



A 28-DAY DEVOTIONAL JOURNEY

Day 1: LOVE'S SOURCE

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

1 John 4:7-8

Our current culture is obsessed with love. It is at the center of some of our most famous books, movies and songs. It is the topic of late-night conversations. During our teen years it can consume our thoughts and become our primary pursuit. The trick is that this world's definition of love is limited to a romantic feeling conjured up between two individuals that is ultimately expressed in some kind of physical action (often sex). This definition of love is both inaccurate and incomplete compared to God's definition.

What does this passage teach us about love?

BOTTOM LINE: Allow these two phrases to settle in deep today... *love comes from God* and *God is love*. Love flows from God because it is at the core from who He is. We will not understand love in its fullness unless we look to God to teach us what love is.

That is why we are going on this 28-day journey. Let's allow God to define love through His Word. At the close of each day, you will take a moment to turn the Scripture you have studied back into a prayer to God.

God,
I want to learn what love truly is, so I look to you, because I know love comes from you. I want to love in a way that truly reflects that I was born of you, because, you are love.
Amen.

Day 2: LOVE IS THE KEY INGREDIENT

If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

1 Corinthians 13:1-3

What do these verses teach us about love?

Imagine you arrive home from school to a plate of the most amazing looking freshly baked chocolate chip cookies. Your heart leaps as you grab two, three or five of them along with a glass of milk from the refrigerator. As you sink your teeth into the cookie, instead of your mouth exploding with the amazing taste, you immediately spit it out. Whoever had made the cookies decided to mess with the recipe by replacing sugar with salt. Disgusting, right? You may still be able to make a cookie without sugar or by putting something else in to take its place, but it just won't taste right.

According to this passage, love in our lives is a lot like sugar in a chocolate chip cookie. What if you made it a point to have your attitudes, actions and interactions be driven by the key ingredient of love?

Lord,
As I am *(state the attitudes, actions, and interactions that are happening in your life)*, let love be at the center of everything I think, do and say. If I don't I realize my words are just a clanging symbol, my knowledge means nothing, and my achievements will gain me nothing.
Amen.

Day 3: LOVE IS _____

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, and always perseveres.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Love is a pretty tricky thing to define, but these verses do a pretty decent job, right? This passage also gives you a great opportunity to evaluate the presence of love in your life. Go back through the passage, and every time you see the word love, put your name in its place.

As you did this, which statement(s) do you feel reflected you well? Give an example.

Which statement(s) did you feel didn't reflect you well? Give an example.

As we are on this journey of love, take the next 24-hours to work on the area(s) you just wrote about. The only way you can truly do this is with God's help. As you pray this Scripture, put extra emphasis on the statement(s) you want to work on:

**Lord,
Give me patience, give me kindness. Help me not envy, not boast, not be proud. Help me to not dishonor others, not be self-seeking, not become easily angered. Help me to not keep record of wrongs. Help me to not delight in evil but rejoice with the truth. Help me protect, trust, hope, and perseveres. Amen.**

Day 4: LOVE IS SELFLESS

*This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us.
And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.*

1 John 3:16

You have likely heard and know John 3:16 (if you don't, we will check it out on Day 8), but 1 John 3:16 has something powerful to teach us about love. Jesus displayed an ultimate act of love in dying for us on the cross. But it doesn't end there. We are challenged to do the same.

Wait.... Whaaaaaat? To be clear, this verse is not telling us to literally die for others. Instead, John is challenging us to figuratively *lay down our lives* by finding ways to take our focus of ourselves and helping those around us.

Who are two people you can "lay down your life" for over the next 24 hours?

1. _____ 2. _____

Why did you pick these two people, and what do you think you can do?

As you make it a point to put this verse into action, realize that you are also opening yourself to a better understanding of what love truly is.

Jesus,
Thank you for laying down your life for me. It is how I can truly know love. Now, over the next 24 hours, give me clear opportunities to show love and lay down my life for *(person 1)* and *(person 2)*.
Amen.

