

Loving With No Regrets
Lesson 02 of the series, "No Regrets"

A. Love is the wisest investment we can make.

"If I could speak all the languages of earth and of angels, but didn't love others, I would only be a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I had the gift of prophecy, and if I understood all of God's secret plans and possessed all knowledge, and if I had such faith that I could move mountains, but didn't love others, I would be nothing. If I gave everything I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it; but if I didn't love others, I would have gained nothing... Three things will last forever—faith, hope, and love—and the greatest of these is love. 1 Corinthians 13:1-3,13 (NLT)

Note: Loving others is the most powerful testimony/witness we have.

"I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples." John 13:34-35 (NLT)

B. Love is an act of the will.

"Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance. 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (NLT)

1. We love others because Christ first loved us.

"God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins. Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other... We love each other because he loved us first." 1 John 4:19 (NLT)

"And may the Lord make your love for one another and for all people grow and overflow, just as our love for you overflows." 1 Thessalonians 3:12 (NLT)

2. Love is both words and actions.

"...let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions." 1 John 3:18 (NLT)

"Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works." Hebrews 10:24 (NLT)

C. Seven resolutions that will help me love others and keep me from regret.

1. Resolved: This year I will make amends with people I offend.

"So if you are standing before the altar in the Temple, offering a sacrifice to God, and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, leave your sacrifice there beside the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God." Matthew 5:23-24 (NLT)

2. Resolved: This year I will forgive people who offend me.

"You must make allowance for each other's faults and forgive the person who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others." Colossians 3:13 (NLT)

3. Resolved: This year I will put the needs of others ahead of my own.

"For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love." Galatians 5:13 (NLT)

4. Resolved: This year I will thank people who help me.

Boaz went over and said to Ruth, "Listen, my daughter. Stay right here with us when you gather grain; don't go to any other fields. Stay right behind the young women working in my field. See which part of the field they are harvesting, and then follow them. I have warned the young men not to treat you roughly. And when you are thirsty, help yourself to the water they have drawn from the well." Ruth fell at his feet and thanked him warmly. "What have I done to deserve such kindness?" she asked. "I am only a foreigner." Ruth 2:8-10 (NLT)

5. Resolved: This year I will choose to believe the best about others.

"Love your neighbor as yourself." Romans 13:9 (NLT)

"Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you. This is the essence of all that is taught in the law and the prophets." Matthew 7:12 (NLT)

6. Resolved: This year I will show loving kindness to people who may never pay me back.

"Love your enemies! Do good to them. Lend to them without expecting to be repaid. Then your reward from heaven will be very great, and you will truly be acting as children of the Most High, for he is kind to those who are unthankful and wicked." Luke 6:35 (NLT)

"Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means caring for orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to let the world corrupt you." James 1:27 (NLT)

7. Resolved: This year I will take advantage of opportunities God gives me to express love & reconcile relationships.

"Teach us to number our days and recognize how few they are; help us to spend them as we should."

Psalm 90:12 (LB)

"And "don't sin by letting anger control you." Don't let the sun go down while you are still angry, for anger gives a foothold to the devil." Ephesians 4:26-27 (NLT)

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Connect Group Questions

1. Share one New Years resolution you intend to keep this year.
2. How often do you thank those around you for what they contribute to your life? Who would you thank today if you knew it was your last chance to do so?
3. Read Matthew 5:23-24 & Matthew 6:14-15. Who do you need to forgive? From whom do you need to ask forgiveness? If you are willing, share one situation in your life that needs reconciliation. Spend some time brainstorming over possible solutions and praying for each other.
4. Read Psalm 90:12. Who needs to be assured today that you love them? What keeps us from spending time and saying these words more often?
5. Read Romans 13:9 & Matthew 7:12. What does loving your neighbor as yourself look like? Discuss how the Golden Rule can be lived out effectively in your family, workplace, and neighborhood.
6. Why do many people insist that love is only a feeling or emotion? How does Paul in 1 Corinthians 13: 4-7 define love?
7. Discuss the following quotations:

"He who cannot forgive others destroys the bridge over which he himself must pass." George Herbert

"I know God will not give me anything I can't handle. I just wish that he didn't trust me so much." Mother Teresa

"I've long since retired, my son's moved away. I called him up just the other day. I said, 'I'd like to see you if you don't mind.' He said, 'I'd love to, Dad, if I can find the time. You see my new job's a hassle and the kids have the flu, but it's sure nice talking to you, Dad. It's been sure nice talking to you' And as I hung up the phone it occurred to me he'd grown up just like me. My boy was just like me." Harry Chapin

"What's love but a second hand emotion? What's love got to do, got to do with it? Who needs a heart when a heart can be broken?" Tina Turner

"Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples." Jesus in John 13:35