

READ 1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-7

DAY 4

This verse is a great illustration of what love is . . . and what love isn't. When we put love into action, we show others that they're important and that they matter. We put others first instead of focusing on our own needs. We treat others the way we would hope to be treated.

Read the verses again. This time, substituting your name every time it says "love" or "it."

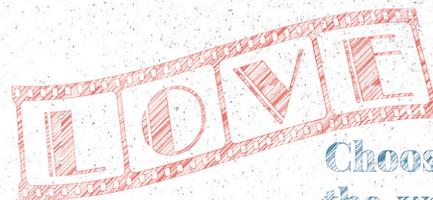
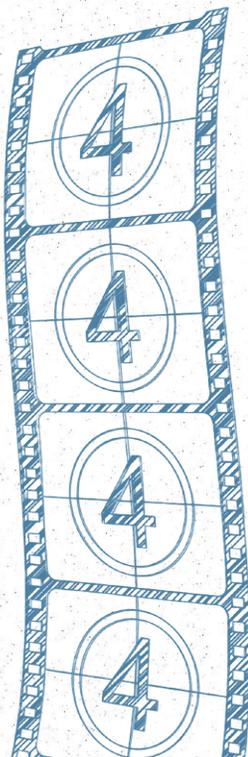
How did that feel? Did you feel like some of the sentences were true of you? Did you feel like there were some that you need to work on? Wouldn't it be great to say that the whole passage perfectly described you?

Now look back at the verses and write in the names of people you know when they come to mind. For example, if you know that your mom is always kind, you can write her name there.

THANK God for all of the loving people He has surrounded you with.

THINK ABOUT IT:

1. How is this description of love different from the way a lot of movies or songs talk about love?
2. As you look at the list, what part do you think is the hardest for you?
3. How do you think God can help you develop that quality in yourself?



Choosing to treat others
the way you want to be treated

READ LUKE 10:29

DAY 1

Jesus told the story of the Good Samaritan after a teacher of the law asked him: "Who is my neighbor?" The teacher knew what he was supposed to do, to love God and love his neighbor, but he asked Jesus that extra question to try to see if he really had to treat everyone that way.

Jesus' answer was to tell him a story. The story was about a guy who got beaten up and left on the side of the road. Two church leaders saw him, but they were too busy to care, and so they passed by on the other side of the road. The Samaritan was different. He felt sorry for the man and he took the time to bandage him up, take him to an inn to rest, and pay for his room!

Jesus knew the teacher was only trying to do just enough for God to be satisfied with him. But that wasn't the point at all. The point was that the teacher should actually *care* about the man who had a need—not try to make excuses for his own actions.

THINK about what motivates you to show love.

THINK ABOUT IT:

1. If you're honest, have you ever looked at showing love like it's an assignment—something you're supposed to do?
2. How does Jesus want us to look differently at showing love?
3. How does this story show us that each person really matters to God?

WEEK FOUR

4TH - 5TH

READ PSALM 139:17-18

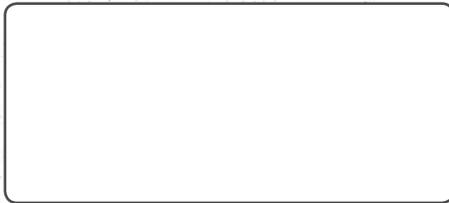
DAY 2

Have you ever laid in bed and couldn't go to sleep? Have you ever tried counting sheep? This verse is a pretty cool take on that idea. David is saying that God cares about you so much that if you counted all His thoughts about you as you fell asleep, you'd still be counting when you woke up.

You know what that means? You really matter to God. Everyone does. And not in a big, gigantic, God-created-you-from-a-distance kind of way. He actually LOVES you, personally. He knows everything about you and He's crazy about you!

The truth is people need to hear that they matter to God. And a great way to show them they matter is by treating them with love and compassion; treating them the way you'd want to be treated.

Make a custom license plate here. Find a cool way to abbreviate "You matter to God." (Don't forget to put your state at the top.)



TALK to your parents about different ways you can show people that they matter to you.

THINK ABOUT IT:

1. Can you think of a time when someone made you feel like you really mattered to them?
2. What stood out about the way they treated you?
3. Why is it so easy for people to forget that they really matter to God?

READ MATTHEW 5:43-44

DAY 3

Jesus really challenged our idea of love with this idea: that we should love our enemies. It's easy to say that, but really difficult to actually do it. Loving others isn't always easy, especially when God calls us to love people who are different from us.

So why should we love our enemies, anyway? I mean, they sure don't deserve it! But here's the thing, *none* of us deserve God's extravagant love. All of us mess up. All of us sin. But God loves us anyway. He gives us grace and cares for us even though we can't do anything to earn His love.

You see, everyone is worthy of our love. Everyone matters to God. Jesus came to show love to *all* of us. So in response, we can take our cue from His bold, courageous love and treat everyone around us with the love He's already shown to us.

Write down two or three people who are challenging for you. Now write "Show love to" and draw an arrow to their names. Now write one idea of a way you can show love to each of them.

ASK God to help you love your enemies

THINK ABOUT IT:

1. Think of a time that you messed up and had to ask God for forgiveness.
2. Think of a time you messed up with a friendship and had to say you were sorry.
3. How did you hope they would respond to you in that moment? Do you think you can extend that same kind of grace to others?

**LOVE OTHERS BECAUSE
THEY MATTER TO GOD.**

