



**Endless Summer Series:
Love**

**I Cor 13:4-7
Aug 13th, 2023**

DAILY DEVOTION

Find a rhythm in God's word this week! Follow this 5 day plan on your own or with your group!

<https://my.bible.com/reading-plans/22186>

INSPIRATION

“Darkness cannot drive out darkness:
only light can do that.
Hate cannot drive out hate:
only love can do that.”

— Martin Luther King Jr.

“Love is that condition in which the happiness of another person is essential to your own.”
– Robert A. Heinlein

ICE BREAKER

While the word ‘love’ can be applied both the highest and most trivial things in this world – we know what we love. For you, what are some of those things that you ‘just love’?

DEEP DIVE

Read this out loud

An excerpt from the message this week:

“Most of the time when we talk about love in our culture today – it is a feeling – or maybe more than a feeling – but it is some sort of feeling I have – some sort of quiver in my liver – goose bumps – but love in the NT is something that we do – not something that we feel.



Love is a command – by Jesus himself – our Lord commands us to love. It has nothing to do with whether I feel like it or not. Love is what we do."

So who are we to love?

A) Loving Our Neighbors

Read Mark 12:28-31 and then answer the following questions:

One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him,

"Of all the commandments, which is the most important?"

"The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord you God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."

- 1) First: we are to love God. What is your understanding of how to do that? What does that look like? Is it emotional? Does it have to be emotional? Is it mainly actions – obeying what he has commanded? Is it in the way we worship? How have you come to understand this?
- 2) Second: we are to love our neighbor. Since we know from the story of the good Samaritan that our neighbors are not just people who are photocopies of ourselves.

Describe some of these neighbors God has brought into your world (i.e. work, school etc. – people you feel you have little or nothing in common with).

What might be some small steps we could take to build bridges to these neighbors, to be gracious and show kindness and love to them? (Suggest some examples of simple things we could do.)

Read I Corinthians 13:4-7 and then answer the following questions:

Love is patient,

love is kind.

It does not envy,

it does not boast,

it is not proud.

It does not dishonor others,

it is not self-seeking,

it is not easily angered,

it keeps no record of wrongs.



*Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.
It always protects,
always trusts,
always hopes,
always perseveres.*

- 1) From the list above,
What is something you tend to struggle with a lot?
What element have you been doing well at?

- 2) While love does produce feelings, this list above is primarily actions.
How do we treat others with these loving actions if we just don't feel like it,
or if our feelings are driving us to do the exact opposite?

B) Loving Our Family

Read this out loud

An excerpt from the message this week:

Loving family – harder than you think - you know why? Family members are annoying. They are there constantly – they say things – and do things – that are very hard to ignore or forgive at times – I don't know why that is – but it is that way for a lot of families. But loving God is played out in the living room – the kitchen – the bedroom – the backyard – car rides – it is the true test of the love of God in our lives..

Read Ephesians 5:25 and answer the following questions:

"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and give himself up for her."

This is that "agape" type of love – self-sacrificial giving to meet another's needs.

- 3) Give me a few specific examples of instances where a husband could set aside what they prefer to show love by choosing what would be most meaningful for their wives?
(i.e. movies, restaurants, vacations, furniture, clothes, holidays etc)



C) Loving Our Enemies

Read Matthew 5:43-48 and answer the following questions:

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

It's easy to love our enemies when we don't have any. But once you do, this command takes on a whole new dimension.

- 4) Describe situations today where someone becomes the enemy of another. What happens, what do these people choose to do? And how do they do it?

- 5) If we have an enemy in our lives, give me examples of things we could do to genuinely show love to them?

- 6) When an enemies actions reach the level of abuse, how do we continue to show love to them, but establish boundaries to protect ourselves (and others we are responsible for) from their actions?

NEXT STEPS

- 7) Who is someone in your life that deserves to see some loving actions from you. Give me one example of something specific you could do to show love to them.

PRAYER



Pray for someone in your world who might be considered your enemy.
Pray for someone who deserves some loving actions from you.

SERVE YOUR COMMUNITY

Establish a regular rhythm of serving together! Below are some service opportunities.

- BENSON - Serve with us at ABIDE every 2nd Saturday.
- MILLARD - Serve with us at Heartland Hope every 4th Saturday.
- FREMONT - Serve with us at LifeHouse every 3rd Saturday.
- OMAHA - Serve with us at Open Door Mission every 4th Saturday.
- Or get to know your community, are there any needs/volunteer opportunities?