

Biblical Love – Study Guide

The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.

By JD Rogers 2011



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WHY LOVE

BIBLE READING

Galatians 5:5-7 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 Matthew 22:34-40 1 John 4:7-21 Hebrews 11:1 1 Corinthians 13:4

OTHER READING

To Quote from A.W. Pink:

“It is not simply that God ‘loves,’ but that He is Love itself. Love is not merely one of His attributes, but His very nature.”

To quote Crazy Love:

“If you could have heaven, with no sickness, and with all the friends you ever had on earth, and all the food you ever liked, and all the leisure activities you ever enjoyed, and all the natural beauties you ever saw, all the physical pleasures you ever tasted, and no sin in you or others, could you be satisfied with heaven, if Christ was not there?”

HEART QUESTIONS

1. At your funeral, how would people answer the question “How did he/she love me?” Think about it from many different perspectives: your spouse, your kids, your family, friends, strangers, church members, neighbors, enemies...
2. Are you taking this whole idea of Loving as seriously as God is calling you to?
 - a. If your answer is yes, then what have you done in the past year to increase love in your life?
3. Do you "love" love?
 - a. Do you actively seek it and show it?
 - b. Is your day full of it or do you give it lip service and sprinkle your day with it?
 - c. Do you long to love people or do you just show a little more kindness than the world so that people think you have "Christ's love" in your heart?
4. Are you in love with Jesus? Explain your answer.
5. Do you know what Biblical love looks like?
6. What do you think God means when He says to love him with all you are and to love your neighbor as yourself?
7. Is your definition of love based on your ideas, what you learned, or what you have taken from scripture?

LOVE TEST

Circle the word that best describes you. Fill your name in the blank, and read it to yourself. Be sure to test your sentence against everyone we are called to love (Spouse, kids, friends, co-workers, strangers, church members, enemies, etc)..

- is patient / impatient.
 is kind / cruel.
 takes pleasure in another's blessings / envies others.
 is modest / boastful.
 is humble / proud.
 honors others / dishonors others with his/her speech and actions.
 is selfless / self-seeking.
 is slow to anger (calm) / quick to anger (temper).
 keeps no record of wrongs / mentally tracks the wrongs people have done.
 rejoices in good / evil things. (Before you answer this question too quickly think about the movies you laugh at, the TV shows you watch. Do you take pleasure in them? Are they good or evil according to God's standards?)
 rejoices in truth / lies.
 always protects / neglects.
 always hopes / despairs.
 always perseveres / gives up.
 always holds up / fails others.

LOVE CHART

Bible Says Love is	Therefore is not
1. Patient	1. Impatient
2. Kind	2. Cruel
3. Good will or pleasure in others	3. Envious
4. Modest	4. Boastful
5. Humble	5. Proud
6. Honors others	6. Dishonoring / Rude
7. Selfless	7. Self-Seeking
8. Slow to anger (calm)	8. Quick in anger (temper)
9. Keeps no record of wrongs	9. Keeps record of wrongs
10. Rejoices in good	10. Rejoices in evil
11. Rejoices in truth	11. Rejoices in lies
12. Always protects	12. Always neglects
13. Always hopes	13. Always despairs
14. Endures all things	14. Gives up on things
15. Never Fails	15. Temporal

LOVE IS PATIENT

BIBLE READING

Proverbs 14:29 Proverbs 15:18 Proverbs 16:32 Job 2:10 Job 42:12 Matthew 8:26 Matthew 14:31
Matthew 16:8 Matthew 17:20 Exodus 14:10-12 Exodus 16:2-4 Exodus 32:1-13 Job 2:8-10 Genesis 16:2-4
Ephesians 4:22-24

OTHER READING

Look up the word Patience in the dictionary.

HEART QUESTIONS

1. What positive examples of patience did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as positive?
2. What negative examples of patience did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as negative?
3. Can you think of other Biblical examples of positive or negative patience in love?
4. In what ways have you been patient in love this past week?
5. In what ways have you failed to be patient in love this past week?
6. In the past week, give an example of seeing someone else be patient in love?

