

**August 26 | Sunday**

Shaped by God's heart...fearlessly loving and sacrificial

Read [1 John 4:7-21](#)



**27 | Mon – It's all about love** | Read [Matthew 22:34-40](#) and [John 13:34-35](#)

Jesus distilled God's Old Testament commandments into these two, very familiar statements. Then on the night before his crucifixion, Jesus gave his disciples an command specifically for them (and anyone else who decides to live as a Christ-follower). Compare Matthew 22:39 and John 13:34. Is Jesus suggesting they were to love their brothers/sisters in Christ differently than those who were not believers? To what end?

**28 | Tue – Need a new supply?** | Read [1 John 4:7](#)

Where does love come from? Is it a spontaneous feeling? Something you choose? Does it just happen, like falling in love? John answers that basic question here. This may come as a big relief for someone who knows God wants them to love others but has trouble with certain difficult-to-live-with people. It is okay when you cannot seem to drum up those kind of feelings on your own. You just go to the Source and ask. Who is tough for you to love?

**29 | Wed – Starting point** | Read [1 John 4:11, 19](#) / [Ephesians 3:14-19](#)

You cannot give away what you do not have. A prerequisite for loving others is believing that you are unconditionally loved yourself. In a world where people are constantly being judged on looks, abilities and achievements, it can be difficult to comprehend the intrinsic value you have in God's eyes, totally unrelated to your performance. When you understand, at the heart level, how much you are loved (Ephesians 3) you will see others differently and will be able to love them in the same way. Do you really believe God loves you?

**30 | Thu – You know it when you see it** | Read [1 Corinthians 13:1-7](#)

Have you ever heard of an 'operational definition'? Simply put, it is defining how you will operate. More than just a goal, it is a statement of how you will know when you are doing what you said you would do. Apply that idea to loving people. How will you (and others) know that you love them, other than the obvious "I love you" statements? See verses 4-7 for an operational definition of love which might be helpful. Now who can you practice on?

**31 | Fri – Risky business** | Read [1 John 4:10](#)

Love can be rejected. Is that where the fear comes in? To love fearlessly is to face the fact that love might not be returned and still be willing to take the risk. Read John's unique definition of love. In a nutshell, God gave human beings a free will which means each person has the power to break God's heart by rejecting His love. If God was willing to take that risk for you, would you be willing to do likewise for others?

**01 | Sat – Worth the price tag** | Revisit [1 John 4:10](#)

It costs something to love. Love is willing to sacrifice because of the value of the one being loved. If you are a parent, you understand this reality. A mother temporarily gives up her body so her baby has a safe place to grow until it can live on its own. A father works hard for wages that will be spent on things his children need. To love someone the way God does will take sacrifices of time, effort, maybe even money. In extreme cases, it could mean giving your life for the ones you love like Jesus did. What are you willing to give and for whom?