Day 5: LOVE IS REALLY SELFLESS

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.

John 15:12-13

Go back and reread our verse from Day 4 (1 John 3:16). Obviously, these two verses are a lot alike, but one big difference is 1 John 3:16 has the author (John) talking about Jesus while John 15:12-13 is the author (John) quoting Jesus. In the end, this tie between love and “laying down our lives” for each other is a pretty big deal if it’s going to be repeated in the Bible. The big idea in both of these verses is to remind us to not limit love to something to be “taken.” It is at its best when it is “given.”

Yesterday, you picked out two people to find a way to be selfless and show love. How did it go?

Let's do it again. Pick two new people to “lay down your life” for over the next 24 hours (if you didn't follow through yesterday, pick the same person):

1. _____ 2. _____

Why did you pick these two people, and what do you think you can do?

Jesus,
Help me love others in the way you have loved me. Thank you for *(person 1)* and *(person 2)*. Give me the grace and strength to show love by laying down my life for them.
Amen.

Day 7: LOVE OF A SAVIOR

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:8

Have you ever attended a wedding? There is a part in the ceremony called the exchanging of the vows. It is where each person commits to love the other through any and all circumstances. They usually say something like this...

I take you to be my wedded wife/husband, to have and hold from this day forward, for better or for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish; until death do us part.

These vows remind us that true love between a man and a woman is best demonstrated through both the good times and the bad. Romans 5:8 reminds us that the greatest act of love was demonstrated for us when we were at our worst. Take a second and reread that sentence you just read, then go back up and reread the verse.

Rewrite Romans 5:8 in your own words:

Jesus Christ died as an innocent man. As this verse reminds us, He went to the cross because of our sin. This reality is mind-boggling. Today, allow your prayer to be a response to this act of love.

God,
Thank you for your ultimate demonstration of love. Jesus, thank you for giving me your best when you died for me at my worst.
Amen.

Day 8: ETERNAL LOVE

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16

You've probably read or heard this verse a thousand times. You may even have it memorized. Sometimes when we hear something so many times we miss what it is really saying. So, let's make it truly settle in by doing one of the following exercises:

Rewrite It: Grab a sheet of paper and figure out five different ways to write what this verse is saying.

Draw It: Draw a picture of this verse. It may be abstract or it may be a portrait. It only needs to make sense to you and God.

Make a Poem/Song: Make the big idea a piece of poetry or a song.

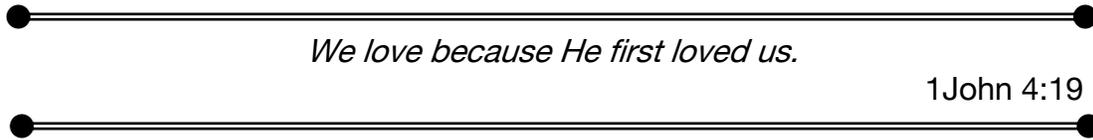
What did you do and what stuck out to you from the verse as you did this?

Let's review these last three days. God's love is that of a Father and He wants to walk in relationship with you (1 John 3:1). Jesus showed you God's ultimate love by dying for your sins (Romans 5:8). His sacrificial love can result in eternity with Him when you choose to believe (John 3:16). If you have already accepted these truths and trusted Jesus as your Savior, pray these words as a reminder. If you have never done this, maybe today is the day to make this prayer your own.

**God,
I believe in you and what you have done. I know you loved this world (and specifically me) so much that you sent Jesus to die for me at my worst. I look forward to eternal life with you.
Amen.**

**If this is the first time you've honestly prayed a prayer trusting Jesus as your Savior, let us know at the church so we can celebrate and walk through where to go from here!*

Day 9: OUR LOVE FROM HIS LOVE



It is such a simple verse, but it is a deeply profound truth. His love allows us to love. That is why it is so important study what God's love looks like and what God's Word has to say about love.

How many verses do you have memorized? If you could start reciting them one by one, exactly word perfect and where they are found, how many could you say?