GROWTH QUESTIONS

- What should we put off to grow in patience?
 -
- What should we put on to replace what we have put off?
 -
- What does this look like in your day-to-day life? (Patience with kids, spouse, church, co-workers, neighbors, leaders, enemies, etc)

PLAN OF ACTION

Pray

- Pray for the Spirit to open your heart to areas where you need to grow in patience
- Psalm 139:23
- Pray that God would give you chances this week to grow in this area, and strength to respond correctly when it happens.

Scripture

- Memorize Proverbs 16:32 – “Better a patient person than a warrior, one with self-control than one who takes a city.”

Take notes

- Write down areas in which you know you need patience or have failed in the past, or people with whom you need patience or have failed in the past.
- Think about what that situation would have been like if you had responded in a Godly way.
- Pray that God would help you the next time to respond in that way.

Fight

- Nehemiah 4:9 - But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat.
- This is a threat! We are in a war! Don't sit idly by, engage in the battle.
- Hebrews 12:1-4 – “Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.”

ACCOUNTABILITY

Encourage one other in patience this week.

In prayer time next week, be ready to share your successes and failures.

WEEK 3

LOVE IS KIND

BIBLE READING

Proverbs 11:17 Proverbs 21:21 Proverbs 31:26 Book of Ruth (or at least Ch 1 & 2) Luke 7:36-50
Luke 10:30-36 Romans 2:1-5

OTHER READING

Look up the word Kindness in the dictionary.

HEART QUESTIONS

1. What positive examples of kindness did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as positive?
2. What negative examples of kindness did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as negative?
3. Can you think of other Biblical examples of positive or negative kindness in love?
4. In what ways have you shown kindness this past week?
5. In what ways have you failed to be kind in love this past week?
6. In the past week give an example of seeing someone else show kindness?

GROWTH QUESTIONS

- What should we put off to grow in kindness?
 -
- What should we put on to replace what we have put off?
 -
- What does this look like in your day-to-day life? (Kindness with kids, spouse, church, co-workers, neighbors, leaders, enemies, etc)

PLAN OF ACTION

Pray

- Pray for the Spirit to open your heart in areas where you need to grow in kindness.
- Psalm 139:23
- Pray that God would give you chances this week to grow in this area, and the strength to respond correctly when it happens.

Scripture

- Memorize – Romans 2:4,5 “Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God’s kindness is intended to lead you to repentance? But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God’s wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed.”

Take notes

- Write down areas or people where you know you need kindness or have failed in the past.
- Think about what that situation would have been like if you had responded in a Godly way.
- Pray that God would help you the next time to respond in that way.

Serve

- Go out of your way to show someone kindness this week.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Encourage one another in kindness this week.

In prayer time next week, be ready to share you successes and failures.

LOVE DOES NOT ENVY

BIBLE READING

Proverbs 14:30 Ecclesiastes 4:4 Romans 8:12-14 Matthew 20:1-16 Mark 10:35-45 Genesis 16
John 3:26-30 Romans 8:1

OTHER READING

Look up the word Envy in the dictionary.

HEART QUESTIONS

1. What positive examples of not being envious did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as positive?
2. What negative examples of envy did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as negative?
3. Can you think of other Biblical examples of positive or negative envy?
4. In what ways have you refrained from envy this past week?
5. In what ways have you been envious of others this past week?
6. In the past week give an example of seeing someone else not be envious of a person or refrain from envy in a situation?

GROWTH QUESTIONS

- How do we put envy to death?
 -
- What does it look like to live as though Christ is your greatest prize?

