

DAY 6

And do everything with love.

1 Corinthians 16:14 NLT

When was the last time you enthusiastically, and with a heart of love did your chores? What about the last time you chose to take the high road with your sibling or teammate out of love? Hopefully, you can think of a recent time, but if not, an opportunity has just presented itself! As this verse states, we are to do everything in love. Yep, everything. That wasn't a typo. Whether you're doing something that you love to do, or something that requires sacrifice, it's important to consider the motivation behind the action.

If the motivation isn't out of love, ask the Lord to show you what that looks like, and redirect your heart to walk in love. You might just get a perspective shift!

DAY 7

For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. The government will rest on his shoulders. And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6 NLT

This specific verse is so important for us to memorize because we get a picture of all of the amazing things Jesus is, while also seeing a picture of how He came into this world.

Here are some suggestions to help you memorize this verse:

- 1. Tape a note card with the verse on it to your mirror and read it when you're getting ready in the morning.**
- 2. Turn it into a song!**
- 3. Ask your small group leader to hold you accountable and quiz you the next time you meet.**

DAILY DEVOTIONAL

IT'S BEGINNING TO LOOK A LOT LIKE CHRISTMAS / WEEK 4

FOR AN
everyday faith.

HIGH SCHOOL

DAY 1

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.

1 John 3:16 NIV

When we think of love, do we always think of sacrifice? While movies may show us chasing after someone in the airport, or a room full of roses, there's something more important to realize when it comes to love—Love requires sacrifice. Jesus sacrificed His life for us, and while I don't want you to go all Romeo and Juliet on us, I do want to highlight that it's not all sunshine and rainbows. It's our turn to sacrifice for those we love.

It may look different for each person in your life, depending on their wants and needs, so ask the people around you this week how you can serve them and love them well. Lay down your conveniences and pick up love.

DAY 2

Give thanks to the God of heaven. His faithful love endures forever.

Psalm 136:26 NLT

The iconic line in the movie "The Sandlot" emphasizes just how long forever is. "For-ev-er," is a really long time. Have you ever thought about how long it actually is? Can you imagine doing anything for that long? Imagine cleaning your room or playing baseball forever. I'm exhausted just thinking about it. The Creator of the Universe loves us so much, and that love lasts forever! It's mind-blowing to think that despite our brokenness and flaws, God's love will never leave us. That is a humbling thought.

Today, stop and think about how long God's faithful love lasts, and take a minute to thank God for loving you that much for that long. It's truly an honor to be called a Child of God.

DAY 3

Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.

1 Corinthians 13:7 NLT

Have you ever heard that "God is love"? John talks about this concept, so when reading 1 Corinthians 13, you could replace the word "love" with "God" for another perspective of love. Even taking the beginning of this verse and reading, "God never gives up," is such a powerful truth. No matter what is going on in your life, God never gives up on being available to you. Even when it feels like you're unworthy or too far gone, there's no such thing when it comes to outrunning the love of God. Wow, what a relief, right? Knowing how big and far God loves us makes us want to stay connected to, and secure in that love.

Understanding the incredible endurance of God's love will result in a heart yearning for obedience and community with God.

DAY 4

We love each other because he loved us first.

1 John 4:19 NLT

Where did you learn about love? Did your parents show you, or maybe a coach, or teacher at school? We can find examples of love in many places, but the best example of love is what God shows us. We can only love our families, friends, and the world around us because God not only showed us how, but God also laid out exactly what love should look like. If God didn't model how to love, we would be confused, and unable to show love at all. When was the last time you read about how God loves us, and how we can learn from that example?

Take some time today to do more research so you can better love those around you.

DAY 5

This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.

1 John 4:9 NLT

Written by Christian, age 18

From Cumming, Georgia

Personally, Christmas time is my favorite time of year, and I know I am not alone. In fact, this year I was at the beach during summer vacation, still months away from Christmas and somehow, I still found myself walking through a Christmas themed store. The store was covered with all things Christmas. There were countless Christmas trees covered in ornaments and lights, reindeer with bells, elves with presents, and probably a million tiny Santas.

I won't lie—I loved it. However, the most important part of Christmas was nowhere to be seen in the store. No matter how hard I looked I did not see anything related to Jesus. There was no baby Jesus in a manger, no wise men, no crosses, or a Mary or Joseph. In Jesus, we got the best gift God could ever give: God's Son, sent to show us the ultimate expression, or example of God's love, reminding us

we never have to be alone no matter how hard things get. In my opinion, that is the best gift any of us will ever get! So even though presents and decorations, and all the amazing food are great, I encourage you to take some time this Christmas and reflect on Jesus—the real reason for Christmas.

This week, take some time to write down some of the reasons you are thankful for Jesus and celebrate all that He has given you.