

# WAYS

## DEVOTIONAL

### **What are the Ways?**

From reflecting on Scripture and on lives lived with God, FPCM's Staff and Session have distilled 25 Ways that God calls us to live our faith in community and in devotion to Him.

These Ways are meant to help us create an "atmosphere thick with love," and a culture where God's character is evident in all we do. In short, they show who we aim to be.

# How do I Devote?

## 1. Pick your Best Time and Space

Give God your best time, not your leftovers. Look for a time in your day when you are alert and uninterrupted. It can be helpful to find a location which feels prayerful to you.

## 2. Be Attentive to Yourself

Before you Devote, be attentive to your own heart and mind. Are you feeling preoccupied... disappointed... resentful? Your personal state will impact your prayer life. Make it known to God.

## 3. Be Attentive to God

This is your time with God. It is personal and relational. Jesus is listening and the Spirit is present with you. Be with God in this time. Even in silence you can know and enjoy His presence.

## 4. Read. Think. Pray.

Devoting yourself to God is simple. **Read** scripture, **Think** about what it means and means to you, and **Pray** about it. This can be a time to engage your heart and mind toward God's calling. Don't rush it. Savor your time in the word and in prayer with God.

## 5. Live it Out

Now do something about it.

# Rest and Reflect

Each Sunday is an opportunity to Rest with God and Reflect on His presence and power in the previous week and how you will respond in the next.

Sabbath can be a powerful force in your life. Take a break and recline into God's grace. Let work take a back seat to joy and peace. Remember all that God has done for you this week. *God* is in control.



# ASSUME *positive* INTENT

Sunday

Decide to trust that other members are being fair, honest, and concerned for the well-being of our church. Set aside your own judgments and preconceived notions. Surrender the urge to criticize and judge—it doesn't help.

Remember to Rest and Reflect on God's goodness and how you can *Assume Positive Intent* this week.