PLAN OF ACTION

Pray

- Prayer from Valley of Visions – Contentment

<p>Heavenly Father,</p> <p>If I should suffer need, and go unclothed, and be in poverty, make my heart prize your love, know it, be constrained by it, though I be denied all blessings.</p> <p>It is your mercy to afflict and try me with wants, for by these trials I see my sins, and desire to be rid of them.</p> <p>Please help me willingly accept misery, sorrows, temptations, if those things will help me feel sin as the greatest evil, and be delivered from it with gratitude to you, acknowledging this as the highest testimony of your love.</p> <p>When your son, Jesus, came into my soul he became more dear to me than sin used to be; his kindly rule replaced sin's tyranny.</p>	<p>Teach me to believe that if I ever want to conquer any sin I must not only labor to overcome it, but must invite Christ to take its place, and he must become more valued to me than the vile lust had been; that his sweetness, power, life may be there.</p> <p>So I need to seek a grace from God that will oppose sin, but I should not seek it as a thing on it's own, apart from himself.</p> <p>When I am afraid of evils to come, please comfort me by showing me that in myself I am a dying, condemned wretch, but in Christ I am reconciled and live; that in myself I find insufficiency and restlessness, but in Christ there is satisfaction and peace; that in myself I am feeble and unable to do good, but in Christ I can do all things.</p> <p>Though now I have his graces in part, I shall shortly have them perfectly in that state where you will show yourself fully reconciled, and alone sufficient, efficient, loving me completely, with sin abolished.</p> <p>O Lord, may that day come quickly!</p>
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Scripture

- Memorize – Romans 8:1 – “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.”

Spend time with Jesus

- Spend your time with Jesus this week. Walk with Him, sit with Him, eat with Him, and fall in love with Him.
- Spend every minute of your free time with Christ this week.
 - No TV, news, movies, Internet surfing, Weather channel, etc. Use the time you normally entertain yourself as time with Jesus.
 - Use the time you usually talk with your spouse about your day, to talk to them about your time with Jesus.
 - Let your family time be about Christ. Talk to your kids about him.
 - Talk to Him as you walk along through your day.
 - Read about him in the Gospels and in Revelation.
 - Devote this week as one wholly to Jesus.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Encourage one another this week by sharing what you learn about Christ.

In prayer time next week, be ready to share how you feel more in love with Jesus this week.

WEEK 5

LOVE DOES NOT BOAST

BIBLE READING

Proverbs 27:1 Jeremiah 9:22-24 James 4:13-17 2 Corinthians ch. 11 & 12 Isaiah 40:22
Job ch. 38-40 1 Chronicles 29:11-12 Romans 3:9-20 Isaiah 64:6

OTHER READING

Look up the word Boast in the dictionary.

HEART QUESTIONS

1. What positive examples of boasting did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as positive?
2. What negative examples of boasting did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as negative?
3. Can you think of other Biblical examples of positive or negative boasting?
4. In what ways have you been humble this past week?
5. In what ways have you boasted this past week?
6. In the past week give an example of seeing someone else be humble?

GROWTH QUESTIONS

- How do you put to death boasting in your life?
- What does it look like to live a life without boasting, except in Christ?

PLAN OF ACTION

Pray

- Pray that God would reveal areas where you are boastful, and give you the strength to be modest.
- Praise God with the prayer Nebuchadnezzar prayed after being humbled by God for 7 years:
 - “His dominion is an eternal dominion; his kingdom endures from generation to generation. All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: ‘What have you done?’”

Scripture

- Memorize – 1 Corinthians 5:6 -“ Your boasting is not good. Don’t you know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough?”

Boast in Christ

- Purposefully look for opportunities to boast about what Christ has done, is doing, or is going to do.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Encourage one other with boasts of Christ.

In prayer time next week, be ready to share your successes and failures.

LOVE IS NOT PROUD

BIBLE READING

Proverbs 8:13 Proverbs 11:2 Proverbs 13:10 Proverbs 16:18 Psalm 101:5 Proverbs 16:5 John 13:1-17
1 Corinthians 9:1-18 Book of Esther (or at least ch. 3) Daniel 4:28-32

OTHER READING

Look up the word Pride in the dictionary.

HEART QUESTIONS

1. What positive examples of humbleness did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as positive?
2. What negative examples of pride did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as negative?
3. Can you think of other Biblical examples of positive or negative pride?
4. In what ways have you been humble this past week?
5. In what ways have you been prideful in love this past week?
6. In the past week give an example of seeing someone else be humble?

GROWTH QUESTIONS

- How can we put pride to death?
 -
- What should we put on to replace pride?
 -
- What does it look like to live a humble life and be at war with pride?

