

# YEAR OF GROWTH

## LOVE WEEK 4

### EXERCISE

#### How To Grow in Love:

It is important to understand the meaning of love and to see examples of this characteristic in Scripture. Yet, it is also important to do the work necessary to have and to develop true love. Our focus will be on passages that teach what one must do to have and to grow in *agape* love.

#### Day One – Sunday

Reflect on the definitions of the words that God used to describe love. Think back over the previous lessons. Read again the passages that you have written. Recall the verses you have memorized. Focus on the meaning of love and prepare to exercise in developing this characteristic.

#### Day Two – Monday

##### Titus 2:1-6

Love must be **taught**. In this passage, the older women are to teach the younger to love their husbands and their children. The Greek word *philandros* means “to be fond of man (one’s husband).” The Greek word *philoteknos* means “to be fond of children (one’s offspring).” There is a “natural affection” that a mother has for her children and a wife usually has for her husband (cf. Rom. 1:28-32; 2 Tim. 3:1-3). Yet, the proper development and expression of that love must be taught. Love is more than just a feeling or an emotion. It is active in word and deed.

#### Day Three – Tuesday

##### Psalm 103:8-14

Love must be **experienced**. Often, people do not know how to love because they have never been loved. True *agape* love is rare in a wicked world filled with fallen men. Yet, as we come to learn of God, we begin to realize how and how much we are truly loved. We are redeemed from slavery; adopted into God’s family; married to Jesus; freed from debt; saved from sin; delivered from Hell; and assured of Heaven! In turn, we must love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Then we must love our neighbors as He loves us – so they can experience true love, maybe for the first time in their lives.

Day Four – Wednesday**John 15:9-16**

Love must be spoken. Note that Jesus declared twice to His disciples, “I love you.” Love is more than words, but the words need to be said! The Father openly declared His love for His Son (Matt. 3:17). Shouldn’t the same words be said between earthly fathers and sons, mothers and daughters, husbands and wives, companions and friends? Furthermore, shouldn’t Christians openly proclaim their love for God – in worship, in prayer, and in teaching?

Day Five – Thursday**Matthew 5:43-48**

Love must be exemplified. Jesus taught about love. However, He also gave examples of love – in His teaching and in His life. God loves His enemies by sending sunshine and rain on both the good and evil. From that example we learn how to love our enemies. After teaching this truth, Jesus demonstrated it by going to the cross and dying for His enemies – including us! Love is more than words; it must be seen in action.

Day Six – Friday**Matthew 25:34-40**

Love must be servicing. More than a feeling, true love is a commitment. Thus, true love is expressed in service – whatever kind of service is necessary and best for others. Helping those who are in need is a demonstration of love. This will always require sacrifice, but true love is sacrificial (cf. 2 Cor. 12:15).

Day Seven – Saturday**John 14:27-31**

Love must be obedient. Jesus declared that He would demonstrate to the world His love for the Father. He would do this by obeying the commandments of God. Keep in mind that this included going to the cross! Earlier, Jesus declared, “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (vs. 15). One who loves will be obedient.