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—Joy and Judy Cooper



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WALKING IN LOVE



"Our vocation is to belong to Jesus so completely that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. What you and I must do is nothing less than putting our love for Christ into practice. The important thing is not how much we accomplish, but how much love we put into our deeds every day. That is the measure of our love for God."

– Blessed Teresa of Calcutta (Mother Teresa)

DAY 1

Date _____

The Meaning of Love

Pray before you begin. Ask the Lord to show you what love truly is.

1. Look up the word "love" in the dictionary. How is love defined?
2. Discover what the Bible has to say about love. Read the following verses aloud. Read each one again slowly. Repeat it in your mind and think about what it says. After each verse, write down the words, phrases, or concepts that most stand out to you.
 - a. 1 John 3:16
 - b. 2 John 1:6
 - c. 1 Corinthians 13:4-8
3. Circle the word or phrase you wrote down in Question 2 that speaks most to you. Why did you choose it?

You will use this space for notes during group discussions.

4. Who in your life has been a role model of this kind of love? How and why?

“What is love?”

“To love is to will the
good of another.”

– *Catechism* 1766
(quoting St. Thomas Aquinas)

Optional Further Reading

a. Romans 13:10

b. 1 John 4:18

c. John 15:13

“Why is love important?”

3. Discover what the Bible has to say about love's importance. Read the following verses aloud. Read each one again slowly. Repeat it in your mind and think about what it says. After each verse, write down the words, phrases, or concepts that most stand out to you.

a. Matthew 22:37-39

b. Colossians 3:14

c. John 3:16

d. 1 Corinthians 13:2

Optional Further Reading

a. Mark 12:33

b. 1 John 4:20

c. 1 John 4:8



DAY 3

Date _____

Walking in Love

Pray before you begin. Ask the Lord to show you what it means to follow him by walking in love.

1. According to the Bible, what does it mean to walk in love?
Prayerfully read these verses several times each and meditate on them. Record what stands out to you about love in action.
 - a. Romans 12:9-13
 - b. Ephesians 5:2
 - c. Matthew 5:43-44
 - d. 1 John 3:18
2. Read the story of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-37. How did the Samaritan walk in love compared to the priest and the Levite? What kinds of things did he do to demonstrate love?

“What are some practical ways to walk in love?”

3. As you reflect on this story and the verses in question 1, think about how your love for God relates to your relationship with others. Is there something specific you can identify as needing change in your life?

4. What obstacles or feelings of resistance come up for you when you think about how you are being called to walk in love?

Optional Further Reading

- a. John 15:16
- b. 1 Peter 1:22
- c. Ephesians 4:15-16
- d. Romans 8:28



DAY 4

Date _____

Praying Scripture for a Change

Pray before you begin. Ask the Lord to show you in what areas he can help you to love as he does.

1. Look back through your journal for the week and select the Scripture that meant the most to you. Look it up in your Bible and decide whether to read it alone or in the context of the surrounding passage. For example, if you select John 15:13, you may want to start with verse 11 or perhaps continue on to verse 17. You can use as little as one word or phrase or as much as a paragraph.

Write the verse and its reference here:

2. Using the steps of *lectio divina* on page 11 or on your bookmark, meditate on the Scripture you chose until it turns into prayer and then simply rest in the Lord, trusting that he will help you to take action and make a change in your life.

Read (Lectio)

**“What did you
glean from your
lectio divina?”**

Meditate (*Meditatio*)

Taking the First Step

Small Group Discussion

This is the time to share the insights you gained from your work on *lectio divina* with the other members in the group. You will begin with a 5-10 minute exercise of *lectio divina*.

1. Meditate prayerfully in a group on 1 Corinthians 13:1-13. (Choose three people to look up the passage in the Bible and distribute the verses on page 12) Take no more than 10 minutes on this exercise.

2. Answer these questions in a group, giving as much detail as you can. (You may want to discuss the questions in pairs or small groups of three or four.)

- What did you learn? (Day 1)
- Why? (Day 2)
- What are some practical ways to live? (Day 3)
- What did you glean from your work on *lectio divina*?

3. If there is time, discuss the discussion questions.

- How did your definition of love change?
- Did you observe any new insights or experiences?
- What insights did you gain about how God loves us and how we should love others?