PLAN OF ACTION

Pray – Valley of Visions - Pride

<p>O thou terrible meek, Let not pride swell my heart. My nature is the mire beneath my feet, The dust to which I shall return. In body I surpass not the meanest reptile; Whatever difference of form and intellect is mine Is a free grant of thy goodness; Every faculty of mind and body is thy undeserved gift. Low as I am as a creature, I am lower as a sinner; I have trampled thy law times without number; Sin's deformity is stamped upon me, Darkens my brow, Touches me with corruption: How can I flaunt myself proudly? Lowest abasement is my due place, For I am less than nothing before thee. Help me to see myself in thy sight, Then pride must wither, decay, die, perish.</p>	<p>Humble my heart before thee, And replenish it with thy choicest gifts. As water rests not on barren hill summits, But flows down to fertilize lowest vales, So make me the lowest of the lowly, That my spiritual riches may exceedingly abound. When I leave duties undone, May condemning thought strip me of pride, Deepen in me devotion to thy service, And quicken me to more watchful care. When I am tempted to think highly of myself, Grant me to see the wily power of my spiritual enemy; Help me to stand with wary eye on the watch-tower of faith, And to cling with determined grasp to my humble Lord; If I fall let me hide myself in my Redeemer's righteousness, And when I escape, may I ascribe all deliverance to thy grace.</p> <p>Keep me humble, meek, lowly.</p>
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Scripture

- Memorize - Proverbs 16:5 – “The LORD detests all the proud of heart. Be sure of this: They will not go unpunished.”

Take notes

- Ask God to show you areas of pride in your life, and write them down.
- Think about what those situations would have been like if you had humility in your heart.
- Pray that God would help you to respond in humility next time.

Fight

- “Nehemiah 4:9 - But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat.”
- This is a threat! We are in a war! Don't sit idly by, engage in the battle.
- Hebrews 12:1-4 – “Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.”

ACCOUNTABILITY

Think of at least one act of humble service this week and do it.

In prayer time next week, be ready to share your successes and failures.

LOVE IS NOT RUDE

BIBLE READING

Deuteronomy 27:16 Romans 2:23 Ephesians 5:4 Proverbs 21:21 Proverbs 10:18 2 Samuel 16:5-14
John 19:1-37 Ephesians 4:22-24 1 Thessalonians 5:11

OTHER READING

Look up the words Rude and Dishonor in the dictionary.

HEART QUESTIONS

1. What positive examples of honor did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as positive?
2. What negative examples of dishonor did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as negative?
3. Can you think of other Biblical examples of positive or negative honor?
4. In what ways have you honored others this past week?
5. In what ways have you dishonored others this past week?
6. In the past week give an example of seeing someone else be honored?

GROWTH QUESTIONS

- What should we put off to grow in honor?
 -
- What should we put on to replace what we have put off?
 -
- How do you honor others above yourself in today's world?

PLAN OF ACTION

Pray

- Pray for God to help you control your thoughts of others, that He would help you really see others as before you and more important than you.
- Pray that He would give you the opportunity to honor someone this week with your words or actions.
- Pray that God would show you the second you speak a dishonoring word to someone or about someone and that he would grant you quick repentance.

Scripture

- Memorize – 1 Thessalonians 5:11 – “Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.”

Be intentional

- Don't just sit back and wait for a chance to show love with honor, think of those you would have the hardest time honoring and seek an opportunity to lift them up.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Speak an honoring word to someone this week; lift him or her up with encouragement.

Hold each other accountable if you hear a member of small group speak dishonorably to someone or about someone. Bring it to their attention; do not let sin get a foothold.

In prayer time next week, be ready to share your successes and failures.

LOVE IS NOT SELF-SEEKING

BIBLE READING

Psalm 119:36 Proverbs 18:1 James 3:13-16 Galatians 4:4-7 John 15:12-14 Matthew 26:6-16 John 12:6
Romans 8:12-14 Matthew 19:21-23 Matthew 16:26 Malachi 3:10

OTHER READING

Look up the word Selfish in the dictionary.

HEART QUESTIONS

1. What positive examples of giving did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as positive?
2. What negative examples of selfishness did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as negative?
3. Can you think of other Biblical examples of positive or negative giving?
4. In what ways have you given this past week?
5. In what ways have you been selfish this past week?
6. In the past week give an example of seeing someone else give like Christ calls us to?

