

John 7

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind.’ This is the first and most important command... And the second command is like the first: ‘Love your neighbor as you love yourself.’ ... All the law and the writings of the prophets depend on these two commands.” (Matthew 22:37-40)

SPirit
EMPOwERED
Faith

Day 1

L-3. Experiencing God as He really is through deepened intimacy with Him.

I. Love the Lord Your God... How might this text lead me to better love God? “We love because He first loved us.” (1 Jn 4:19) We can only love with all our “heart, soul, mind, and strength” the REAL God.

A. As you read and reflect on the chapter, how might you describe the “REAL” God as He is seen as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

1. In verse _____ He is seen as _____

2. In verse _____ He is seen as _____

3. In verse _____ the love of Jesus is seen toward _____ as He

4. In verse _____ the love of Jesus is seen toward _____ as He

5. How might the above insights challenge some of your misconceptions of God? “Sadly, I sometimes mistakenly see God as _____.”

B. Since God is the same yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13:8): The REAL God described above wants to relate to you as you described Him above; pause to let Him love you.

1. Father, as you express yourself to me as the God who _____, my heart is moved with _____

2. Father, as you express yourself to me as the God who _____, my heart is moved with _____

C. Jesus is available to love you like we read of His love in this chapter. Pause to express your heart to Him as you see Him in this chapter.

1. Describe how Jesus has loved you in some of the same ways that you read of His love in this chapter: “I have experienced the love of Jesus as He has _____

2. Jesus, as you love me like you loved those in this chapter, my heart is touched with _____

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Day 2

W-1. Frequently being led by the Spirit into deeper love for the One who wrote the Word.

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Day 3

P-5. Ministering His life and love to our nearest ones at home and with family as well as faithful engagement in His Body, the Church.

II. Love Your Neighbor... How might this text lead me to better love others, both those who follow Jesus and those who don't know Him? “Love one another even as I have loved you.” (John 13:34)

Since we have freely received of His love, we are to freely give this same love to others; consider again how you see love portrayed in this chapter.

A. Who among your family or friends might you better love?

1. I could better love _____ especially by _____

B. Notice again how Jesus expressed love by accepting, forgiving or sacrificing? How might Jesus have taken initiative, expressed compassion or offered support? How did Jesus share truth and eternal hope?

1. Who in the traffic patterns of your life might benefit from receiving the blessing of Christ's love through you? (*who*) _____ could benefit from my sharing the love of Jesus by _____

2. Who in your life could benefit from sharing part of your life story of encountering truth and eternal hope? (*who*) _____ could benefit from sharing more about _____

3. Pause now to pray from this person and then yourself as you impart both your life and the gospel.

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Day 4

M-1. Imparting the gospel and one's very life in daily activities and relationships, vocation and community.

III. “As you love yourself” your significance, value and worth have been established by your creator through the gift of His Son. How might this text affirm your identity as His “beloved”?

“This is how God showed his love to us: He sent His only Son into the world to give us life through Him.” (1 John 4:9)

Celebrate how you have received His love and grace, His forgiveness and new life, His calling and kingdom purpose.

A. Re-read the text as His truth being shared just for you.

1. I'm grateful that I have experienced the blessing of verse _____ as I _____

B. Since He is the same yesterday, today, and forever meditate on you being “in” the story of this chapter; allow Him to love you as you read of His love in the chapter.

1. My heart is touched with gratitude that Jesus _____

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Day 5

L-4. Rejoicing regularly in my identity as “His Beloved.”

John 7

Experience Scripture

“If you want to test my teachings and discover where I received them, first be passionate to do God’s will, and then you will be able to discern if my teachings are from the heart of God or from my own opinions.” (John 7:17)

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L-2

Listening to and hearing God for direction and discernment.

Our commitment in faith to yield to God before we fully know is the secret to spiritual transformation. Like Jesus, we must say, “not as I will, but as you will” (Matthew 26:39). Are you committed to yield in this way? Is it your very “spiritual food” to do the Father’s will (John 4:34)? We invite you by faith to pray a prayer of yielding – to give expression to your heart’s commitment to yield to whatever God asks of you, even when you do not really understand what He is asking or what He is doing.

Consider the circumstances of your life right now. Think about your important relationships. Reflect upon critical situations and unanswered questions. What are you struggling with right now?

Compose your own prayer of commitment to yield, and then offer it to God. Use the structure below to assist you as needed.

Father, before I even hear Your voice concerning...

- *My calling as a husband/wife/parent or friend to... (For example: my calling as a parent to demonstrate the importance of personal purity regarding what I allow to come into my mind.)*
- *The decision regarding... (For example: the decision regarding how to best care for our aging parents.)*
- *How I should handle... (For example: how I should handle the conflict with my boss.)*
- *What I should trust You for relative to... (For example: what I should trust You for relative to my health problem and the treatment for it.)*

...I yield to You all that I am, and all that my future holds. By faith, I commit to live out what you reveal. Speak Lord, you servant listens.

After you have offered your prayer and spent some time listening for the Lord, share your prayer with your partner or small group. Pray for one another, asking God to answer your prayers and to empower each of you to live out your commitment to yield.

John 7

Encounter Jesus

“Believe in me, so that rivers of living water will burst out from within you, flowing from your innermost being.”

(John 7:38)



Listening to and hearing God for direction and discernment.

Quietly meditate on the invitation of Jesus. Come to Him. He has available for you the Holy Spirit's presence and power.

“Jesus was prophesying about the Holy Spirit that believers were being prepared to receive. But the Holy Spirit had not yet poured out upon them, because Jesus had not yet been unveiled in his full splendor.” (John 7:39)

It's the Holy Spirit who provides discernment and direction as we pause to yield to His fullness.

Respond to His promise of the Spirit flowing through you. Welcome the Holy Spirit's prompting and empowerment. Thank the Lord Jesus for not leaving you as an orphan, but coming to you through His Spirit. You are never alone as He guides, directs and empowers.

John 7

Engage Fellowship

“You don’t understand—he speaks amazing things like no one else has ever spoken.” (John 7:46)



Listening to and hearing God for direction and discernment.

The Lord...takes the upright into his confidence (Proverbs 3:32).

Consider a time in your life when you sensed God revealing something to you—when you felt that He “took you into His confidence.” It may have occurred as you encountered Scripture, as you were praying, or as you listened to the sharing of another. Then complete the following sentence, either on your own or using one of the sample beginnings listed below.

I remember having a very personal encounter with God when He...

- drew me to Himself by...
- gave specific direction concerning...
- provided caution/warning about...
- revealed Himself as...
- confronted me concerning...
- affirmed/encouraged me concerning...
- reassured me during...

(For example: “I remember having a very personal encounter with God when He encouraged me concerning my worth to Him. I felt like a failure, but I sensed the Lord saying to me, ‘I love you. Don’t give up, trust Me.’”)

“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds” (Hebrews 10:24).

