



**MON 10-17**

▼ **SCRIPTURE** John 3:19-22

▼ **THOUGHT** "This is the basis for judgment: The light came into the world, and people loved darkness more than the light, for their actions are evil. All who do wicked things hate the light and don't come to the light for fear that their actions will be exposed to the light. Whoever does the truth comes to the light so that it can be seen that their actions were done in God." [CEB] God is love and light, and we choose to move toward or away as we choose our actions. What is one thing you can change this week to move toward God?

▼ **PRAYER** **Loving God, forgive me when I choose darkness over love. You've never written me off, and you never will. Help me open my heart to your Spirit's work in me, changing and renewing me. Amen.**

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**TUES 10-18**

▼ **SCRIPTURE** John 15:9-10

▼ **THOUGHT** "I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love. When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father's commandments and remain in his love." [NLT] Jesus describes a triad of love, and you are a vital part! Jesus said this knowing that he would soon sacrifice everything to demonstrate that love to the world. Praise God!

▼ **PRAYER** **Loving God, help me grow more and more in the way I love. I want your love to fill my heart so it bubbles and overflows to bless others. Show me a specific way today to practice loving as you do. Amen.**

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**WED 10-19**

▼ **SCRIPTURE** Luke 23:34

▼ **THOUGHT** "Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.' And they divided up his clothes by casting lots." [NIV] True love requires a spirit of forgiveness. Christ's love for those who were actively mocking and harming him included forgiving them though they hadn't even acknowledged their hurtful actions. How hard is this for you? Is there someone in your life to whom you need to extend forgiveness?

▼ **PRAYER** **Merciful Jesus, it is so difficult to let go of the pain that people have caused me, but I know that is the standard you have set. As hard as it is, I want to love in a way that heals and brings peace. Please help me. Amen**

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**THURS 10-20**

▼ **SCRIPTURE** Proverbs 27:19

▼ **THOUGHT** "As water reflects the face, so one's life reflects the heart." [NIV] Our life choices reveal what is at the core of our nature. The Spirit of God breathes life into us, constantly nudging us to grow more and more into people of love. The key to this living kind of life is staying connected to God. Spend a few moments in silent prayer and self-evaluation. Listen for direction.

▼ **PRAYER** **Holy Spirit, breathe your life-giving power into me. I want my life to reflect a genuine heart of love. I cannot do that on my own. I need your constant reminders and power at work in me. Amen.**

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**FRI 10-21**

▼ **SCRIPTURE** Acts 20:24

▼ **THOUGHT** "But my life is worth nothing to me unless I use it for finishing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about the wonderful grace of God." [NLT] One of the best things you can do as a follower of God is to share the grace you've received with others. By doing so, you create meaning in your own life. If we focus on this mission, we will focus less on the things that divide us. Our common love for Christ will create space for our differences.

▼ **PRAYER** **God of Mercy, I am so grateful for your forgiveness and grace. Sometimes I lose focus and let myself forget that others need that hope so desperately. Help me keep that in the forefront of my mind. Amen.**

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**SAT 10-22**

▼ **SCRIPTURE** Hebrews 10:24-25

▼ **THOUGHT** "And let us consider each other carefully for the purpose of sparking love and good deeds. Don't stop meeting together with other believers, which some people have gotten into the habit of doing. Instead, encourage each other, especially as you see the day drawing near." [CEB] What a great purpose--sparking love and good deeds! The church is meant to be a place where we gather to encourage each other in doing good. Being a regular part of that is crucial to staying on-mission!

▼ **PRAYER** **Lord Jesus, thank you for providing a community of believers to encourage me and motivate me to serve. Use me to be a blessing to other believers as we seek a vibrant life of faith together. Amen.**

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# DIGGING DEEPER

▼ **Intro**      **In this series, we'll focus on the biblical ideas of kindness, love, and good deeds that are meant to be our way of life as followers of Jesus. As we head into the political campaign season, these are virtues that we want to highlight and unpack. The shared love of Christ will help us make space for our differences.**

▼ **Reflect**

- Have you ever had an unexpected friendship or connection with someone who was very different than you? What brought your friendship to life?
- Describe a time when you had to work really hard to establish or maintain a friendly relationship with someone. What motivated your persistence?
- 1 John 4:7-11 says, "Dear friends, let's love each other, because love is from God, and everyone who loves is born from God and knows God. The person who doesn't love does not know God, because God is love. This is how the love of God is revealed to us: God has sent his only Son into the world so that we can live through him. This is love: it is not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son as the sacrifice that deals with our sins. Dear friends, if God loved us this way, we also ought to love each other." [CEB] There is power in love because God IS love. That statement is different than the idea that love is one of God's activities. Why is that distinction significant?
- Verse 11 called all of God's children to grow toward loving as God does. What helps you to grow toward having all you do be an expression of love?
- The Greek term *agape* describes a type of love that is not temporary or conditional. It is a chosen attitude supported by an exercise of the will. This type of love makes allowances. What does it practically mean to love in this tough-minded, robust way? Can you think of someone in your life who demonstrates this type of love?

▼ **Prayer**      **Lord God, you created me out of your love, and you planted a seed of that love deep within me. Let me always value and respect the holiness of that wonderful gift from your heart. Help me to let that gift be the reason why I persistently love even when it takes a lot of effort. Amen.**



# DIGGING DEEPER

**LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR**

▼ What did I learn? \_\_\_\_\_  
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▼ How might it apply in my life? \_\_\_\_\_  
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▼ What is a next step I can take? \_\_\_\_\_  
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