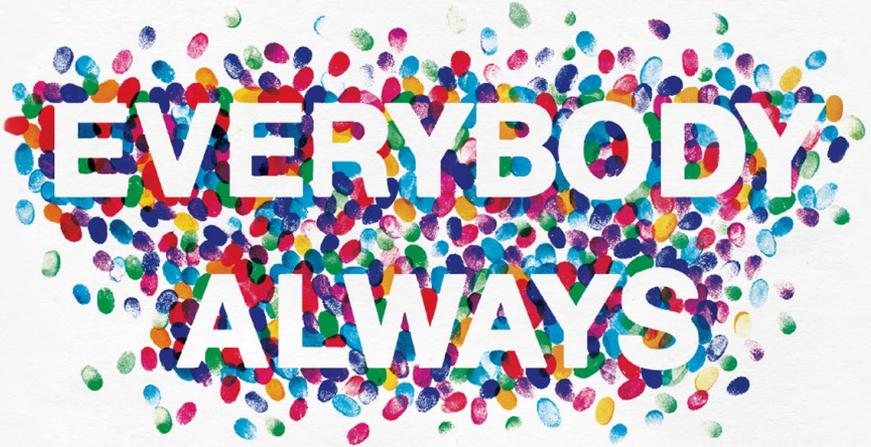


CROSSROADS ALL-CHURCH STUDY



DAILY DEVOTIONAL

INTRODUCTION

Did you know that God's love is unconditional? His love is for everybody. God's love turns enemies into friends, and it is bigger than all the things we use to divide ourselves. But God doesn't want to be the only one around here who loves this way. He wants us to love this way too. He wants us to love the people we like and the people we don't - the people we respect, and the people we try to ignore. He wants us to love everybody, always.

It is our hope that you can use this companion book to guide you through each day of our all-church study. Consider it your daily devotional as you learn how to better love all the people in your life. We've left ample space for you to add your own reflection, notes, and questions. If you're in a small group, use your responses in this booklet as a tool to spark conversations during your meetings. If you're not in a group, this guide can help you develop a daily rhythm to get the most out of this series. Together, we will use our Sunday morning teachings as a way to dive even further into topics like loving difficult people, loving without inhibition, and helping others replace shame with acceptance.

Let's get started – it's time to love *everybody, always*.

READ

Romans 15:5-6

What did you hear in this passage?

What do you hear God telling you to do?

What are you going to do as a result of what you read today?

DO

Tell your story. Who are you?

This week make time with one or two people to have coffee or meet up somewhere. The goal of these meetings is to Get to know each other better by telling your story. Here are some questions to help break the ice

- Where did you grow up?
- How long have you lived where you do now?
- Do you have any siblings? What can you tell me about them?
- Who were and are the most formative people in your life?
- When and how did you get turned onto Jesus and church?
- Why did you decide to participate in this study?
- If you had a whole day to yourself, how would you spend it?
- What is one thing the two of us have in common?

Reflecting

Now that you have had your 1-2 meetings reflect on the following questions:

- How was the experience of sharing stories
- Was it easier or harder than you thought? Why?

READ

Matthew 18: 1-5

This is a great example of how God's Kingdom is counterintuitive. The weak are made strong and the frail are most powerful. It is hard to change your mindset that you need to embrace the ways you lose and stop focusing on winning in God's Kingdom.

QUESTIONS

What else do you think Jesus meant when he talked about becoming like little children?

Jesus says "anyone who welcomes a child welcomes me." What does that mean to you?

Where are you frustrated by your own needs right now?

In what ways might this actually be an invitation into the Kingdom of God?

READ

Mathew 20:16

What did you hear in this passage?

What do you hear God telling you to do?

What are you going to do as a result of what you read today?

READ

Matthew 16:25

What did you hear in this passage?

What do you hear God telling you to do?

What are you going to do as a result of what you read today?

