

BELLEVUE CHRISTIAN

WITH PURPOSE

Week Four: May 4th-May 8th

The devotional on the pages that follow can be used by individuals, families, and small group Bible studies. If you're doing this devotional alone, we encourage you to invite friends and family to join you—beautiful things happen when we invite others to grow with us in our relationships with Jesus!

This devotional has three sections:

1) **Reading:**

- Key text: Read this text at least two times. Bonus points if you read it out loud! Look for the main idea and look for a phrase that jumps out at you.
- Digging deeper: Use these verses to go deeper into themes from the key text. Use a highlighter to mark ideas that stand out or themes that repeat.

2) **Reflection:** Use these reflection questions to connect your reading directly to your life. Reflect on how God is speaking to you and equipping you through His Word!

3) **Prayer:** This guided prayer is broken up into four sections, using the acronym ACTS:

- Adoration—Tell God what that you love about Him.
- Confession—Confess your feelings, worries, troubles, and sin to God.
- Thanksgiving—Tell God what you're thankful for.
- Supplication—Talk to God about what you're needing or wanting.

Throughout your prayers, return to the specific words and phrases you read in the Bible verses. One of the many ways we can use God's Word is by turning into prayer!

Extra resources: Check out these videos from The Bible Project on [Ahavah](#) and [Agape](#) love!

Key Texts: 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 and 1 John 4:7-21

As you read below, highlight the verbs and phrases that describe what God does.

1 Corinthians 13

¹ If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ² If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³ If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

⁴ Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

⁸ Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. ⁹ For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰ but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. ¹¹ When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. ¹² For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

¹³ And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

1 John 4:7-21

⁷ Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹ 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. ¹⁰ This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹ Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹² No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

¹³ This is how we know that we live in him and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴ And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. ¹⁵ If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God. ¹⁶ And so we know and rely on the love God has for us.

God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. ¹⁷ This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. ¹⁸ There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

¹⁹ We love because he first loved us. ²⁰ Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. ²¹ And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.

Digging Deeper:

Reread the 1 Corinthians and 1 John passages and make lists that describe love:

Love is:	Love isn't:
<i>patient</i>	<i>envious</i>

1 John 4: 15 says **God is love**. Read the verses below and highlight what God says about Himself. How does that help you understand what it means that God is love?

Exodus 34:6-7

⁶ And God passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, ⁷ maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation."

Isaiah 41:13

For I am the Lord your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, "do not fear; I will help you."

Isaiah 43: 14-15

¹⁴ This is what the Lord says—
your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel:
¹⁵ I am the Lord, your Holy One,
Israel's Creator, your King."

Isaiah 57:15

¹⁵ For this is what the high and exalted One says—
he who lives forever, whose name is holy:
"I live in a high and holy place,
but also with the one who is contrite and lowly in spirit,
to revive the spirit of the lowly
and to revive the heart of the contrite."

Revelation 1:8

"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."

Reflection:

Which description of love surprises you most? Why? Which makes most sense to you? Why?

If God is love itself, what does that mean for your relationship with him?

How does understanding God's love for you help you understand how to love others?

1 John 4:16 says, "so we know and rely on the love God has for us." How can you *know* God's love? How can you *rely* on God's love?

Prayer:

Adoration: Praise God by telling Him who He is—the God who IS love! (Hint: use some of the descriptors from the passages!).

Confession: Confess the ways you doubt God's love for you. Confess how you fail in loving God and loving others.

Thanksgiving: Thank God that he loves you first, that his love is perfect, and that it never stops. Thank him for forgiving you when your love is small. Is there a specific part about God's love that you are thankful for? Tell him!

Supplication: Ask God to help you understand his love for you and others. Ask for his help to love more like he loves. Pray for the people in your life that you love the most and the people in your life that bother you most, that God would teach you to love them like he loves them.