If you feel a little ashamed by your answer, you aren't alone. We could all do a better job at what Psalm 119:11 calls "hiding God's word in our hearts." When you think you have it down, prove it by covering the top of the page and write it word for word, including where it is found:

What if you took it a step further? If you haven't ever memorized John 3:16 (yesterday's verse) see if you can. If you have time, try Romans 5:8. When you think you have one memorized, prove it by writing it out:

Now you have two important verses about God's love memorized! Now, let these verses guide how you live in the coming days!

God,
Lord, thank you that I can love because of your love. Help me to walk in the truth that Your Word teaches me about love.
Amen.

Day 10: INSEPERABLE LOVE

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written:

“For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:35-39

This longer passage is all about the love of God. As you read through it, what is one statement that especially sticks out to you and why?

Yesterday, we memorized two verses that will help us remember God's love. Today's verses would be a lot trickier to memorize (you can feel free to do it if you want), but they are still important for us to remember our security in God's love. Another way to let God's Word really stick in our lives is to write it out and put it somewhere we can see it and read it regularly.

Write today's verse on a notecard and put it by your bed. Take a screenshot of it and save it as your home screen. Type it out, print it off and tape it to your locker. Do what you need to do to remember nothing *will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

**Lord,
Thank you for your amazing love that I cannot get away from. Help me to walk with confidence that nothing can separate me from your love that is in Christ Jesus.**

Amen.

Day 11: WALK IN LOVE

Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Ephesians 5:1-2

If you haven't caught on to it yet, the Bible regularly ties love and the sacrificial death of Christ together. This is another example. In these verses, Paul (the author) says we should "follow God's example" and "walk in the way of love."

Outside of His death on the cross, what are examples of how Jesus "walked in love?"

What is one specific way you think it could look like to walk in the way of love over the next 24 hours?

Lord,
Help me walk in the way of love by (state your specific way you identified above). Jesus, thank you for walking in the way of love when you for died on the cross for my sins.
Amen.

Day 12: FLEE EVIL/PURSUE LOVE

Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

2 Timothy 2:22

There are three steps to this verse we are going to pick apart.

Part 1 - *Flee the evil desires of youth...* What does this look like in your life right now? _____

Part 2 - *pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace...* Love is just one of several virtues mentioned here, but which of these do you feel makes the most sense for you to pursue right now to replace evil desires? Why?

Part 3 - *along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart...* Who are the people in your life who fit this description and how well are you connecting with them? _____

Lord,
Help me flee from *(name the evil desires you identified)* and pursue *(name the virtue you identified)*. Thank you for *(name the people you identified)* and help us to have a strong connection through you.
Amen.

Day 13: LOVE IN US

This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

1 John 4:10-12

These verses cover a lot of thoughts. What is a statement that especially strikes you and why?

The end of verse 12 is a reminder that God lives in you. Many other Scriptures also talk about this. In fact, check out what the three verses that follow these:

This is how we know that we live in him and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God.

1 John 4:13-15

If you have trusted Jesus as your savior, the Holy Spirit takes up residence within you. Just allow that to settle in. The Spirit of God lives inside you. And, His love is made complete within you.

In the next couple days we are going to further examine how the presence of the Spirit in our lives affects us. For today, sit in the reality of His presence and thank Him for the lesson learned on His love.

**God,
Since you loved me, I know I am called to love others. As I love others, I know your Spirit is alive in me, and your love is made complete in me. Help me to continue to walk in that love. Amen.**

Day 15: HEIGHTS AND DEPTHS OF LOVE

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 3:16-19

This powerful prayer by Paul is all about the connection of the Holy Spirit with our “inner being.” It was originally intended for the church of Ephesus, but it can also be for us today. Read back through the prayer and picture Paul saying this directly to you.

As you reread the prayer, what thought or statement especially resonated with you? Why? _____

Who in your life could benefit from this prayer? It could be one person or ten people. Take some time today to pray this prayer over those people by putting their names in the blank.

