

Foreword by *New York Times* bestselling author Ann Voskamp

JODIE BERNDT

Praying ^{the} Scriptures for Your Life

31 Days *of* Abiding *in the* Presence,
Provision, *and* Power of God



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Provision, *and* Power of God

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ZONDERVAN BOOKS

Praying the Scriptures for Your Life

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ISBN 978-0-310-36163-3 (audio)

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Berndt, Jodie, author.

Title: *Praying the scriptures for your life* : 31 days of abiding in the presence, provision, and power of God / Jodie Berndt.

Description: Grand Rapids : Zondervan, 2021. | Includes bibliographical references. |

Summary: "The latest addition to the bestselling *Praying the Scriptures* series, *Praying the Scriptures for Your Life* gives readers practical help in finding a more intimate relationship with God, greater hope in uncertain times, and a more vibrant prayer life"—Provided by publisher.

Identifiers: LCCN 2020054676 (print) | LCCN 2020054677 (ebook) | ISBN 9780310361602 (trade paperback) | ISBN 9780310361619 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: Bible—Devotional literature.

Classification: LCC BV4832.3 .B474 2021 (print) | LCC BV4832.3 (ebook) | DDC 872/.0109—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2020054676>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2020054677>

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Cover design: Curt Diepenhorst

Cover photo: dmnapat / Shutterstock

Interior design: Kait Lamphere

Printed in the United States of America

21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 /LSC/ 15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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Foreword

“True, whole prayer is nothing but love,” wrote Saint Augustine.

It’s a tender question: is the only reason we don’t truly pray because we don’t truly love?

If we are not praying regularly, is it only because something else is regularly loved more than God?

I don’t know where I was when the conviction struck me so hard it stung for days. The only reason we fail to pray is because we’ve made an idol out of self. The only thing that prevents me from praying more—*is me*.

I look in the mirror, in my calendar, in my own heart and confess, I’ve had to painfully face it’s my own inflated sense of self-importance, the elevation of my plans, my work, my agenda, that keeps me from prayer-communion. That’s called idol worship. It’s a striking thing of deep conviction to realize: I don’t pray enough because I’m practicing idol worship.

But what else is it when I too often have something else that comes first, or one more thing to do, or anything else that’s more distracting, appealing, satisfying, instead of stopping my work to still my heart and speak words back to the very Word whence I came?

The truth I came to sit with is: my prayer life reflects my theology—or my idolatry.

Unless we make time to genuinely pray, our other priorities betray what we genuinely think of Jesus. The extent of prayer in one's life is a direct function of whether something else has been set up as more important than God. I began to whisper it gently to my soul: Do not work so hard for Christ that you make no time to pray to Christ. He is the lifeblood of all work, all joy, all hope, all being, all communion.

I began to slowly turn and learn: when I choose to be still in prayer is when I know that He's God . . . and I am not.

When I bow, idols topple.

Our life changed when we as a family began to embrace a daily rhythm of prayer, by gathering in a circle in our kitchen as the sun comes up, and bowing our heads in prayer first thing, before any of us do anything else. The house of our Lord is a house of prayer—and we realize that prayer is the only way we can keep ours standing. Each morning, we pray honestly, vulnerably. We pray through tears, we pray His Word, we pray each one of us around the circle, we pray first thing, we pray our hearts to the One who gave us a new heart. This is what we began to do: we returned to our first love.

We discovered: prayer is not what we do before we begin our work. Prayer is our life's work.

Prayer becomes what we live when we want to get hold of God, not just get hold of what we want. And real prayer isn't about changing God's mind, but about finding God's heart, and letting His heart change our minds.

Is this why God urges us to pray without ceasing? We need to pray *without* ceasing—because it's the only way to live *in* communion. Without prayer, how can our life and His will have anything in common? Without prayer—we have no fellowship, no relationship, no worship.

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But when we choose to enter a life of prayer, Christ enters into our thoughts, takes captive every thought because we are most captivated with Him, Him having first place in our hearts and hours and priorities—and the conversation never ends, and we have our heart's real desire—communion with Christ.

“I know of no better thermometer to your spiritual temperature than this, the measure of the intensity of your prayer,” wrote Charles Spurgeon.

And the relief is? None of us pray alone.

Though you think no one is praying with you, the Ultimate One is praying for you.

The One who breathes stars breathes prayers for you, the One whose words spoke the world into being uses priceless words over your being, the One who made time lives beyond time, controls all of time, uses all of His time to pray for you, because you are priceless to Him.

