

News Story Summary

June DeVilla and Bill Bratton met on the stoops of the Bunker Hill projects in Charlestown. They soon became girlfriend and boyfriend. Bill wanted to propose but couldn't because of the war. He joined the navy and went off to fight in the Pacific. When he returned, June was waiting for him, and they got married. June and Bill had a son, Billy, and a daughter, Pat. In 2007, June got sick and died. She and Bill had been together for 65 years, married for 61 of those years, and only spent the night apart when Bill was at war. Every day following June's death, Bill drove to the cemetery and sat by June's grave, telling her what was going on. Bill died this year and was buried where he wanted to be, at June's side.

(For more on this story, search the Internet using the phrase "sacrifice and love reunited.")

Focus Attention

To supplement the discussion about the Hebrew word *chesed*, read the news story summary. Ask: *How would you describe the love shared between June and Bill? How would you compare the love June and Bill had for each other with the love God has for us?* June and Bill had a deep and abiding love that may have included aspects of kindness, mercy, and faithfulness. However, unlike God's love, their love was imperfect and temporal, while God's love is perfect and eternal.

Summarize and Challenge

To supplement the Summarize and Challenge ideas, ask: *What emotions were evoked when you realized the depth and longevity of God's love for you?* In Psalm 136, the psalmist encourages us to respond by giving thanks to God. Remind group members of the news story summary. Say: *We can imagine that June and Bill often said, "I love you" to each other. Repetition of words or phrases can be used to emphasize their truth. The repetition of the phrase "His faithful love endures forever" stresses the truth of God's love.* Challenge group members to take time this week to meditate on the phrase "His faithful love endures forever" and spend time giving thanks to God for His love.