God,
I pray that out of your glorious riches you may strengthen _____ with power through your Spirit in _____’s inner being, so that Christ may dwell in _____’s hearts through faith. And I pray that _____, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge - that _____ may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Amen.

Day 16: LOVELY FRUIT

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Galatians 5:22-23

Much like fruit sprouts up from a planted seed, this verse highlights actions and attitudes that should come out of us when the Holy Spirit is planted in us. The first mentioned is love, but it's not the only one. Let's do a personal evaluation of how present these fruits are in your life.

Give yourself a letter grade on how much the fruit is coming out of you:

Love:	A B C D F	Kindness:	A B C D F
Joy:	A B C D F	Goodness:	A B C D F
Peace:	A B C D F	Faithfulness:	A B C D F
Forbearance:	A B C D F	Gentleness:	A B C D F
<i>(big word for patience)</i>		Self-Control:	A B C D F

Which would you say is the ripest fruit sprouting out of your life, and how do you see it present in your life?

Which would you say is the most rotten fruit sprouting out of your life, and how do you think you can change that?

God,
I know that these fruit are to be present in my life when the Holy Spirit is in me. Thank you for allowing *(name the healthy fruit in your life)* to sprout out of me, and I ask that you would help sprout more healthy *(name the unhealthy fruit)* out of me.
Amen.

Day 17: THE LOVE JACKET

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Colossians 3:12-14

We'll get to the part of these verses that address love in a moment, but the author (Paul again) lays out a bunch of directions on how "God's chosen" people should be living.

Which of those directions really resonates with you and why?

The final challenge is to put on love in a way that binds all the other virtues together. These directions are basically the outfit that you are putting on, and love is the final article of clothing. It's the jacket that not only surrounds everything; it is the perfect style and color to make the outfit complete.

If you haven't caught on, followers of Jesus must have love as a central attitude and action in their lives. It's kind of a big deal!

**God,
I am your chosen child. I am dearly loved and made holy by you. Today, I clothe myself with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Give me the ability to bear with others and forgive anyone I have struggles with. Help me forgive as you forgave me. And Lord, over all these things, I put on the love jacket. Allow all these things to come together in love. Amen.**

Day 18: LOVE AND OBEDIENCE

Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.

John 14:21

When you read these words of Jesus, how do they make you feel? Why do they make you feel that way? _____

We can easily read these verses as if they are telling us the love of Jesus has a condition to it... keep His commands and then He will love you. However, when we look at that whole of Jesus' life and the teachings of the Bible, it is clear His love for us is not based on our behavior (remember Romans 5:8). Think of this passage as more of a reminder that when we love someone, we will honor him/her. Our obedience is a way of saying thank you back to God for His love for us. It's kind of like our love letter to Him.

If your obedience is your love letter to God, how have you written an awesome letter recently?

Where could your love letter to God use some improvement?

**Jesus,
Thank you for loving me so much that you died for me. Help me to return that love through my obedience to your commands. Forgive me where I have fallen short (include the areas you mentioned above). I love you.
Amen.**

Day 19: LOVE AND FEAR

There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

1 John 4:18

What are you afraid of? Think beyond spiders and heights. Be honest. What are some of your greatest fears you are facing about life, God and your faith?

Fear can be pretty powerful. It's kind of like a weed. Whether you dwell on it, give in to it, or try to avoid it, it is like you are putting fertilizer on it, which allows it to grow stronger and stronger. It begins to choke out the virtues and fruit of the Holy Spirit that we studied before.

However, love is more powerful; especially perfect love. Just one healthy dose of perfect love can kill the fear weed. Remember, perfect love is that sacrificial love that is often talked about in Scriptures. Jesus was the perfect sacrifice to drive out fear. So, let's pray prayers of Jesus' perfect love over our fears and watch those fears wither away. Take your fears, one by one, and pray the following prayer boldly and confidently over them. You may even want to pray out loud just to drive home that you will not be controlled by fear!

Jesus,
I give you *(name your fear)*. I know that there is no fear in love, and that your perfect love can drive out fear. I pray your perfect love through your sacrifice for me on the cross over this fear. Instead of fear, I choose to walk in your perfect love.
Amen.