GROWTH QUESTIONS

- How do you put to death selfishness in your life?
- What do you need to put on as selfishness dies in your life?
- What does it look like to sell all your possessions, give them to the poor, and follow Jesus in today's world?

PLAN OF ACTION

Pray

- Pray that God would increase in you a giving spirit, and an eternal view of life.
- Pray that God would cause your selfish desires to turn toward loving others more.

Scripture

- Memorize – Matthew 16:26 – “For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”

Give

- If you are not at least tithing, start doing so this week. Don't even argue with yourself about how you can't. Just do it. TITHE! Malachi 3:10
- In addition to tithing, I want to challenge you to give away something this week. Don't just give a couple of bucks to the homeless guy, unless that was all the money you had for food that day. Really give something away that you will feel a little “ouch” on. Be it time, money, or items, give like Christ has given to you.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Encourage one other in giving this week.

In prayer time next week, be ready to share whether or not you did the tasks this week. You don't have to share details if you want that to stay between you and God, but be ready to give an account of whether you did it or not.

LOVE IS SLOW TO ANGER

BIBLE READING

Proverbs 15:1 Proverbs 22:24 Proverbs 30:33 Ecclesiastes 7:9 Ephesians 4:31 Luke 23
Acts 5:40-42 Ezekiel 8 1 Samuel 18:1-11 John 8:48-59

OTHER READING

Look up the word Anger in the dictionary.

HEART QUESTIONS

1. What positive examples of “slow to anger” did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as positive?
2. What negative examples of anger did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as negative?
3. Can you think of other Biblical examples of positive or negative anger?
4. In what ways have you been “slow to anger” this past week?
5. In what ways have you been angry this past week?
6. In the past week give an example of seeing someone else be “slow to anger”?

GROWTH QUESTIONS

- What should we put off to grow in slowness of anger?
 -
- What should we put on to replace what we have put off?
 -
- What does it look like to be “slow to anger” around people in your life?

PLAN OF ACTION

Pray

- Pray that God will give you eyes to see and focus on eternal matters, and to see the “here and now” for what it really is.
- Pray that God would expose idols in your heart and that the Spirit would help you dethrone them.

Scripture

- Memorize - Ecclesiastes 7:9 – “Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, for anger resides in the lap of fools.”

Heart Exam

- Write down times in the past where you have had a quick temper.
- Think about those situations and ask yourself 5 heart questions from Paul Tripp:
 - What was going on?
 - What were you thinking and feeling while it was happening?
 - What did you do in response?
 - Why did you do it, and what were you seeking to accomplish?
 - What was the result?
- Pray that God would help you have insight into those answers and help you next time to respond in love.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Encourage one another this week to be “slow to anger”.

In prayer time next week, be ready to share what you have learned from the heart exam and what we can pray for around the insight God has granted you.

LOVE KEEPS NO RECORDS OF WRONGS

BIBLE READING

Psalms 130:3 2 Timothy 2:24 Hebrews 12:15 Matthew 18:21-22 Proverbs 21:19 1 Corinthians 5
Matthew 26:74-75 Mark 16:6-8 Genesis 50:19 Genesis 34 Matthew 18:21-35 1 Timothy 1:15

OTHER READING

Look up the word Resentment in the dictionary.

HEART QUESTIONS

1. What positive examples of forgiveness did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as positive?
2. What negative examples of resentment did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as negative?
3. Can you think of other Biblical examples of positive or negative resentment?
4. In what ways have you forgiven this past week?
5. In what ways have you kept a record of wrongs this past week?
6. In the past week give an example of seeing someone else show forgiveness?

GROWTH QUESTIONS

- What should we put off in order to keep no record of wrongs?
 -
- What should we put on to replace what we have put off?
 -
- How do you practically live out keeping no record of wrongs in your life? (Of course I remember things done to me)

PLAN OF ACTION

Pray

- Pray that God would keep before your eyes your true state, which is that you are the worst of sinners and you are forgiven in Christ alone.
- Pray that God would keep you humbly dependent on His grace, and that the Spirit would allow that same grace to flow through you to all those around you.

