

COVID-19 PARENTS AND STUDENTS BIBLE STUDY GUIDE

STUDENTS

BIBLE
STUDIES
FOR LIFE.

Session 1

DEALING WITH MESSY RELATIONSHIPS

Love // John 15:9-14



ONE SHEET

THE POINT: Let love characterize every relationship.

THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

If we don't use our relationships the ways God intended, what was once a source of joy and excitement becomes gross, and we'd rather just stay away. But our friendships, as well as relationships with teachers and parents, don't have to follow this pattern. Fortunately, the Bible gives us a method to keep our connections with others from going stale. For followers of Jesus, we have the power within us to help others feel alive and healthy, refreshed by the love of Christ. The way God accomplishes this is through real love.

► **What is your favorite unhealthy food?**

JOHN 15:9-10

Love is found in God, and if we expect to continually give love to others, we must first receive love from our heavenly Father. When it comes to giving love, if we haven't first received it from God, then we'll have nothing to give away. Here's another way to think about it—the quality of our relationships with others will always be tied to the quality of our relationship with God. Obedience to God is the crucial factor in bearing fruit that impacts others for the sake of the gospel. Notice how Jesus connected love and obedience: If we do what Jesus tells us to do, then we will experience His affection! It's not that Jesus will love us more—God's children are loved in ways we can't even imagine. However, obeying Him translates into our knowing His love in a deeper way. And this deeper experience will allow us to share God's love and bring life to others around us. Remaining in Jesus' love is the key to our relationships with others.

► **What do we tend to expect from the people who love us?**

► **How would you describe the connection between remaining in God's love and obeying His commandments?**

JOHN 15:11-12

Living in Christ should produce joy in the heart! For the child of God, obeying Him is not a road of misery, but the path to freedom. When we know the love of God, trusting that the things He calls us to are actually for our own good, following Jesus isn't seen as something we have to do, but something we want to do. And the joy that we experience inside will be expressed in the ways we live. Jesus was very clear—we are to love others in the specific way He's loved us. And here's how Jesus showed His love: He was generous. He forgave. He was gracious, kind, merciful, and sacrificial. As recipients of the gift of God's love, we are not to hoard it, but to share it with others. When we love people as Jesus did, we begin to break down their defenses and close relationships are built.

► **How does our relationship with God impact our relationships with others?**

► **What does it look like to love others in the same way Jesus has loved us?**

JOHN 15:13-14

The ways we're willing to give of ourselves is often a good measurement of our love for others. Little did the disciples know that, even as Jesus taught them how to love, this would be lived out in their own lives. In the years that followed, those in Jesus' inner circle would give it all for their Savior. Though they had once deserted Jesus (Mark 14:46-50), the disciples ultimately showed supreme love by laying down their own lives. No higher form of love has ever been known. For those we love, we should be giving of ourselves, not only in big ways, but in the small things as well. Some people move to a different continent to lay down their lives so that people would know the love of God. For most of us, though, giving our lives means offering a kind word, sharing a meal, or simply spending time with someone. Either way, love calls us to pay a price. And when we do this, we reflect Jesus to those around us.

► **Why are we tempted to give as little as necessary to get what we want?**

► **List some practical ways you can demonstrate sacrificial love to others.**