



love your neighbor

september – november
2021 devotional
guide for
all ages

MT. OLIVE FAMILY
MINISTRY

Hello! Whatever age or stage this devotional finds you at the prayer for this guide remains the same: May we step away from this instruction striving to love others the way Jesus loves us.

May these passages bring you, family members and even friends you may share these words with encouragement in knowing the way you LOVE impacts your neighbor.

So, let's get started!

Each month has two focus thoughts:

1. The first focus thought will always be a passage of scripture from the Bible with instruction given from Jesus.
2. The second focus thought will be a LOVE IN ACTION moment for you, your family or others you share this with to engage in together & then reflect upon.

Questions? Feedback? Mt. Olive Family Ministry & Church are here for you! Please reach out if there is any additional support we can offer to you or your family.

Steph Riebe, Director of Family Ministries
stephr@mtoliveumc.com
317.500.1450

SEPTEMBER 2021

****Read what Jesus says in Matthew 22:34-37:**

“Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: ‘Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?’

Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

Some background info:

-The Sadducees and Pharisees were considered what we would think of as “church going people”—they were seeking to follow God but they weren’t so sure about Jesus at times. When they asked Jesus the question it was almost as they were mocking him a bit.

-Jesus is really addressing their tone with his last sentence that all the laws that “church going” God seeking people had known before in following God should only be considered when living out the two commandments that Jesus shares here

1. Loving God

2. Loving Others/Our Neighbor!

****Focus on this passage ONCE a week throughout September. Come back to these questions as you reflect on this verse together.**

1. What do you think it looks like to love God with all your heart?

To love God with all of your soul?

To love God with all of your mind?

****This is a HUGE command to obey and live out. So important in fact that we can come to it daily to talk about and strive towards.****

2. What things do you do for yourself on a daily basis?

3. What things do you do for others on a daily basis?

LOVE IN ACTION: Strive to choose one thing you do for yourself on a regular basis and begin serving someone else in that same way.

Some ideas to get you thinking for different ages and stages:

Toddler-Preschool: Do you pick up your own toys? Can you pick up a toy that belongs to someone else?

Early Elementary: Do you ever tie your shoes? Open a door for yourself? Carry your plate or cup from the table to the sink? Pick one small act that you do for yourself to do for someone else...

Late Elementary/Middle School: How do you spend your free time? How do you spend your screen time? How could you help someone else during the time it takes to play one video game? The time it takes to watch one TV show....

High School: When you earn \$20 what do you spend it on usually? Who benefits? How could you impact someone else in a loving way with \$20 you earn this month...

College/Young Adult: Who checks in on you on a weekly basis? A parent? A co-worker? How could you check in on them? When was the last time you asked someone how they are really doing?

Adults: What's your most tedious home/yard task? Who is someone who would benefit from your help in that same way who you may never have thought of reaching out to before?

OCTOBER 2021

****Read what Jesus says in John 13:34b-35**

“As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

Some background info:

-The word disciple means to be a follower or a learner. So, Jesus is saying that others will know that we follow him and learn from him ONLY if we love one another. Jesus shows us love and then asks us to love.

****Focus on this passage ONCE a week throughout October
Come back to these questions as you reflect on this verse together.**

- 1. Why would Jesus speak and teach so much about love?**
- 2. Would you rather be known by your words or by your actions?**
- 3. Where do you see love at work the most in our world?**

LOVE IN ACTION: Loving one another means even when we do not agree with someone else. For October, each one of us is challenged to put this love in action to work in a moment when we find it the very hardest in a relationship/situation we would rather, ignore, avoid or place blame.

Some ideas to get you thinking for different ages and stages:

Toddler-Preschool: How can you choose love in a moment that you are upset?

Early Elementary: How can you choose love at school in a situation that feels personally unfair to you?

Late Elementary/Middle School: Who is a peer you avoid? Why do you avoid them? How can you show them love the very next time you interact with that person?

High School: What adult in your life is it hard for you to respect? What is the root of your lack of respect? How can you be apart of healing that relationship with love?

College/Young Adult: Who do you know personally that annoys you? Why? What is one loving act you can initiate there?

Adults: When have you found yourself in a situation or conversation turned towards gossip? How can that pattern find accountability through love?

NOVEMBER 2021

****Read what Jesus says in Luke 10:25-37**

"Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, "Look after him," he said, "and when I return I will reimburse you for any extra expenses you may have.

Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers? The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him," Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

****Focus on this passage ONCE a week throughout NOVEMBER Come back to these questions as you reflect on this verse together.**

- 1. Make a list of all the Samaritan did for the man who was attacked. Jesus instructs us to love our neighbors just as specifically as the Samaritan did. The Samaritan didn't just hand the hurting man some money, or help him for a few minutes—he went above and beyond to care for every need his neighbor may have had in this situation.**
- 2. When do we often go above and beyond for others?**
- 3. Why is it easier to love those we know well than those who do not?**
- 4. November is often a month where we take extra time to give thanks and gratitude. What opportunities would you like to give thanks for where you were loved in an above and beyond type of way.**

LOVE IN ACTION: Loving above and beyond to someone you haven't have an opportunity to show love to before.

Some ideas to get you thinking for different ages and stages:

Toddler-Preschool: Who is a neighbor that lives near your family that Mom/Dad or another safe adult would help you color a picture or send a card of encouragement too?

Early Elementary: How can you show someone in your home above and beyond love in a way that you haven't before? Taking on a chore for a sibling? Not being asked to help by an adult?

Late Elementary/Middle School: Who is a loner at your school? What would it look like for you to include them in something this month?

High School: How can you go above and beyond for your parents this month?

College/Young Adult: Who who is someone who makes your daily life possible? A parent? A co-worker? A college worker? What is one above and beyond type of act of service could you do for someone in this category?

Adults: It's often easy to love our friends when they are sick, helping an elderly loved one, etc. but have you ever reached out to a single parent in your child's class? Is there someone on your street you've never met? Who do you avoid on social media? Most likely you already know who God is nudging you to love in an above and beyond type of way.