Day 20: LOVE ONE ANOTHER

A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.

John 13:34-35

This is Jesus talking to His disciples. He said this a very short time before He went to the cross, and He challenged His disciples with this command. It is a simple command to put the love they had experienced from God on display. Here's the powerful part of this all. Jesus says that people will know the disciples are His followers by the way we love each other.

Can you think of a time where you clearly knew someone was a follower of Jesus only by the way he/she loved you or loved someone you know? Who was it, and what did he/she do?

What about you? When, where and how have you displayed love in a way that the people around you would know you are a disciple of Christ?

What if you were to make it a point over the next 24 hours to show love to others in a way that they would know you are a follower of Jesus?

**Jesus,
Thank you for loving me and for your command to love others. Thank you for the way *(name the person you mentioned above)* showed me your love. Help me show love to others in a way that they will know I am your disciple. Amen.**

Day 21: SINCERE LOVE



Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.

Romans 12:9-10



The challenge in these verses is to have sincere love. The word *sincere* creates a mental picture of honesty and authenticity. It then goes on to give some ways we can make sure our love is sincere.

Hate what is evil... What evil things (not people, but actions and attitudes) are present around you? Do you hate these evil things? Why or why not?

...cling to what is good... What is the good that is around you that you can cling to? _____

Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourself. Who do you see the need to live out these directions toward, and how do you see yourself doing it?

God,
Give me sincere love. Lord, I want to hate (*name the evil things*) and cling to (*name the good things*). I pray for (*who you identified*). Help me to be devoted to them in love and to honor them above myself.
Amen.

Day 22: LOVE IN ACTION

If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.
1 John 3:17-18

This passage is pretty straight-forward, so let's be straight-forward and love, as this verse says, in action and truth.

Take a moment to pray and process. Ask God to clearly identify a person or group of people who is in need right now. Write down any that come to mind: _____

Dictionary.com defines pity as "sympathetic or kindly sorrow evoked by the suffering, distress, or misfortune of another, often leading one to give relief or aid or to show mercy." How could you show pity to those you've identified above?

God,
I lift up *(name those you identified as in need)*. I know that you love them, and therefore I love them, but let my love be more than words. Give me the strength and opportunity to *(state how you want to show pity)*. Amen.

Day 23: LOVE AND FORGIVENESS

The end of all things is near. Therefore be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray. Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.

1 Peter 4:7-9

Let's zero in on the middle sentence in this passage. We're going to pick it apart.

Above all... During some great teaching about being aware of the times and caring for others with a good attitude, we are challenged to lift what is about to be said higher on our priority lists.

... love each other deeply... It could have just said "love each other" and left it at that. Instead, we are challenged to love deeply. It's the kind of love that isn't easily swayed or affected when challenged.

... because love covers a multitude of sins. We fail. Others fail us. There is no question it has happened and it will happen again in the near future. It's amazing the amount of patience and grace we will give someone we truly care about. Granted, it often hurts the most when those we love most deeply sin against us, but when we take 1 John 4:19 (do you remember it?) seriously, we know that His love was rooted in grace and forgiveness, and our love flows from that love. How can we not forgive?

Of the three parts of this verse we just picked apart, which resonates with you the most? Why?

God,
Help me to, above all, love others deeply. I specifically lift up (name the person who has sinned against you). Give me the strength to forgive, because I know deep love covers these offenses against me.
Amen.

Day 24: LOVE AND ENEMIES

"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,

Matthew 5:43-44

Welcome to one of the toughest teachings that Jesus ever gave.

Be honest. Who is someone (or several people) you consider an enemy? Why would you call this person (or these people) an enemy?

Love is a lot easier with the people we find lovable. Jesus fully recognized this when he made these statements about loving your enemies. In Matthew 5:46 he says, "If you love those who love you, what reward will you get?"