83 HER HUSBAND CAN  
TRUST HER,  
AND SHE WILL  
GREATLY  
ENRICH  
HIS LIFE.  
PROVERBS 31:11

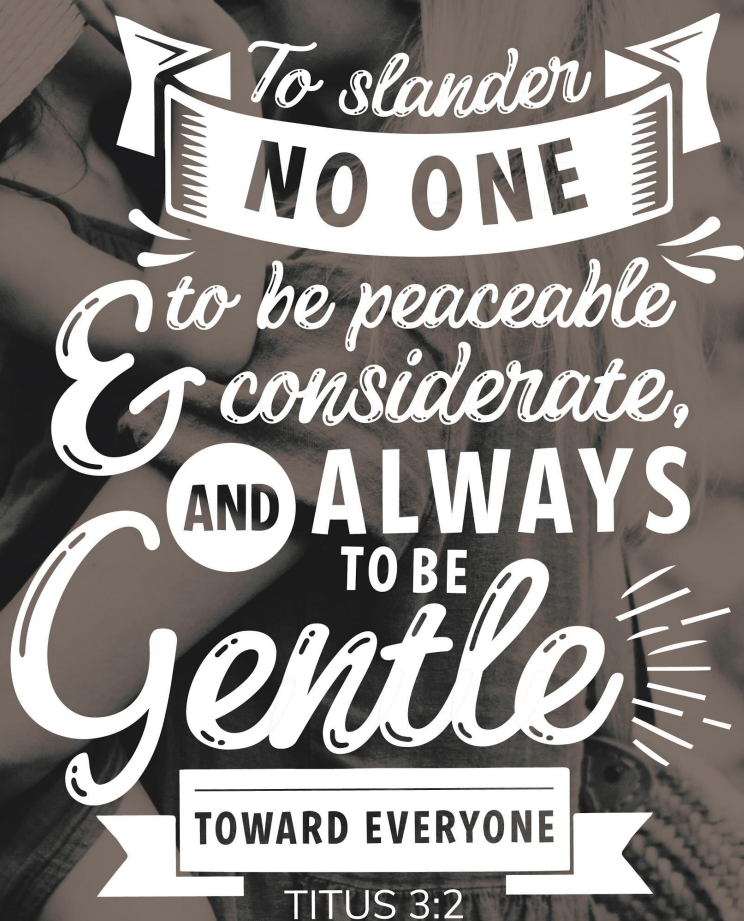
Monday

**READ:** Proverbs 31:10-12

**THINK:** In describing a wife of noble character, Proverbs declares that the husband trusts her. No matter how wonderful a spouse's character, if they are distrusted, their goodness cannot shine through. It is the same in the church community. When you don't *Assume Positive Intent*, you paint many good actions with paranoia.

**PRAY:** that the Spirit would show how you tend to distrust.

*Assume Positive Intent* today.



To slander  
**NO ONE**  
to be peaceable  
& considerate,  
**AND ALWAYS**  
TO BE  
*Gentle*  
**TOWARD EVERYONE**  
TITUS 3:2

Tuesday

**READ:** Titus 3:1-8

**THINK:** Since we are told not to speak evil of one another, the solution seems to be to control our words, but our words come from our thoughts. Do not merely control your words, but steer your thoughts about one another. Why assume that a fellow believer plans evil for you? Instead, *Assume Positive Intent* and choose to avoid evil thoughts about one another.

**PRAY:** through your thoughts about others with God to discover what is wrong.

*Assume Positive Intent today.*



BUT IF YOU ARE ALWAYS

BITING AND DEVOURING ONE ANOTHER,

WATCH OUT! BEWARE OF

DESTROYING ONE ANOTHER. GALATIANS 5:15

Wednesday

**READ:** Galatians 5:13-18

**THINK:** It is natural to protect yourself and natural to distrust. We have all been burned before. Some have been hurt so deeply that trust feels nearly impossible. But the Church is destroyed when trust is lacking. We devour one another seeking ulterior motives for words and actions. When you *Assume Positive Intent*, you might get hurt sometimes, but the alternative is worse.

**PRAY:** for wisdom in learning to trust when it's hard.

*Assume Positive Intent* today.



ABOVE ALL,

# Love Each Other Deeply,

BECAUSE LOVE COVERS OVER  
A MULTITUDE OF SINS.  
1 PETER 4:8

Thursday

**READ:** 1 Peter 4:7-11

**THINK:** Trust can only exist long term alongside forgiveness. We don't *Assume Positive Intent* because the Church is filled with perfect people who will never harm you.

We *Assume Positive Intent* because the Church is made of people who are forgiven. Our love for one another will cover over a multitude of sins. Love overcomes past, present, and future sins allowing us to trust despite being wronged.

**PRAY:** that God would help you forgive.

*Assume Positive Intent* today.



- LET YOUR YES MEAN YES, -  
AND YOUR NO MEAN NO.  
MATTHEW 5:37

Friday

**READ:** Matthew 5:33-37

**THINK:** Sometimes, the least trusting are the least trustworthy. We often assume the worst because we know our sinful and prideful inclinations and project them on others. It may not be you, but maybe you struggle to *Assume Positive Intent* because you struggle to speak honestly and truthfully.

**PRAY:** that the Spirit would be the Spirit of truth in your life.

*Assume Positive Intent* today.

A sunset over a body of water with a white rectangular box containing text.

**[LOVE] BEARS ALL THINGS,  
BELIEVES ALL THINGS,  
HOPEES ALL THINGS, ENDURES ALL THINGS.  
1 CORINTHIANS 13:7**

Saturday

**READ:** 1 Corinthians 13:1-7

**THINK:** “Love hopes all things.” We can’t say that enough. The Christian life is built on hope: hope for Christ’s return, hope for the world's renewal, hope for our resurrection, hope for our perfection, and hope for our union with God. We quite literally live in and by hope. Our love for one another “hopes all things.” *Assume Positive Intent* because we live in hope of perfection together.

**PRAY:** that God would increasingly realize the hope of a perfected community here.

*Assume Positive Intent* today.