READ

Read the prologue and Chapters 1 through 3: in “Everybody Always”, and reflect on the following questions:

Who are some people you know who give away love “like they’re made of it?” What are some characteristics you admire in these people?

What are some of the barriers you encounter when it comes to loving difficult people? What can you learn from Jesus’ example about how to deal with them?

What does “extravagant love” look in your life in terms of “coloring outside the lines” and going beyond the “norms”?

Why do you think Jesus asks us to start loving others by first loving our neighbors? Who would you define as being your “neighbors”?

What are some ways that you are actively loving your neighbors? How has this involved more than just speaking with them from time to time?

READ

Proverbs 16:23-24

What did you hear in this passage?

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DO

Talk About the Right Stuff

Make a list of 3 people, 1 person you are close with, 1 acquaintance and 1 person you may not know well or some that you are critical of. Next write down three complimentary things about each person and then you are going to say these three compliments about this person behind their backs to people who know them.

Person #1

Person #2

Person #3

How did it feel to participate in positive gossip? Did it change anything about how you saw the person?

Did it change anything about how you saw yourself? Keep track of your thoughts, make some notes below and share them next week.

READ

Luke 15: 11-32

QUESTIONS

In what ways can you relate to the “score keeping” nature of the older brother?

In what ways has God shown you mercy like he did to the younger brother?

How do you respond to the idea that God doesn't feel the need to divide things equally to “keep everything fair?”

How does this parable challenge you to change your mind-set toward others?

Do you think the older brother ever joined the party? More importantly, what would you do if you were in his palace?

READ

Romans 5:1-11

What did you hear in this passage?

What do you hear God telling you to do?

What are you going to do as a result of what you read today?

READ

Romans 3: 21-31

What did you hear in this passage?

What do you hear God telling you to do?

What are you going to do as a result of what you read today?

READ

Read Chapter 4-6 in “Everybody Always” and then reflect on the following questions:

Does your Christian practice feel more like “faith” or “compliance” these days? Explain.

Is there a relationship where you’ve let shame create a barrier between you and someone else? What would it look like to heal that divide?

What does it mean to build a “kingdom” rather than a “castle” when it comes to accepting others who are different from you?

What are some ways to love the difficult people in your life “thirty seconds at a time?”

Why is it so important to react to those who have failed with compassion and understanding instead of disapproval or indifference? Use the space below to write any other key points or questions you want to bring to the next group meeting. In preparation for your next session, read chapters 10 through 12.

READ

Mathew 5: 3-10

What did you hear in this passage?

What do you hear God telling you to do?

What are you going to do as a result of what you read today?

DO

Move Toward Others

Instead of moving away from {broken, needy, and creepy people} our idea is to move toward them find some time this week to spend 30 minutes being present in a place where systems of society are not working, Parks, rescue shelter, bus station or anywhere else where people who are intimately acquainted with struggle and even failure might be hanging out. Then answer these questions:

What I learned about myself...

What I learned about the struggles of the people in this place...

What I learned about God...

READ

John 9: 1-11

QUESTIONS

Where are you feeling the most tempted to look backward and ascribe blame for the hard things in your life?

When was a time when something good emerged out of a sad and tragic circumstance?

Do you think this kind of thing could happen for you again? Why or why not?

READ

Mark 2:13-17

What did you hear in this passage?

What do you hear God telling you to do?

What are you going to do as a result of what you read today?

READ

John 4:1-38

What did you hear in this passage?

What do you hear God telling you to do?

What are you going to do as a result of what you read today?

READ

Read Chapters 10 through 12 in “Everybody Always” and then reflect on the following questions:

Why is it important to not always be looking for the “green lights” when it comes to boldly stepping out in faith and loving others?

How have you witnessed Jesus helping you to “see more” spiritually as you’ve continued to follow him?

When has a voice of defeat tempted you to quit what you knew God was leading you to do? How did you respond to that situation?

When you think about the word evangelism, does it bring up positive or negative associations? Why did you answer the way you did?