Jesus is praying right now that the Spirit comforts you, strengthens you, anoints you with fresh oil of brave joy. Jesus is seeing us through, carrying us through, praying us through. And when we're struggling to pray, it's Jesus Himself who prays for all we're struggling with. There are arms that won't let you go, there are plans that won't abandon you, there are prayers that won't fail you.

Jesus won't get off His knees until you are in His arms.

Nothing makes you more fiercely brave than knowing Jesus is fiercely praying for you.

Hard times don't need to understand what God is doing—like they need to know that God's standing with us, that He's kneeling in prayer for us at all times.

The Word-formed, scriptural prayers of Jodie Berndt have led me into our Abba Father's heart on some of my very hardest

days. When my spirit didn't know how to find words, the pages of Jodie's prayer books find the Word itself, giving His own words to us, that we may pray them back to the Word Himself. Jodie has become a prayer companion for me, the gripping, Word-saturated pages of her prayer books reaching over and grabbing hold of my hand and holding me like a lifeline, tied to the heart of God. Books from Jodie's *Praying the Scriptures* series have become the gifts I give for all occasions—because there is no greater gift than praying on all occasions, without ceasing. And there is nothing we need more than to learn how to become a prayer warrior—instead of a panicked worrier. Worry is just the facade of taking action—when prayer really is.

When I think of how prayer is always our most real work, our most meaningful act, I call to mind again the story of Abba Paul, that desert monk who wove baskets and prayers. And while other monks lived close enough to cities to sell their handiwork in the markets, Abba Paul lived such a distance that the cost of transportation would exceed any profits from selling the baskets. Nonetheless, each day he collected palm fronds and worked as faithfully as if basketmaking was his primary means of support. And come the end of the year, when his cave overflowed with long months of toil, he took a torch to the work of his hands and the flames devoured and rose higher and crackled long into the night. Then, come morning, the heat died away, satiated. And Abba Paul stood in the long quiet and the wind blew away the ashes of all his work.

It is not the products of our days that will matter in the end, but the prayers of our days. *Prayer is not what we do before we work, nor is prayer what we do instead of our work. Prayer is our life's work.*

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Because by and large the work of our hands, the to-do lists, the plotting across planners—while all needful acts of service, these acts will become ash in wind. “On the judgment day, fire will reveal what kind of work each builder has done. The fire will show if a person’s work has any value. If the work survives, that builder will receive a reward. But if the work is burned up, the builder will suffer great loss. The builder will be saved, but like someone barely escaping through a wall of flames” (1 Corinthians 3:13–15 NLT).

What survives fire? Our places of work won’t. Neither will the actual work of our hands. Abba Paul’s baskets didn’t. But what was woven into the baskets did—the prayers. *Ora et labora*—pray and work—but what is everything? Weave prayers *through* all the work.

The prayers we weave into the matching of socks, the stirring of oatmeal, the washing of floors, the coming and going and all the moments of our work, these survive fire.

Turn these pages, and return to your first love—for prayer is nothing but love for Love Himself.

We were loved to life by the Word, by Him kneeling close and kissing us to life with His warm breath, and when our words return to Him in prayer, we are returning home. Prayer is our coming home.

We become whole—when our breath becomes prayer.

Ann Voskamp, from the farm, early 2021,
author of the *New York Times* bestsellers
The Broken Way and *One Thousand Gifts*

— Part 1 —

An Invitation to Abide



What Is Abiding?

“Remain in me, as I also remain in you.”

John 15:4

I remember, back when I was a young girl, coming into the kitchen and seeing my mom’s spiral notebook—the one in which she made a fresh to-do list each morning. “Make List” was always the first thing she wrote, followed by “Read Bible,” and then on the third line, “Pray.”

“Why do you do that?” I asked one day. “I mean, you do these things every day. Do you really need to jot yourself a reminder? And can’t you combine reading your Bible and praying into one ‘Time with God’ or whatever?”

“It’s not that I need a reminder,” Mom said with a laugh. “It’s just that I want to feel like I’ve accomplished something—and if I get my list made, then I have. And when I spend time with the Lord, if I count that as two things instead of just one, I get to check more stuff off!”

Today, as a grown woman who makes her own lists (and who is not above noting something she has already done, just for the pleasure of checking it off), I appreciate my mother’s perspective. And I bet you do too. Because we can’t help ourselves: We *want*

to be people of impact. We *like* being productive. We are created, God says, to do good works—works he prepared in advance.¹ We want to get to it!