He is basically challenging us to love in a way that goes beyond the norm. When you stop and think about it, this makes perfect sense. Remember Romans 5:8 (see why it's great to memorize verses... we've referenced this one a lot), *While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.* When we were enemies of God, Jesus loved us all the way to His death. How can we not be willing to do the same? It's not easy, but doing the right thing is not always easy. The great part is that Jesus gave a very practical way for us to love our enemies. We pray for them. So, let's do it... not just today, but for the next three days of this devotional journey.

God,
I lift up *(name your enemies)*. I know that you love them, and I ask that you give me a love for them as well. Whatever *(name your enemies)* are facing right now, I pray that you will show them your presence and bless them. *(If you are aware of any specific needs in your enemies' lives, pray for those as well)*.
Amen.

Day 25: LOVE AND HATE

Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.

1 John 4:20-21

This is a great follow-up to what we read yesterday. What connections do you see between what we read in Matthew 5:43-44 and these verses?

Where do you see hate in this world right now, and what effects are you seeing from that hate? _____

The reality is that God only calls us to hate evil and sin. He never calls us to hate people. John says that when there is hatred toward others in our heart (just to be clear, “brother and sister” are general terms, meaning the people around us and not just our siblings) we can’t fully experience the love of God. That is why we are going to work extra hard on loving and praying for our enemies. Let’s pray for them again today!

God,
I do claim I love you, so I know I can’t hate others. Therefore, I lift up *(name your enemies)* to you and ask you to give me your love for them. I also pray that you would help them today by *(pray specific prayers for what is going on in their lives)*.
Amen.

Day 26: THE DEBT OF LOVE

Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not covet," and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

Romans 13:8-10

What statement or thought about love jumps out at you from these verses? Why does it jump out?

Did you catch the second to last statement? *Love does no harm to a neighbor.* There it is again... a reminder that your responsibility to others is to love them, no matter what they do to you.

As you've taken two days to pray for your enemies, how has it affected your feelings and attitude toward them?

Are you at a point you could say you can love your enemies?

Let's take one more day to make the primary focus of our prayer on our enemies.

God,
I have a debt of love to you for what you've done for me. Help me to love others out of that debt. I specifically lift up (*name your enemies*). Be with them today and show your love to them. Help me to also show love to them no matter how they treat me. Amen.

Day 27: THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Matthew 22:37-40

This moment in Matthew is when people are trying to trick Jesus by asking Him to make one commandment of the Bible more important than the others. Instead, Jesus gives two commandments when He quotes Deuteronomy 6:5 (*Love the Lord your God...*) and Leviticus 19:18 (*Love your neighbor...*). He then follows up these commandments by saying all the commandments and prophecies of the Bible can go back to these two commandments.

Did you catch what Jesus did? Rather than saying these commandments are more important than the others in the Bible, He explains that everything we are called to do is somehow tied to one of these two.

So, what if you were to evaluate your day to day activities off these two commandments? What if you were to seek to live out God's call on your life by asking, "How can what I'm doing allow me to love God with everything I have and love the people around me?" Journal some thoughts below:

God,
Help me to love you with all my heart and with all my soul and with all my mind. And help me to love my neighbor as myself. Thank you for explaining how these commandments allow me to fulfill every commandment and prophecy in scripture.
Amen.

Day 28: THE POWER OF LOVE

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

1 Corinthians 13:13

We have been on quite a journey of discovering what God's Word has to teach us about love. It is pretty easy to agree with this verse about incredible power of love. Take some time to look back through this journal and reflect:

What has been the most valuable lesson(s) you've learned?

How have your views on love changed through this journey?

You memorized two verses at the beginning of this journey. Can you still write them out word for word?

Pick out two or three more verses from this devotional that you would like to commit to memory over the next several days:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

God,
Thank you for your incredible gift of love. Help me to continue walking in the way of love, showing my love to you, and loving my neighbor.
Amen.

You've done it! Congratulations on completing this 28-day journey of deeper discovery of love. From here, may you continue to allow God to be your source and definition of love, and may you seek to love God and love others in everything you do!