



**LOVE
NEVER
FAILS**

SACRIFICE OVER SELFISHNESS

Love always protects. Love is not self-seeking. Love never fails.

If love is easy, why do we find it so hard to do? If love is our natural disposition, why does Jesus continually remind His disciples to obey the Great Command?

Every one of us has a way of naturally putting our own interests above others. We may love the idea of love, but in the end, we are often unwilling to pay the cost. We are unwilling to forgo our own comfort, preferences and desires for the sake of others. True love is a sacrifice. True love is always offered without demanding anything in return.

The greatest example of sacrificial love is found in the person of Jesus. He laid down his own comfort, position and status to walk among His creation in humility and service. What a great cost!

Jesus didn't just command us to love; He showed us how to love. There is no more powerful an exhibition of love than Jesus sacrificing His life on a cross for the forgiveness of our sins. In a world desperately longing for love, we are commanded to walk in the way of Jesus to demonstrate what love looks like.

Share

1. Share an example of sacrificial love in action.
In what aspects of your life do you find sacrificial love most difficult?

Read

1 Corinthians 13: 4-7 and John 15:9-17

Discuss

2. What is the connection between obedience and love in these verses?
3. What is the connection between joy and love in these verses?
4. What does it mean for us to be called Jesus' friends?

Apply

5. What is God saying to you through these verses?
What are you going to do about it?
6. Who will you ask, "What do you need from me right now?"

Pray

Pray for each other as you seek to love sacrificially this week.

Further Reading

- Matthew 22:34-40
- John 13:34-35
- John 14:23-27
- John 21:15-17

PATIENCE OVER ANGER

Love is patient. Love is not easily angered.

We live in a world of immediacy and instant gratification. We can buy almost anything with a click of a button on a website: meals arrive ready to eat in thirty minutes, movies stream instantly, and information is always accessible on our mobile device.

We don't have to wait for much, and we don't like waiting. When we are always in a hurry, we find ourselves agitated, annoyed, anxious and angry – a long way from the life of peace and joy Jesus promised! Tragically, anger is destroying homes, families and lives in our community.

In our fast-paced, instant world we need to learn the discipline of patience. Patience is a gift for our own soul, and a gift to all those around us. Whether it is around the dinner table, or driving down the highway, patience leads to a peaceful presence that blesses those around us.

We see this most wonderfully reflected in the life of Jesus, who patiently persevered all the way to the cross so we can know forgiveness, freedom and ultimately, eternal life. When we live with this perspective, and understand we have all eternity with Him ahead of us, we can live with a new sense of patience. When we live with patience, we bring love and hope to a world tormented with a hurried stress and anxious anger.

Share

1. Share an example of patience in action.
In what aspects of your life do you struggle with hurry and anger?

Read

James 1:19-27

Discuss

2. How can we apply verse 19 to our lives when we are often busy and stressed?
3. What are some practical ways we can reject evil and apply God's truth to our lives consistently?

Read

Romans 5:1-5

Discuss

4. According to these verses, how should we respond to suffering? Share examples from your own life.

Apply

5. What is God saying to you through these verses?
What are you going to do about it?

Pray

Pray for each other as you seek to be patient rather than angry this week.

Further Reading

- James 5:7-11
- Matthew 5:21-26
- Philippians 4:4-9
- Proverbs 14:29; 15:18; 29:11

KINDNESS OVER MALICE

Love is kind. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

Throughout history we see an awful propensity in the human heart for cruelty. It only takes a walk down the magazine aisle or time on social media to notice the way we delight in the failure and demise of others. The dialogue on our media platforms are becoming more spiteful and divisive. It is affecting the way we relate and communicate.

We are becoming polarised as society, as different perspectives and groups shout for their opinion to be heard. Even as Christians, it is easy to be drawn into this cultural posture. But following the way of love demands a different response.

Jesus offers us mercy and kindness because He sees value in every person. He forgives us because He longs that we might enjoy relationship with Him. Jesus shows us, in both word and action, what it means to offer kindness to not only our family and friends, but also to those who hate us.

Jesus invites us to be kind and compassionate to our friends and those we agree with, and, radically, with those we disagree with. Jesus calls us to show kindness to our enemies.

Share

1. Share an example of kindness in action.
In what aspects of your life do you find kindness most difficult?

Read

Ephesians 4:29-5:2

Discuss

2. What are some practical ways we can get rid of evil (4:31) and follow God's example of a life of love (5:1-2)?

Read

Titus 3:1-8

Discuss

3. How should our lives change after we have been saved? How should this be evident in the way we relate and communicate to those we live, work and laugh with?
4. According to these verses, what is the motivation for living a godly life?

Apply

5. What is God saying to you through these verses?
What are you going to do about it?

Pray

Pray for each other as you seek to be kind to those you disagree with this week.

Further Reading

- Matthew 5:38-48
- Galatians 5:13-26
- Romans 12:9-12
- Colossians 3:12-17