

THE
Greatest...

Love God. Love others.



THE *Greatest...*

BIBLE STUDY LESSONS
FOR C.O.R.E. GROUP
DISCIPLESHIP



Staying in Love

- What do you think is the secret to a lasting relationship? Why?
- Share your most memorable time with someone you love (friend, spouse, parents, children, etc.). What has made it memorable?

READ THE BIBLE

⁴ “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ⁵ You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. ⁶ And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. ⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. ⁸ You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹ You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

DEUTERONOMY 6:4-9 ESV (See also Revelation 2:1-4 ESV)

This is the Shema, an ancient Jewish prayer derived from some passages of the Torah (Deut. 6:4-5; 11:13-21, Num. 15:37-41), which is both a pledge of allegiance and praise and is still recited by Jewish people today. Shema means "hear" or "listen" in Hebrew. The salvo, "Hear, O Israel," or "Shema," is a call to hear, listen, understand, and respond to the words of this prayer. This prayer highlights both listening to and loving God with all our heart, soul, and strength. This means that we show our love for God through our obedience and faithfulness to Him. God knows that humanity tends their love for Him to rise and fall. That is why Jesus, in the Gospels (Matthew 22:36-40; Mark 12:30-31), affirmed the Shema as the greatest commandment—to remind us of its importance in our relationship with God.

Notes

**As God's people, how can we steadily love God?
Here are three ways.**

1. We keep His commands wholeheartedly.

⁵ You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. ⁶ And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.

DEUTERONOMY 6:5-6 ESV

The Israelites failed to love God with all their hearts throughout their journey in the wilderness. They doubted Him, turned to other gods, and did all sorts of wickedness. However, God saw the Israelites through in whatever experience they had on their way to the promised land. In turn, God wanted them to love Him with all their heart, soul, mind and strength. Moreover, God longed for His people to follow Him faithfully because their obedience would show their love for Him.

Why is it difficult to obey God's commands at times? How can you grow in your obedience to Him?

2. We teach the next generation diligently.

You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.

DEUTERONOMY 6:7 ESV

God knew that the Israelites would do the same things repeatedly: disobey Him and neglect to teach God's commands to their children. For instance, most of the post-Joshua generation didn't know God anymore. The few who did had recounted the story of the Exodus and taught their children how God saved them from slavery, kept His promises to their forefathers, and gave them the promised land.

To whom are you passing on God's truth today? Are you making disciples as you are being discipled?

3. We nurture our relationship with God deliberately.

⁸ You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹ You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

DEUTERONOMY 6:8-9 ESV

Like little children, the Israelites received instructions from Moses on how to keep God's commands. They needed to recite God's laws daily and put symbolic figures and written words on their hands, doorposts and gates as practical reminders to obey God's Words.

How can you nurture your relationship with God? What will you do to devote time for prayer, Word and worship daily?

LET'S PRAY

- Pray for a deeper intimacy with the Lord through His Word and prayer.
- Ask God to lead you to a person who needs to be assured of His love this week.

LET'S APPLY

- Reflect on your relationship with God and others. What change/s do you need to make to improve it?
- This week, try to reach out to someone you know who needs to feel the love of God.

Spreading His Love

- Why do you think some people have a hard time expressing their love to others?
- How have you felt when you expressed your love to someone? How did the person respond?

LEARN READ

⁸ *Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.* ⁹ *For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”* ¹⁰ *Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.*

ROMANS 13:8-10 ESV (See also 1 John 4:7-12)

Jesus, in the Gospels, (Mat. 22:36-40; Mark 12:30-31), affirmed the Shema as the greatest commandment and introduced a subsequent command to love others. Through the cross of Christ, God has ultimately revealed His love for all people. Encountering the cross transforms us and enables us to love God and walk in His love. Receiving and responding to God's love cause us to also love people around us.

Since we have received God's love, we in turn should spread it to others. This can only happen if we love God and remain in Him first. Consequently, this love overflows into loving others, such as sharing the good news with them.

Notes

STUDY & LEARN

Do you find it difficult to love your neighbor at times? Why or why not?

Why should we spread God's love to our neighbors? Here are three reasons.

1. To love others is a duty of a follower of Christ.

Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.

ROMANS 13:8 ESV

In this passage, Paul discourages us from owing each other anything like money but as followers of Christ, we have a debt to love our neighbors (fellow believers and others). The specific commands in verse 9 about doing no wrong nor hurting others mean we should choose to love them instead.

2. To love others is a mark of being a child of God.

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.

1 JOHN 4:7 ESV

The ability to act lovingly towards others is a result of our loving relationship with our Heavenly Father. We cannot genuinely love others without first experiencing His love. God has given His only Son to die and rise again for the forgiveness of our sins.

How have you experienced God's love through faith in Jesus Christ?

3. To love others is a demonstration of God's amazing love to us.

⁹ *In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him.* ¹⁰ *In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

1 JOHN 4:9-10 ESV

Since God has first loved us by giving His only Son, we can also love others because His love now lives in us.

In what way/s can we extend God's love to others?

LET'S PRAY

- Pray for God to teach you, by His grace, to love others even those who persecute you (Luke 6:27-28).
- Ask God to lead you to a person with whom you can share the gospel this week.

LET'S APPLY

- Reflect on your love for God and others. How can you grow more in this love?
- This week, ask God for a person who needs to experience His love through you.

REFERENCES

<https://bibleproject.com/articles/what-is-the-shema/>