Scripture

- Memorize – 1 Timothy 1:15 “Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners – of whom I am the worst.”

Forgive

- This week I want you to pray and ask God to show you someone that you have been resentful of or unwilling to forgive. I want you to seek that person out and grant them forgiveness.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Pray for each other this week to be overwhelmed by God’s grace, mercy and forgiveness.

In prayer time next week, be ready to share how offering forgiveness has freed you from a burden.

LOVE DOES NOT REJOICE IN EVIL

BIBLE READING

Proverbs 3:31 Proverbs 2:12-15 Proverbs 1:7 Proverbs 8:13 Proverbs 11:19 1 Corinthians 5:1-3
2 Kings 22 and 23:1-30 1 Kings 11:1-13 Nehemiah 13:26-27 Ephesians 2:1-5 Ephesians 5:3

OTHER READING

Look up the words Rejoice, Evil, and Wrongdoing in the dictionary.

To quote Josh Harris in *Sex Is Not The Problem, Lust Is* :

“Take this rule: whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, or takes off the relish of spiritual things; in short, whatever increases the strength and authority of your body over your mind, that thing is sin to you, however innocent it may be in itself. It doesn’t matter what something is rated, or how popular it is, or how seemingly innocent it appears. If it hardens your heart toward God, if it obscures your awareness of the ugliness of sin and the holiness of God, if it takes the edge off your spiritual hunger, then it’s sin. Ask yourself can I honestly thank God for it?”

HEART QUESTIONS

1. What positive examples of not rejoicing in evil did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as positive?
2. What negative examples of rejoicing in evil did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as negative?
3. Can you think of other Biblical examples of positive or negative rejoicing in evil?
4. In what ways have you stood up for righteousness this past week?
5. In what ways have you rejoiced in evil this past week?
6. In the past week give an example of seeing someone else who stood up for righteousness?

GROWTH QUESTIONS

- How do we put to death rejoicing in evil?
 -

- What should we put on to grow in not rejoicing in evil?
 -
- What does it look like to live a life with not even a hint of evil before our eyes?

PLAN OF ACTION

Pray

- Pray that God would allow you to see sin the way He sees it.
- Pray that you will not grieve the Holy Spirit in your life.
- Pray that the Spirit would reveal areas in your life in which you are rejoicing in evil, and help you have a desire for the things of God.

Scripture

- Memorize – Ephesians 5:3-4 – “But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God’s holy people. Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving.”

Change your media intake

- With all the media you take in (TV, movies, books, papers, Internet, news, music, etc) ask yourself “Can I honestly thank God for this?” If the answer is “no”, then put it away. Replace them with things that God says is good.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Spur each other on this week to feed our minds with things that draw our hearts closer to God.

In prayer time next week, be ready to share areas that passed and failed the “Thankful test.”

LOVE REJOICES IN TRUTH

BIBLE READING

Proverbs 12:19 Proverbs 23:23 Proverbs 8:7 Psalm 119:142 Psalm 119:160 Psalm 25:5
Acts 5:25-32 John 6:25-66 2 Samuel 12:1-12 Acts 5:1-11 John 19:1-16

OTHER READING

Look up the word Truth in the dictionary.

HEART QUESTIONS

1. What positive examples of rejoicing in truth did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as positive?
2. What negative examples of not rejoicing in truth did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as negative?
3. Can you think of other Biblical examples of positive or negative rejoicing in truth?
4. In what ways have you rejoiced in truth this past week?
5. In what ways have you rejoiced in lies this past week?
6. In the past week, give an example of seeing someone else who rejoiced in truth?

GROWTH QUESTIONS

- How do we put off, in order to grow in rejoicing in truth?
 -
- What should we put on to replace what we put off?
 -
- How do you live a life of loving the truth and being willing to speak truth whatever the cost?

PLAN OF ACTION

Pray

- Pray that God would show you idols in your heart that you are willing to lie about or are actively lying about.
- Pray that the Spirit would give you a love for the truth of God's word, and strength to speak truth to those around you.

Scripture

- Memorize - Psalm 25:5 - "Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long."

