayer

God, I ask that your Holy Spirit would cultivate a heart of generosity in me. As I have read, reflected and grown over these last several weeks, would you help me to take a specific step forward in giving to Your Church. May I follow the sacrificial example of your Son Jesus who willingly gave His life for my good and Your glory. It is in His powerful and holy name that I ask these things, Amen.

Ways To Give:

Cash or Check in an envelope:
Please write on the envelope: “For Our Family.”

Set up “Bill Pay” through your Bank.
Please indicate: “For Our Family” on the check.

Non-Cash Gifts such as Stocks or Mutual Funds

Online (scan the QR Code) or head to our website:
Confirm the drop down
“For Our Family Fund”





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