

THIS WEEK'S DEVOTIONS

MEMORY VERSE: A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. John 13:34

Monday

Read Colossians 3:12-14, 17a. How does knowing that God loves and forgives you help you live out these verses? Thank God for His immense love for you, and for forgiving you. Ask Him for the power to be compassionate, kind, humble and gentle. Talk to God about the areas you're struggling to forgive someone. Ask God to increase your love for that person and help you start down the path of forgiveness.

Tuesday

Read Colossians 3:18-19, Galatians 3:27-29, and Ephesians 5:21-22, 25. What could the instruction to "submit" mean, as it relates to living a life filled with grace? In Ephesians, Paul specifies that husbands should love their wives "as Christ loved the church". What does that mean as it relates to living a life filled with grace? Thank God for caring about all our relationships. Thank Him for His Word and the instructions for living in community with others as we learn. Ask God to give you a heart that is open to His ways and what He has for you and your relationships.

Wednesday

Read Colossians 3:20-21 and the parallel passage in Ephesians 6:1-4. It doesn't matter how old you are, family relationships matter! It's never too late to change a pattern. How can you apply these verses to your family relationships? What is one way you can show honor to your parents (even if they have passed away)? If you're a parent, what is one way you can build in to each child's life this week? Thank God for His grace, not only for you, but for your family. Ask God to give you an extra measure of grace and love in your family relationships this week.

Thursday

Read Colossians 3:22-25 and 4:1. Paul's principles apply well to an employer-employee relationship. How does Paul say we should serve our earthly authorities? Why? How could this idea change your attitude in, or even your performance in, your job? What does Paul say to those in leadership? How can you use your leadership position to be right and fair today? Thank God for the purpose you have when it comes to work and tasks. Pray for an attitude in your work and tasks that reflects the truth that it is the Lord you are serving.

Friday

Read John 13:34-35. How have you seen Jesus show love towards you? How could starting with this over-arching principle of loving one another help you when it comes to your relationships? When do you find it easiest to love others? When is it most difficult? Thank God for the example of Jesus' love for you. Talk to Him about your struggles when it comes to loving. Pray for a heart that more and more reflects God's love in your relationships.

Saturday

Read Colossians 4:2-6 to get ready for this weekend's message. Please keep the services in prayer. Ask for God's blessing on our church and all the churches in Santa Cruz County.

FOCUSED

ON LOVING ONE ANOTHER

MARK SPURLOCK

JULY 14 & 15

A new command I give you: Love one another.
As I have loved you, so you must love one another. John 13:34

1. Loving One Another at Church

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and **dearly loved**, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as **the Lord** forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity... And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of **the Lord Jesus**... Colossians 3:12-14, 17a

2. Loving One Another at Home

• Loving couples _____

Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as is fitting in **the Lord**. Colossians 3:18

Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them. Colossians 3:19

Submit to **one another** out of reverence for **Christ**. Ephesians 5:21

Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to **the Lord**. Ephesians 5:22

Husbands, love your wives, **just as Christ loved** the church and **gave himself up** for her... Ephesians 5:25

What a union of two believers—one hope, one vow, one discipline, and one worship! They are brother and sister, two fellow-servants, one spirit and one flesh... They pray together, fast together, instruct, exhort and support each other. – *Tertullian, Ad Uxorem, circa 200 AD*

• Loving kids and parents _____

Children, obey your parents in everything, for this **pleases the Lord**. Colossians 3:20

Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged. Colossians 3:21

3. Loving One Another at Work

• Loving employees and bosses _____

Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to curry their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence **for the Lord**. Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, **as working for the Lord**, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance **from the Lord** as a reward. **It is the Lord Christ you are serving**. Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for their wrongs, and there is no favoritism. Colossians 3:22-25

Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you know that you also have a **Master in heaven**. Colossians 4:1

Heavenly Father, I pray that the love of Jesus Christ would be expressed in my relationship with _____. Thank you for loving me! I pray that you would teach and empower me to love others as you love me!

Primary Resources

The Greco-Roman World of the New Testament Era: Exploring the Background of Early Christianity. James S. Jeffers, Intervarsity Press, 1999.

Man and Woman, One in Christ: An Exegetical and Theological Study of Paul's Letters. Philip B. Payne, Zondervan, 2009.

It's Mutual. Sermon by Andy Stanley, NorthPoint Church, October 14, 2017.

The Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Captivity Epistles. Ben Witherington III, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2007.