



LESSON 2 DEVOTION 1

THE LORD SAID TO ME, “GO, SHOW YOUR LOVE TO YOUR WIFE AGAIN, THOUGH SHE IS LOVED BY ANOTHER AND IS AN ADULTERESS. LOVE HER AS THE LORD LOVES THE ISRAELITES, THOUGH THEY TURN TO OTHER GODS.” HOSEA 3:1

Have you ever been caught in a “one-up” conversation? That’s when someone tells about an event in their life, and another person tries to outdo them by telling a bigger and better experience in their own life. For example, you might be in a group and the conversation goes something like this:

- **Person A:** “You won’t believe what Jill said about me.”
- **Person B:** “Well Erica said some bad stuff about me and we go to church together.”
- **Person C:** “That’s nothing. Megan lied about me and we’ve supposedly been friends since kindergarten.”

The prophet Hosea would probably have the ultimate “one-up” story. He could say his wife had children by other men, left him, then returned to a life of prostitution before God told him to go buy her back and continue to show love to her. Now THAT’S a story of loving others.

When it comes to loving people who are difficult to love, people around you may have some incredible stories. Perhaps you have what you think is the “one-up” story of all time but you would be wrong. The greatest example of loving the unlovable is when God showed His love to YOU sending His Son Jesus to die for your sins. Since God showed such great love to us then we should show His great love to those we see as truly unlovable.

LESSON 2 DEVOTION 2

Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified him, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” And they divided up his clothes by casting lots. Luke 23:32-34

Jesus taught through His words, but He also taught through His actions. Jesus had gone through the agonizing pain of being whipped and beaten before being led to the cross. His pain continued as they nailed Him to a cross and hung Him to die. Despite all that pain He still uttered words asking God to forgive the people for what they did to Him.

Maybe someone in your life seems unlovable because he or she has done something really mean or hateful to you. Your first step to loving that person might be to forgive him or her.

So what’s the next step?

- Is there an unlovable person in your life that you need to forgive? Is there someone in your life you need to ask for forgiveness?
- Forgive the person for what they have done, and commit yourself to praying for them. If possible and safe, see if you can reestablish a connection with that person.
- Once you do all the Bible says to do, if the person continues to act in an unlovable way towards you, just continue to pray for them and look for ways to express God’s love whenever possible.

LESSON 2 DEVOTION 3

Now about brotherly love we do not need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other. And in fact, you do love all the brothers throughout Macedonia. Yet we urge you, brothers, to do so more and more. 1 Thessalonians 4:9-10

The track and field portion of the Summer Olympic Games always draws the biggest crowds and the largest television audience. The 400-meter run is roughly one lap around a track surrounding most high school football fields. Every athlete training for the 400 meters knows the margin of time between winning and fourth is fractions of a second. Athletes are driven to train a little harder each day knowing the extra effort might make the difference.

Paul complimented the Christians in Thessalonica because of the way they loved people in their part of the world. However, he urged them to continue to strive to do a little more each day. We know God's love is eternal and has no end. Paul was urging the Christians to show that same kind of unending love to others. That means we can always get better!

Pray this week that God will help you to continue to love others with His eternal, unending love.