Which is partly why, when I read John’s gospel and got to chapter 15, I didn’t really think it was intended for me.

I mean, I know that *all* of God’s Word was written for *all* of his people, but this particular passage—one where Jesus tells us to “remain” in him eleven times in only ten verses—just seemed so *passive*. Like it had been written for people who had time to be still—people with fewer children and less laundry than me. People who were content to sit and wait for their name to be called, like you do at the DMV.

DMV people, I thought, *would appreciate John 15*.

The fact that I had memorized huge chunks of this chapter (well, a few verses anyway) in the King James Version for my grandmother, who wanted Bible verse recitals as her Christmas gift every year, didn’t help. King James did not say *remain*. He said *abide*. And even *abideth*.

I didn’t even know what that meant.

Nor did my much younger brother. We’d grown up going to a Christian family camp every summer, one where we learned to sing a song called “Abiding in the Vine.” Having no idea what that was, four-year-old David sang what he thought were the lyrics: *Fighting in the barn! We’re fighting in the barn!*

And honestly? To me, David’s version made much more sense. I mean, anybody could picture what a barn fight looked like, but *abiding*? In a *vine*? Not so much.

Still though. Eleven mentions. In just ten verses. Clearly Jesus thought that abiding—or remaining or whatever it was—was something important.

What It Means to Abide

I needed help. I needed wisdom from a varsity Christian. I turned to Warren Wiersbe, a Bible brainiac with a knack for putting the grass where the sheep can reach it. I opened his *Be Transformed* and read this: “To ‘abide’ . . . means to keep in fellowship with Christ so that His life can work in us and through us to produce fruit.”²

I liked that. The idea that God can work *in* us and *through* us to do stuff excites me. It makes John 15 sound dynamic. Active. Productive—in the best kind of way.

I wanted more.

I picked up Andrew Murray’s *Abide in Christ*, a book that was originally published in the late 1800s. The language has supposedly been updated for the “modern reader,” but buckle up, because it’s no *People* magazine:

If, in our orthodox Churches, the abiding in Christ, the living union with Him, the experience of His daily and hourly presence and keeping, were preached with the same distinctness and urgency as His atonement and pardon through His blood, I am confident that many would be found to accept with gladness the invitation to such a life, and that its influence would be manifest in their experience of the purity and the power, the love and the joy, the fruit-bearing, and all the blessedness which the Saviour connected with the abiding in Him.³

I read that—that one single sentence—and I felt like Murray was getting at something really profound. But I wasn’t exactly sure what. So I read it again.

And again.

And then, the third time through, it hit me. Murray's point, in a nutshell, was this: If Christians got as excited about staying *connected* to Christ as we did about *coming* to him in the first place, we'd experience more power. We'd feel more joy. We'd become people of impact. The deepest cry of our souls—for an encounter with Jesus that will sustain us even when our hearts fail and our prayers feel empty and flat—would be satisfied.

I could feel my toes starting to tingle. John 15—and the whole idea of abiding—was not as dull as I had thought. I went back to my bookshelf and dug out R. A. Torrey. He wrote *How to Pray* in 1900.

(And if you think you are sensing a theme—as in, a lot of input from dead authors—you are right. My library is full of old stuff. I figure that if somebody's work has lasted for fifty, a hundred, or even more years, it must be good. Not a passing fad. Not like platform sneakers, for instance. Or kale.)

And sure enough, Torrey delivered:

To abide in Christ . . . is to renounce all life independent of Christ, and constantly to look to Him for the inflow of His life into us, and the outworking of His life through us. When we do this, and in so far as we do this, our prayers will obtain that which we seek from God.⁴

Our prayers will obtain that which we seek from God. Oh my goodness. Could there be a more captivating invitation than that which leads to tangible answers to prayer? Taken together with Wiersbe's promise of a fruit-bearing life and Murray's assurance that abiding opens the door to things like power and joy,

What Is Abiding?

Torrey's idea—that connection to Christ is what facilitates a powerful prayer life—was enough to push me over the edge. I was ready to abide.

It's Not Up to Us

But . . . how? I knew what it looked like to *come* to Christ in the first place—to acknowledge my sin, to receive mercy and grace, to enter into a love relationship with the Lord—but what did it look like to *stay*? What if I got distracted? What if I wound up like my dog Minnie?

