



5 DAY DEVOTIONAL

Sermon: Love One Another

SPEAKER: REV. CHRIS SMITH | 8/16/2026 | PAGE 1 OF 5

Day 1: Love Starts Here

Devotional: It is easy to think of love as something we have to work up on our own. We try harder, we grit our teeth, and we push through. But that approach always runs dry eventually. Genuine love does not start with us. It starts with God. First John 4:7-8 makes this plain. Love comes from God. He is not just loving. He is love itself. That means every real act of kindness, every moment of patience, every choice to forgive traces its roots back to Him. We are not the source. We are the channel. Think about the people in your life who are hardest to love. A coworker who grates on your nerves. A family member who has let you down. A neighbor who never seems to notice your kindness. Our natural supply runs out fast with people like that. But God's supply does not. When we are in a real, growing relationship with Jesus Christ, His love begins to fill us and then spill out toward others. You cannot give what you do not have. But when you have Him, you have more than enough to share. This week, instead of trying harder to love on your own, ask God to fill you first. Let Him be the source, and watch what He does through you.

Bible Verse: 'Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.' - 1 John 4:7-8

Reflection Question: In what area of your life are you trying to love others out of your own strength rather than drawing from God as your source?

Quote: The only way that I can give something away is if I've already got it. The only way I can give you \$100 is if I have \$100. And the same way with that love. That love comes from God. In order for us to have the capacity to love, it comes from God.

Prayer: Lord, remind me today that love begins with You. Fill me with Your love so that it naturally overflows into the lives of those around me. Amen.

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850-260-5335



3349 McFatter Avenue, Vernon, FL 32462



info@gracevernon.org



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Day 2: He Showed Us First

Devotional: Words are easy. Actions are what reveal what we truly believe. God did not just tell us He loved us and leave it at that. He proved it in the most costly way imaginable. Romans 5:8 says that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Not after we cleaned ourselves up. Not after we earned it. While we were still a mess, He moved toward us. That is the kind of love that changes everything. Jesus walked into a broken world, faced rejection, endured suffering, and absorbed the full weight of God's wrath for our sin. He did not have to. He chose to. And because He did, our sins are paid for. That is not a small thing. That is the greatest act of love in all of history. When that truth moves from something we know in our heads to something we feel in our hearts, it transforms us. A person who truly understands what they have been forgiven of cannot stay the same. That forgiveness becomes the fuel for how we treat others. You are deeply loved, not because of anything you have done, but because of who God is. Let that sink in today. Let it move from your head to your heart, and let it change the way you love the people around you.

Bible Verse: 'But God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.' - Romans 5:8

Reflection Question: How does truly understanding what Christ did for you personally change the way you feel about loving difficult people in your life?

Quote: Jesus took the wrath of God for our sins. He felt the wrath of God for our sins. And let me tell you something, that is good news.

Prayer: Jesus, thank You for not just speaking love but living it out for me. Help me to receive that love deeply today so it changes how I treat others. Amen.

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Day 3: Made New to Love New

Devotional: One of the most encouraging truths in all of Scripture is that you do not have to stay the way you are. God is in the business of transformation. When you come to Christ, something genuinely changes on the inside. Second Corinthians 5:17 tells us that if anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation. The old has gone. The new has come. That is not just poetic language. It is a real, spiritual reality. The same Jesus who turned a hot-headed disciple like John into the apostle of love can do the same kind of work in you. John once wanted to call fire down from heaven on people who rejected Jesus. By the end of his life, he could not stop writing about love. That change did not come from willpower. It came from years of walking closely with Jesus and being shaped by His presence. You may feel like love does not come naturally to you. Maybe your upbringing did not model it well. Maybe past wounds have made you guarded. That is okay. Bring that honestly to God. He is not surprised, and He is not finished with you. The new life He gives is not just about where you go when you die. It is about who you become while you are still here. And who He is making you into is someone capable of loving others in ways you never thought possible.

Bible Verse: 'Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, He is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.' - 2 Corinthians 5:17

Reflection Question: What is one area of your character where you have seen God slowly transforming you, and how has that change affected the way you love others?

Quote: A person void of love may have a head knowledge of God, but they lack that life changing heart knowledge of God. And that comes from a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Prayer: Father, thank You that You do not leave me the way You found me. Keep transforming me from the inside out so that my life reflects Your love more each day. Amen.

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Day 4: Love That Holds Things Together

Devotional: Relationships are hard. Families get complicated. Churches go through conflict. Friendships hit rough patches. And in almost every case, the thing that holds people together or tears them apart comes down to one thing: love. Bitterness and unforgiveness feel powerful in the moment. They feel like protection. But over time, they do the opposite of what we hope. They isolate us. They harden us. They dry up our souls from the inside out. First Corinthians 13 gives us a picture of love that is honest about how demanding it really is. Patient. Kind. Not easily angered. Keeping no record of wrongs. That list is not comfortable to read, because most of us know exactly where we fall short. But it is also a roadmap for what healthy relationships look like. Jesus set the standard from the cross when He said, "Forgive them, for they know not what they do." That is not a low bar. But He did not ask us to meet it alone. He placed His Spirit within us to make that kind of love possible. Choosing to love and forgive is not weakness. It is one of the most courageous and Spirit-filled things a person can do. And it is often the very thing that saves a marriage, restores a friendship, or brings peace back to a family.

Bible Verse: 'Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.' - 1 John 4:11

Reflection Question: Is there a relationship in your life where bitterness or unforgiveness has taken root, and what would it look like to take one small step toward love this week?

Quote: It will dry up your soul if we are consumed by that revenge, that bitterness. That bitterness will dry up your soul.

Prayer: Lord, give me the courage to choose love even when it is hard. Soften any bitterness in my heart and help me to forgive the way You have forgiven me. Amen.

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Day 5: Loved, So We Love

Devotional: We have spent this week tracing love back to its source. God is love. He demonstrated that love by sending His Son. He transforms us through relationship with Christ. And that love, when it takes root in us, holds our relationships together. Today we land on the simplest and most powerful truth of all: we love because He first loved us. This is not love out of obligation. It is not love because we are trying to earn something or prove something. It is love that flows from a heart that has been genuinely changed by the grace of God. When you truly understand that God knows everything about you and still loves you, still pursues you, still forgives you, it does something to you. It gives you the capacity to extend that same grace to others. If you are walking through something hard right now, a family crisis, a health scare, a prodigal child, a difficult season at work, you are not without hope. Jesus Christ is your peace, your anchor, and your source of joy even in the middle of it all. And as you receive His love in those hard places, let it overflow. Let it reach the people around you who are also hurting and searching. That is how the world sees God. Not through arguments or programs, but through people who love the way He loves. You are loved. Now go love someone else.

Bible Verse: 'We love because he first loved us.' - 1 John 4:19

Reflection Question: How does knowing that God loves you fully, even knowing everything about you, change the way you see yourself and the way you treat others?

Quote: We're not loving just out of a sense of duty or obligation, but out of appreciation and obedience. He has forgiven me. He's been patient with me, yet he knows all about me, but still he loves me. And that gives me the capacity to love another person.

Prayer: God, thank You for loving me first. Let that love be so real to me that it naturally pours out into every relationship I have. Make me a reflection of You. Amen.

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