Quick Repentance

- Ask the Spirit to convict you quickly when you lie, and to help you quickly ask for forgiveness both from the person you lied to and from God.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Encourage one another with the truth of God's words and promises this week.

In prayer time next week, be ready to share your successes and failures.

LOVE ALWAYS PROTECTS

BIBLE READING

Psalm 116:6 Proverbs 2:8 Proverbs 2:11 Proverbs 4:6 2 Thessalonians 3:3 Proverbs 3:11 Proverbs 5:23
Proverbs 3:12 Genesis 37:12-36 Job ch 1 Matthew 26:50-52 1 Samuel 13:5-14 Exodus 14:14

OTHER READING

Look up the word Protect in the dictionary.

HEART QUESTIONS

1. What positive examples of protecting did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as positive?
2. What negative examples of not protecting did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as negative?
3. Can you think of other Biblical examples of positive or negative protecting?
4. In what ways have you protected in love this past week?
5. In what ways have you failed to protect this past week?
6. In the past week give an example of seeing someone else be protected in love by others or by God?

GROWTH QUESTIONS

- What do we have to put off in order to grow in loving protection?
 -
- What should we put on to replace what we put off?
 -
- What does God's love and protection look like in our lives, and are you excited about that protection?
-

PLAN OF ACTION

Pray

- Pray that the Spirit would give you strength to let go of your perceived need for comfort and safety.
- Spend some time and think about this; “Are to the point yet to trust God completely with your life.” Do you trust God enough to honestly pray “God bring into my life whatever you will, and whatever will make me more like Christ”?
- Pray that you will have strength to love others enough to protect them like God protects us.

Scripture

- Memorize – Exodus 14:14 – “The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still.”

Let go

- In the past weeks we have been called to fight. This week we are called to be still and trust in God.
- This week let go of your perceived control of your life and give it over to God. Not only your life, but the lives of your love ones that you think you somehow protect. Put it in God’s hands and trust that He loves you and knows what is best in your life.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Encourage one another this week to trust in God with the things we hold so closely to.

In prayer time next week, be ready to share if you struggled in this area this week.

LOVE ALWAYS HOPES

BIBLE READING

Psalms 33:20 Psalm 147:11 Romans 5:1-5 1 John 4:18 Mark 5:24-34 1 Corinthians 15:18-20
Galatians 2:20 Philippians 1:20 Romans 8:22-25

OTHER READING

Look up the word Hope in the dictionary.

HEART QUESTIONS

1. What positive examples of hope did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as positive?
2. What negative examples of hope did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as negative?
3. Can you think of other Biblical examples of positive or negative hope?
4. In what ways have you hoped in Christ this past week?
5. In what ways have you hoped in man this past week?
6. In the past week give an example of seeing someone else hope in Christ?

GROWTH QUESTIONS

- What do we put off, in order to grow in our hope?
 -
- What should we put on to replace what we put off?
 -
- What does your life look like when you hope in Christ and not man?

PLAN OF ACTION

Pray

- Pray that God would reveal areas in your life where you are hoping in anything other than Christ alone.
- Pray that the Spirit would give you the strength to let go of those hopes and replace them with hope in Christ.

Scripture

- Memorize – Philippians 1:20 “I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.”

See the big picture

- Take this week and really try to have an eternal view of things.
- Our hope is for the future things that are to come “in Christ” – Romans 8:22-25
- Spend some time this week really meditating on what it means to hope in Christ, and the glories that are to come.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Encourage one another this week with the promises of God that are yet to be fulfilled.

In prayer time next week, be ready to share what God revealed to you this week.

LOVE ENDURES ALL THINGS

BIBLE READING

Psalm 100:5 Psalm 136 2 Timothy 2:10 Matthew 27:11-66 Ezekiel 23 Job 2:9
Genesis 37:18-20

OTHER READING

Look up the word Endure in the dictionary.

HEART QUESTIONS

1. What positive examples of endurance did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as positive?
2. What negative examples of endurance did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as negative?
3. Can you think of other Biblical examples of positive or negative endurance?
4. In what ways have you endured in love this past week?
5. In what ways have you failed to endure this past week?
6. In the past week give an example of seeing someone else who showed endurance in love?