Minnie is a white Labrador puppy. She comes when she's called, and she will gladly sit still for a treat. But then, once she's inhaled whatever bone-shaped snack you give her, her attention is prone to wander. She loves us, to be sure, but throw a squirrel or a ball in the mix and she's gone.

Could that happen to me? When I come to God—when I taste and see that he is good—how can I be sure I won't go running after some squirrel? How can I know I will stay? Is abiding a willpower thing?

I went back and reread all the biblical scholars and—to a person—here's what they said:

It's not up to us.

Sure, we can choose whether or not we want to lean into God, and whether or not we'll surrender to him. But when daily life presses in—when we have to stop being “holy” and attend to the toddler who's sick, the coworker who misunderstood our email, the spouse who can't find the butter—that doesn't sever our connection to Christ. God's grace does not stop working once we get saved.

Paul talks about this very thing in his letter to the Philippians: “He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion,” he writes.

“God is working in you,” he continues, “giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.”

And then, lest there be any doubt that God is the one who always makes the first move, Paul adds this: “I’m not saying that I have this all together, that I have it made. But I am well on my way, reaching out for Christ, who has so wondrously reached out for me.”⁵

When we reach out for Christ, we discover that he has already reached out to us. The love that saves us is the same love that keeps us attached. We don’t have to struggle or strive for connection; rest is a gift, and abiding is what equips our soul to receive it, even when our minds or our bodies are occupied elsewhere. “Come to me,” Jesus says to the weary and burdened, “and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”⁶

The Productivity and the Peace

I can hear what you’re thinking. You’re asking yourself the question that every parent has heard hundreds (thousands?) of times: *Wait, what?*

I know. I thought the same thing. How can Christ’s invitation to abide—to make us people of impact, to give us power and joy, to transform how we pray—*simultaneously* be an invitation to rest? Wait! What?

All I can say is, look at Moses.

When God told Moses to leave the wilderness and take the

What Is Abiding?

Israelites to the Promised Land—a job that would undoubtedly involve a lot of herding and hauling and walking and work—he gave him a twofold promise: “My Presence will go with you,” God said, “and I will give you rest.”⁷

Moses could work hard—*really* hard—but it wouldn’t be a frenzied or driven-to-succeed sort of work. Instead, moving all of those people and animals and possessions could be done while his soul stayed at rest. Why? Because God was with him.

And it’s the same thing for us.

When we choose to surrender to Jesus—putting down roots and living not so much in a *place* as in a *person*, making “the Most High your dwelling,” as the psalmist says⁸—the Holy Spirit moves into our lives. His presence goes with us. He turns our deepest thoughts toward God so that, whether we’re sitting in church, crafting a sales presentation, or loading groceries into the back of the car, our hearts and minds can enjoy perfect peace. The two things—the productivity and the peace—can happen at once.

My mother—the to-do list lady—understands this dynamic. When I told her I was trying to understand what abiding looks like in everyday life, she told me this story:

One Thanksgiving Day, before all the family arrived, I was stirring the gravy, mashing the potatoes, and cooking all the vegetables. I was whirling around between all the pots, trying not to let anything burn.

I looked out the door, and I saw my husband just sitting in a chair, reading his Bible. “Lord!” I said. “Look at me. I used to be a Mary. Now look at me. I’ve turned into a Martha! All I really want to do is to be with *you*, Lord!”

Then, she says, she heard the Lord speak in his gentle whisper: “Where do you think you are right now?”

Right there by the stove, potato masher in hand, Mom had her answer: God knew her desire was to abide in him—and there he was, in her kitchen, abiding in her.

Abiding Transforms Our Prayer Life

Abiding, then, boils down to a willingness to surrender. It’s taking our everyday, ordinary, potato-mashing lives and placing them before God as an offering—not trying to live up to any sort of impossible standard, but simply trusting the Holy Spirit to change us, renew us, and keep us connected. “Embracing what God does for you,” Paul writes, “is the best thing you can do for him.”⁹

All of which has a transformational effect on the way we pray.

At its most basic level, prayer signals relationship; it’s the vehicle God invented to allow us to communicate with him. And when we take God up on his invitation—when we say yes to dwelling in Christ and to letting him dwell in us—our prayer life changes. No longer do we cultivate our own feelings and desires; rather, it is Christ who forms his thoughts, emotions, and purposes in us—and the more we allow this life-giving flow of his life into ours, the more powerful and effective our prayers become.