Continued on next page...



Pray (Oratio)**Contemplate (Contemplatio)****Resolve to Act (Operatio)**

MEETING DAY

Date _____

Taking the First Step

Small Group Discussion

This is the time to share the insights you received this past week and hear from the other members in the group. You will begin with a brief group exercise of lectio divina.

1. Meditate prayerfully as a group on **1 Corinthians 13:1-13**. (Choose three people to look up the passage and read it out loud as described on page 12.) Take no more than ten minutes on this exercise.
2. Answer these questions as a group, sharing insights gleaned from the verses you meditated on this week. (Turn back in your journal to recall what you discovered each day, and use the space provided to add new insights from the group discussion.)
 - What is love? (Day 1)
 - Why is love important? (Day 2)
 - What are some practical ways to walk in love? (Day 3)
 - What did you glean from your *lectio divina*? (Day 4)
3. If there is time, continue the discussion around any of these questions:
 - How did your definition of love and its importance change or expand?
 - Did you observe any real-life examples of someone walking in love?
 - What insights did you gain about how God's love touches your life or about how you show love to others?

Session Two Outline

DVD Presentation: "Walking in Love"

This video session will prepare you to take the first step in walking more consciously in love. Add your notes to the talk outline below.

I. Introduction

- a. Story of Vincent van Gogh and Paul Gauguin
- b. Universal desire to love and be loved perfectly

II. God's Love: *Agape*

- a. The essence of complete self-giving
- b. 1 John 4:8 – God is love
- c. CCC 221 – God's in himself is an eternal exchange of love
- d. Blessed John Paul II: God is not a solitude but a family
- e. *Gaudium et Spes*: Jesus is loved and he loves
- f. John 3:16 – God gave his only Son

III. How *Agape* Is Different

- a. *Agape* chooses the best for another
- b. Goodwill in action
- c. Romans 5:8 – Christ died for us while we were yet sinners

IV. The World Was Made for God's Glory

- a. Psalm 91:1

b. CCC 293

c. CCC 1

V. The Cross

a. God's love most clearly seen in the Cross

b. Example of love: Sister Teresa

VI. God Loves You Personally

a. You are loved by God just the way you are

b. Because he loves you, he wants to take you to the next step

c. You will never be satisfied without God's love

i. CCC 27

ii. St. John of the Cross

iii. Archbishop Fulton Sheen – "Don't search for the ocean of infinite love in the teacup of finite satisfactions."

VII. Love Is a Theological Virtue

a. Faith, hope, charity

b. Given at baptism

c. Nurtured by the sacraments, prayer, knowledge

d. CCC 1813 – Infused by God's love in our souls

e. Read CCC 1822 – 1826

VIII. You Are Capable of Loving

- a. John 13:35 – Love is the distinguishing mark of a Christian
- b. 1 John 4:16-21 – “Perfect love casts out fear” (vs. 18)

IX. Loving Like God

- a. Love is a choice
- b. Love is a habit – “Love is not a perennial, but an annual”
(Fr. Benedict Groeschel, C.F.R.)
- c. Love is can be commanded
 - i. John 13:34 – A new commandment
 - ii. Matthew 5:44 – Love your enemies

X. Your Plan for Loving

- a. Accept God’s love for you
- b. Love those who come across your path (Luke 10)
- c. See everyone as a child of God (St. Augustine quote,
Commentary on 1 John, 7, 9)

XI. Make It a Point to Know God Better

- a. Knowledge leads to love (St. Catherine of Siena quote from
Dialogues, 85)

XII. Use 1 Corinthians 13 as a Measure in Your Life

Quiet Time in the Lord's Presence

*This is an opportunity for you to sit and pray silently in Christ's presence, allowing him to speak to your heart about how you can walk in love in new ways. Respond by committing to a specific step you will take to bring about a needed change in your life. **Follow the guidelines on the next page.***

Remember, mental acknowledgement that change is needed is not change. Action – responding in word and deed – is essential for lasting change.

"Be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and put on the new man, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness."

– Ephesians 4:23-24

Walking Together

Remember to pray for the other members of your group during the coming week, knowing that they will be praying for you, too.