GROWTH QUESTIONS

- What do you put off in order to grow in endurance?
 -
- What should we put on to replace what we put off?
 -
- What is God calling you to endure in love right now, and what does it look like in your life?

PLAN OF ACTION

Pray

- Pray that God would bless you with a fresh view of the love, grace, and mercy of Christ.
- Pray that God would bless you with the ability to see your sins first and as the worst, so that you may endure with love the sins of others against you.

Scripture

- Memorize - 2 Timothy 2:10 – “Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.”

Pray for others

- Think about the people you are struggling to endure.
- Spend time this week praying for those people in love.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Encourage one other in endurance this week.

In prayer time next week, be ready to share your successes and failures.

LOVE NEVER FAILS

BIBLE READING

Psalm 73:26 Psalm 6:4 Psalm 13:5 Psalm 32:10 Psalm 36:7 Psalm 107
 Revelation ch 21 & 22 Luke 9:23

OTHER READING

Look up the word Fail in the dictionary.

Francis Chan in Crazy love defines the “profile of the obsessed” as follows:

- People who are obsessed with Jesus give freely and openly, without censure. Obsessed people love those who hate them and who can never love them back.
- People who are obsessed with Jesus aren't consumed with their personal safety and comfort above all else. Obsessed people care more about God's kingdom coming to this earth than their own lives being shielded from pain or distress.
- People who are obsessed with Jesus live lives that connect them with the poor in some way or another. Obsessed people believe that Jesus talked about money and the poor so often because it was really important to Him.
- Obsessed people are more concerned with obeying God than doing what is expected or fulfilling to the status quo. A person who is obsessed with Jesus will do things that don't always make sense in terms of success or wealth on this Earth. As Martin Luther put it, “There are two days on my calendar: this day and that day”
- A person who is obsessed with Jesus knows that the sin of pride is always a battle. Obsessed people know that you can never be “humble enough”, and so they seek to make themselves less known and Christ more known.
- People who are obsessed with Jesus do not consider service a burden. Obsessed people take joy in loving God by loving His people.
- People who are obsessed with God are known as givers, not takers. Obsessed people genuinely think that others matter as much as they do, and they are particularly aware of those who are poor around the world.
- A person who is obsessed thinks about heaven frequently. Obsessed people orient their lives around eternity; they are not fixed only on what is here in front of them.
- A person who is obsessed is characterized by committed, settled, passionate love for God, above and before every other thing and every other being.
- People who are obsessed are raw with God; they do not attempt to mask the ugliness of their sins or their failures. Obsessed people don't put it on for God; He is their safe place, where they can be at peace.
- People who are obsessed with God have an intimate relationship with him. They are nourished by God's Word throughout the day because they know that forty minutes on Sunday is not enough to sustain them for a whole week, especially when they will encounter so many distractions and alternative messages.
- A person who is obsessed with Jesus is more concerned with his or her character than comfort. Obsessed people know that true joy doesn't depend on circumstances or environment; it is a gift that must be chosen and cultivated, a fight that ultimately comes from God.
- A person who is obsessed with Jesus knows that the best thing he can do is be faithful to his Savior in every aspect of his life, continually saying “Thank You!” to God. An obsessed person knows there can never be intimacy if he is always trying to pay God back or work hard enough to be worthy. He revels in his role as child and friend of God.

HEART QUESTIONS

1. What positive examples of love not failing did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as positive?
2. What negative examples of love failing did you find in the Bible readings this week, and why did you see them as negative?
3. Can you think of other Biblical examples of positive or negative love never failing?
4. In what ways have you stood, leaning on the unfailing love of God this past week?
5. In what ways have you failed to lean on God's love this past week?

GROWTH QUESTIONS

- How do we sustain our love for Christ and others?
 -
- What does it look like in your life to be obsessed with Christ?

PLAN OF ACTION

Pray

- Pray that God would grow your love for Him and others each day, that daily you would fall a little more in love with Christ.

Scripture

- Memorize - Psalm 36:7 – “How priceless is your unfailing love, O God! People take refuge in the shadow of your wings.”

Plan and work to be madly in love with Jesus Christ

- Become an obsessed person for Jesus.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Continue to encourage one another in love.