Scripture reinforces God’s desire for connection. God could, of course, do stuff on his own (heal this person here, make it rain there), and sometimes it seems like he does. Far more often, though, we see him *waiting* on people, *engaging* with people, getting to *know* people—and then meeting their needs—through their prayers.¹⁰

What Is Abiding?

(And if you only look up one endnote in this chapter, make it that one. Connecting with people—letting us know he sees us and knows us—is so important to God.)

In John 15:7, tucked into the very center of the call to abide, Jesus gives us one of the most jaw-dropping promises in all of Scripture. “If you remain in me,” he says, “and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.” We’ll dig into this if-then dynamic in the next chapter; for now, though, consider the fact that, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, we can begin to experience a deeper level of desire, one where our raw and unformed thoughts begin to reflect purposes that God wants to accomplish—even if we’re not consciously aware that we are praying!

Abiding in Christ sharpens our spiritual senses, equipping us to pray “without ceasing.”¹¹ In her book *Live a Praying Life*, Jennifer Kennedy Dean maintains that prayer is not something we start and then stop. It is a continual flow:

Your mind is an amazing creation. It functions efficiently on many levels at once . . . At one time you may be driving a car, remembering directions, carrying on a conversation, retaining a grocery list in your memory, observing the time, and on and on and on. And there are mental processes going on that you are not even aware of. Consider this: At one of those levels, prayer is always going on. This is true because the Spirit of Christ lives in you and He is always praying.

Sometimes, prayer is at the most conscious and aware level of thought. Other times it is down a level or two . . . The sweet aroma of prayer is always rising from my innermost being (and yours) before the throne.¹²

Jennifer became a dear friend of mine before her death in 2019. Ever ready to apply her science-oriented brain to biblical concepts, she considered prayer to be “proof” of how much God loves us. Why else, she wondered, would he choose to work *with* us and *through* us instead of *around* us?

I remember Jennifer telling me that in Psalm 37:4 (“Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart”), the word *delight* comes from the Hebrew word *anog*, which means “soft” and “moldable.” When God has your heart, she said, he molds it and shapes it, giving us desires that we may not even be fully aware of.

“And then,” she said with a smile, “God says, ‘Yes.’”

— Part 2 —

31 Days of Prayer



Loving People (Even When It's Hard)

"This is my command: Love each other."

John 15:17

"Which command is the most important?"

That's what one of the Pharisees—a legal expert—wanted to know. And when Jesus answered the question, he boiled the commandments (all 613 of them!) down to just two: love God, and love others.¹ And lest there be any confusion about point number two, Jesus underscored the importance of loving one another in some of his very last words: "This is my command: Love each other."²

"Love one another" is one of those Bible verses that pretty much everyone can quote, even if we don't know the exact reference. It's a theme we can all get behind. Love doesn't cause divisions in churches or heated discussions at dinner. And if you see a "Love One Another" sign posted on Pinterest or Instagram, you hit the "Like" button.

We all *like* it.

And we *understand* it, from God's perspective. We're his children, after all, and if we have kids of our own, we feel the same way. We want them to love one another. To be patient. To be

willing to forgive. To put each other's interests and needs ahead of their own (even if it's something as simple as not interrupting when someone is speaking, or giving a sibling the last piece of cake). We want our family relationships to be colored by love.

The "love one another" command is repeated in one way or another throughout the Bible—by some counts, nearly a hundred times—and at first blush, it doesn't seem all that hard to obey. Love your neighbor? Easy! We live on a great street, and we're surrounded by wonderful people.

But when your "neighbor" is the fellow who cuts down all the trees between your house and theirs, or the relative who shows up at Thanksgiving and keeps wondering if you've gained weight, or the coworker who seems to go out of her way to make your life hard (or, even worse, the kid at school who makes your child miserable), love can be harder to generate. And when you turn the page in your Bible and come to Luke 6:27—"Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you"—some of us may be tempted to balk.

I have.

And as I thought about Jesus' words in John 15—and in particular his choice of the phrase "my command" instead of something softer, like "my strongest advice"—I couldn't help but wonder: *Can love be commanded? And if so, can we really be expected to obey, particularly in light of how Jesus defined love in terms of laying down one's life for one's friends?*³ Do we need to be willing to go *there* for people? Maybe not literally giving up our lives, but being willing to risk our privileged position, our reputation, or our right to be "right" in order to demonstrate love? Can *that* kind of love be commanded?

