



NO SERMON NOTES THIS WEEK

DEVOTIONAL GUIDE ON THE NEXT PAGE

ASBURY DAILY STUDY GUIDE May 22-27, 2023

These devotionals were originally used with the "Christian: It's Not What You Think" sermon series in February-March 2015

INTRODUCTION

Our devotionals for this week were originally used in conjunction with a series about the core of the idea of what a "Christian" is in a series called *Christian: It's Not What You Think*. Pastor Eric preached this series in 2015. As we consider Rev. Dr. Becky Beckworth's message about our unity in Christ, we pray these devotionals will help you to consider what it looks like to love those around you.

Monday: John 13:1-20

The gospel of John shows us what love looks like in Jesus Christ. The hours before Jesus gave himself up for us, he wanted to try to demonstrate to his disciples again what love looked like. So he knelt beside each one and washed their feet, knowing that there would be those among the group who would betray him. Can we grasp the strength and fullness of such love? Who does this call you to love?

Tuesday: 1 John 3:11- 23

Turning to the Epistles of John, the work of Jesus Christ is emphasized in his actions and we are called to live likewise. We must ask ourselves hard questions about how we love our "brothers and sister." Verses 3:16-18 and 23-24 of this section urges us to do greater deeds of love because we are children of God, because we are trying to follow Jesus Christ, and because the Spirit is urging us to this life of extraordinary love.

Wednesday: 1 John 4:1-12

This very important section of the book starts out with a warning to be alert for "false prophets" and the forces of evil that pull us away from Christ and the strength of this love. How does violence and revenge influence our decisions? What other forces of evil pull us away from the love of God? The last part of this section stirs up an even greater understanding of God, who is the source of all love. This implies our love is not self-generated and our need for relationship with God.

Thursday: 1 John 4: 13-21

The main thing is: God is love! This love has great strength, and encourages us to be strong in the face of evil. This extraordinary love will help us overcome our fears so that we can live a life of love, also. What are the fears that keep you from taking on this extraordinary love? Also read I Peter 5: 7-11.

Friday: 1 John 5: 1-21

These scriptures encourage us with the knowledge we are children of God and we are called to behave accordingly! It reassures us that although we live in a world where the toughest of things can come against us, we are able, through our faith, to be victorious! This is not easy, and we must constantly be discerning so evil can be identified and conquered! The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing: God is love.

MOVING FORWARD

Jesus would say we give up our leverage in culture when we focus on anything but love. If we loved like he calls us to love, people wouldn't feel condemned by Christians or coerced to join the faith. In fact, they'd feel drawn to the church. What does love look like in the marketplace? In our families? In our marriages? In our friendships? If we don't love well, it doesn't really matter what else we do. So try it: focus on it, meditate on it, act on it. This week, practice loving the people around you. Remember: we owe it to God to love others.