Jesus invites us to move from merely identifying with someone’s pain to standing with that person in it. What is the difference between the two? Where is a place in your life that you have an opportunity to “stand in” someone’s pain with him or her?

Use the space below to write any other key points or questions that you want to bring to your next group meeting:

READ

Mathew 19:13-15

What did you hear in this passage?

What do you hear God telling you to do?

What are you going to do as a result of what you read today?

DO

“People don’t follow vision; they follow availability.” Just by answering the phone we can answer all their questions. For this activity, simply answer your phone whenever it rings for the rest of the week. It might sound a bit crazy, but see what God does with it. If you take one step towards being available you can see how Jesus will meet you there in that moment.

Write down some reflection below as you do this practice this week.

READ

Matthew 25: 1-46

QUESTIONS

There is another book by Gary Chapman called the Five Love languages. He talks about how people give and receive love in one of five different ways.

- Acts of Service
- Words of Affirmation
- Quality Time
- Physical Touch
- Giving Gifts

Is it possible that all good works Jesus mentions in Matthew 25: 31-46, the ones on this list, are simply God's love language?

What questions does this parable of Jesus bring up for you?

What are some of the ways that people show love to you? And what is your primary "love language" to express care to others.

If God's "love language" involves reaching out to people in all kinds of need, where are you already engaged in that kind of service?

Are there other opportunities for connecting with the needy that God might be calling you to do as well?

READ

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

What did you hear in this passage?

What do you hear God telling you to do?

What are you going to do as a result of what you read today?

READ

Romans 12: 9-12

What did you hear in this passage?

What do you hear God telling you to do?

What are you going to do as a result of what you read today?

READ

Read Chapters 14-16 in “Everybody Always” and then reflect on the following questions:

When are some times you’ve seen God leading you from the safest route to the one that helped you grow the most?

How would it change your life if you viewed every person you met as Jesus?

What is Jesus’ ultimate “plan” for us when it comes to serving others?

What do you think Jesus meant when he said that if we make a big deal about what we’re doing now - hoping someone will clap- we’ve already gotten our reward?

What has helping others taught you personally about the cost of grace?

READ

Romans 12:14

What did you hear in this passage?

What do you hear God telling you to do?

What are you going to do as a result of what you read today?

DO

In the book of Romans Paul says you should “bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse” 12:14. One way to live out this teaching is to call to mind one of the “enemies” on the list you made during group time, the one you find hardest of all to love. Then while you are holding that person in your thoughts, ask that God would bless him or her. Offering a prayer of blessing to someone who hurt you can be hard.

READ

2 Corinthians 2: 5-11

QUESTIONS

What strikes you about Paul's words to the church in 2 Corinthians 2: 5-11?

Are you currently carrying a grudge about something that happened to a loved one? What is it?

What would need to happen for you to be able to forgive the offender and let it go?

What would you need from God to make that possible?

READ

Mathew 7:1-5

What did you hear in this passage?

What do you hear God telling you to do?

What are you going to do as a result of what you read today?

READ

Ephesians 4:1-5

What did you hear in this passage?

What do you hear God telling you to do?

What are you going to do as a result of what you read today?

READ

Read Chapters 20 through 24 in “Everybody Always” and then reflect on the following questions:

What are some situations you are facing right now where you need to hear God say, “be not afraid?” What would it take for you to be courageous in that situation?

When are some times that God “blew your mind” and used unbelievable things to help you experience his power?

Every day, we get to decide whether we’re really following Jesus or treating him like “he’s just a Sherpa carrying our stuff.” What is the difference between the two?

When you think about your life, do you tend to look at how far you have to go, or, see how far you’ve come? Why do you think you answered like you did?

How have you seen your life change as you’ve learned to love difficult people? How have you seen your loving actions change another person’s life?

NOTES:

NOTES:

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Crossroads All-Church Study

Everybody Always

3 WAYS TO PARTICIPATE...

1. Join a small group
2. Attend service weekly in-person or online
3. Use this daily devotional as a study companion

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