

WHAT'S NEXT

RENEW OUR LOVE

Matthew 22:36-39 NIV: “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

LIFE GROUP / PERSONAL STUDY:

We have all been under a great deal of pressure as we have experienced so many unprecedented situations in 2020. So we may all be wondering, “What’s Next?” Where do we go from here? What should we do and what do we need to do to be prepared? Scripture clearly reveals that the world has always been filled with chaos and tension and we aren’t in control of hardly anything. We can however be thankful that God is Sovereign and He is in control of everything! In this new series, we’re going to learn what the Bible tells us to do so that we can live effectively even in the midst of these troubled times.

Read John 15:18-19:

1A) What command did Jesus give His disciples (and us) in this passage and why?

1B) Explain what is meant by “the world.”

1C) According to John 3:16, how does God feel about the world?

Read 1 John 2:15-17:

2A) What additional commands, reasons, and specific examples did John include in this passage?

2B) PERSONAL: How difficult are these commands for you? Is it easier for you to love the world or to love God? Why?

Read Revelation 2:3-5:

3A) What commendation did the believers in the Church of Ephesus receive? Verse 3

3B) What was their problem and what did Jesus tell them to do about it? Verses 4-5

3C) PERSONAL: What do you think this would look like in today's world?

Read John 13:34-35:

4A) What was the new command Jesus gave and why is it important for His followers to obey this command?

4B) How are all of these commands about love confirmed in 1 John 4:19-21?

4C) PERSONAL: How important do you think it is for us to "renew our love" for God and for others in 2021?

5) PERSONAL: Have you ever had to deal with a negative experience because you tried to express your love? Describe your experience. Was it painful? Did it shake your faith? Did you realize that it was very possibly Satan trying to keep you from having a good influence in someone's life?

Read 1 John 5:1-5:

6A) What promises are we given in this passage?

6) PERSONAL: How are you encouraged by these promises of God?

ACT: The first step for us to take in order to be prepared for whatever is next is to "Renew our Love!" Renew our love for God! Renew our love for others and even renew our love for ourselves! We do this by spending time with God, reading His Word, learning about His commands and His promises and then doing our very best to obey whatever He says. By our obedience, we prove that we are children of God and we are able to overcome the world by our faith and enjoy the victory that is ours in Christ. God has called us out to live according to His standards and not according to the ways of the world system. This is not always easy, but God will help us every step of the way.

Daily Devotional: It always helps to look at the context of the passage. Then try to answer the following questions about the passage. Who is involved? What is going on? Where is the action taking place? When? How can this concept apply to my life? Why is it important? Also look for Commands, Warnings, and Examples to follow or not to follow.

- This week let's explore passages that describe why it is so important that we express love and how to do that.

Monday:

Romans 12:9-10 NLT

Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other.

Tuesday:

Colossians 3:12-14 NLT

Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony.

Wednesday:

1 Timothy 6:10-11 NLT

For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. And some people, craving money, have wandered from the true faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows.

Thursday:

Hebrews 10:24-25 NLT

Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.

Friday:

1 Peter 1:22 NLT

You were cleansed from your sins when you obeyed the truth, so now you must show sincere love to each other as brothers and sisters. Love each other deeply with all your heart.

Saturday:

1 John 4:16 NLT

We know how much God loves us, and we have put our trust in his love. God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them.

Sunday:

2 John 1:5-6 NIV

I am writing to remind you, dear friends, that we should love one another. This is not a new commandment, but one we have had from the beginning. Love means doing what God has commanded us, and he has commanded us to love one another, just as you heard from the beginning.