I say yes.

I say yes—with confidence—for two primary reasons. First,

Jesus *did* command it; clearly, love can be commanded. And second, as we saw in day three, God never gives us a command he doesn't also give us the power to fulfill.

So the question isn't so much *whether* we can love each other as it is *how*.

I'm sure there are countless ways we can put Christ's words into action—countless strategies we can tap into to equip us to love others well—but for now, I'll give you just three.

1. *Love out of God's riches, not your poverty.* You may have a zero balance—or even a negative balance—in your love bank. But consider where love comes from. “We love,” the Bible says, “because he first loved us.”⁴ When we allow an awareness of God's love for us to flood our souls, we can grasp (as Paul prayed) how “wide and long and high and deep” Christ's love is—with the result that we are “filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.”⁵ Our love banks get full. We don't have to manufacture feelings of love for other people; we can let God's love fill us up and flow out from us.

2. *Pray for the person you are trying to love.* When I say pray, I'm not talking about praying the way the country song does that talks about praying for somebody's brakes to go out when they're going down a hill or for a pot to fall off a windowsill (and conk them on the head).⁶ I'm talking about praying the way Jesus tells us to when he says, “Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.”⁷

When you pray for someone who hurts or offends you, it gets harder and harder to hate them. We can't help it; when we commit to bringing someone before the Lord—asking God to bless them, protect them, and pour good things into their lives—we begin to have a vested interest in their well-being. A warmth

starts to soften our hearts. It may not be full-on love, at least not at first, but it will grow.

3. *Finally, remember the why.* In the months and years of Jesus' public ministry, people could tell who his disciples were because they followed him from place to place. As the day of the crucifixion drew near, Jesus changed that, telling them his *new* command was that they love one another. "By this," he said, "everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."⁸

That's the why. Jesus wants us to love one another so people will know that our trust is in God—and that our faith is legit. People aren't going to look at how many Bible verses we can quote, how much money we give, or even how often we show up in church. People are going to evaluate us—and potentially decide whether or not they also want to follow Jesus—based on the way we treat one another.

Let's ask God to help us obey his command. Let's ask him to equip us to love one another.

Read _____

➤ God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)

➤ "But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:44-45)

➤ We ought always to thank God for you, brothers and sisters, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love all of you have for one another is increasing. (2 Thessalonians 1:3)

Reflect

➤ Is there someone who is particularly hard for you to love? Maybe you wouldn't classify them as an "enemy," but the idea of loving them feels difficult, if not impossible. If so, ask God to help. Start by meditating on God's extravagant love for you, knowing the reason we can give love is that God loved us first.

➤ Next, ask the Holy Spirit to show you different ways you can love and pray for this particular person, as well as for others—your spouse, your child, your coworker, your best friend, your neighbor who cut down all the trees. Consider asking someone else—a trusted friend or prayer partner—to hold you accountable.

➤ Finally, allow God to love others through you, as you remain in his love. Abiding is what makes obedience possible; it's what equips us to do what we cannot do on our own. The more we stay connected to Christ, the stronger our faith will grow and the more our love for one another will continue to increase.

Respond

Heavenly Father . . .

➤ *Equip me to obey your new command to love one another. Show me how to love others, especially _____, the way you have loved me. (John 13:34)*

➤ *May my love be more than just words and speech; let me demonstrate true love by my actions. (1 John 3:18)*

➤ *I want to do everything in love. (1 Corinthians 16:14)*

Loving People (Even When It's Hard)

- *Give me the desire and the ability to love my enemies, do good to those who hate me, bless those who curse me, and pray for those who mistreat me. (Luke 6:27-28)*
- *Make me completely humble and gentle. Help me be patient, bearing with others, including _____, in love. (Ephesians 4:2)*
- *Remind me to love deeply, knowing that love covers over a multitude of sins. (1 Peter 4:8)*
- *Make my love increase and overflow for others. Strengthen my heart so I will be blameless and holy in your presence. (1 Thessalonians 3:12-13)*
- *As I love others, especially _____, may I do so out of the lavishness of your love for me. (1 John 3:1)*
- *Equip me to love in such a way that others will know I am your disciple, and that they will want to follow you too. (John 13:35)*
- *Grow my faith and increase my love for others, including _____. (2 Thessalonians 1:3)*
- *Thank you that I can love because you loved me first. (1 John 4:19)*