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Daily Devotional, Tuesday, May 30, 2017 - How to Love Others

MAY 30TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Matthew 22:35-40

Jesus told His disciples, “In everything ... treat people the same way you want them to treat you” ([Matt. 7:12](#)). Most of us refer to this code of conduct as the Golden Rule.

In theory, we’d probably agree that this is a good foundation for a healthy relationship. Yet it’s tough to live up to such a standard. If we made a list of the ways we hope to be treated and compared it with our own behavior, we’d likely fall short.

And of course, it’s easy to love when others treat us well. But how do we respond when their behavior is hurtful or unpleasant? The truth is, Jesus meant for us to love others all the time, not just when they’re lovable. Regardless of their attitude toward us, we are to think about the relationship qualities we value—like loyalty, trust, encouragement, forgiveness, acceptance, and protection—and let these flow from us in the other person’s direction.

Unfortunately, our society breeds selfishness, greed, and pride, which are enemies of the love Jesus commanded. But when we care for others in the way the Lord prescribes, relationships can thrive and deepen.

Treating others with this kind of love isn’t natural or easy, especially when people are unkind. In fact, loving as Jesus commanded is impossible on our own. But when we trust

Christ as Savior, the Holy Spirit empowers us and lives His life through us.

Take time to list the ways you hope others will treat you. Then ask, *Is that how I treat people?* Pray for God to reveal one area where He will help you apply the Golden Rule.

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Daily Devotional, Friday, May 26, 2017 - The Exalted Lord

MAY 26TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

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[Revelation 1:9-17](#)

Revelation may be the most ignored book of the New Testament simply because it can be difficult to understand. But to avoid the treasures found in its pages is to miss some of the

richest descriptions of our Lord that Scripture offers. We love seeing Him as the baby in the manger, and we recognize the importance of His death and resurrection, but the story doesn't end there.

John was given a dramatic vision of the exalted Lord as He is now in heaven. Even though the apostle had shared an intimate friendship with Christ on earth, the sight of His Lord in this glorified state caused him to pass out in fear ([Revelation 1:17](#)).

In the heavenly scene, Jesus is portrayed as the Lord of His church, which is represented by the seven lampstands surrounding Him. He watches over them, preserving, protecting, and admonishing when necessary.

A few chapters later, Jesus is shown to be the Lamb of God, who, as our High Priest, sacrificed Himself on our behalf ([Revelation 5:1-14](#)). His blood purchased redemption for people from every place and time, so that they could become citizens of His kingdom. All heaven erupts into praise and worship when Christ is found to be the only one worthy to end this age and set up His righteous kingdom (v. 13).

If you believe in Christ, these chapters are about your future. Picture yourself in both scenes, seeing Jesus as the exalted Lord and Lamb of God. The praises described in [Revelation 5:9-14](#) are coming from your mouth! Let this glimpse of the future shape your worship and focus this weekend.

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Daily Devotional, Thursday, May 25, 2017 - Our God of Comfort

MAY 25TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

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2 Corinthians 1:3-4

God's care for us extends even to the details of our lives. He knows when His children hurt, and He longs to offer comfort ([Isa. 49:13](#)).

The Lord's compassion is personal, continuous, and always available. We receive His comfort through the Holy Spirit, who lives within us. There is no situation or time when He is inaccessible to the believer—we can be consoled and reassured at any moment, day or night.

Consider how the compassion of God was demonstrated through Jesus' life. He interacted even with the “untouchables”—people whose bodies were infected with a contagious disease ([Luke 17:11-14](#)). And no sickness of ours will prevent Him from caring for us.

When Jesus saw people with medical conditions, in compassion He not only healed them physically but also gave an even greater comfort—new life through the forgiveness of sins. And while our infirmities may remain, the Lord lovingly strengthens us to persevere ([2 Corinthians 12:7-9](#)).

As for the messes we get into, notice how Peter's betrayal of Christ was met with forgiveness and reinstatement ([John 21:15-17](#)), and Thomas's doubts were answered by Jesus Himself ([John 20:27](#)). Our mistakes won't stop Him from loving us. Even to His enemies, Jesus left the way open for repentance.

God's comfort and care are adequate for anything we face, whether it's poor health, insufficient finances, or family trouble. Then, once we've experienced His consolation, we're to become bearers of comfort to others ([2 Corinthians 1:4](#)). Remember, people everywhere are in great need of His compassion.

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Daily Devotional, Wednesday, May 24, 2017 - The Great Divide

MAY 24TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

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[Isaiah 55:8-9](#)

When we picture Jesus as our bridge to God, it is natural to think about the things that separate us from the Father. Therefore, let's examine three metaphors that describe the barriers between us and almighty God.

First, we are separated by height. Scripture calls God the "Most High" and describes Him as "high and lifted up" ([Psalm 9:2](#); [Isa. 6:1](#) ESV). He is above creation and unconstrained by gravity, time, or space. Furthermore, He declares, "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways" ([Isa. 55:9](#)). Without question, God is

above man.

Next, we are separated by distance. Moses experienced God through the burning bush, but even in that holy moment, the Lord warned him not to come too close ([Ex. 3:5](#)). Later, when the people of Israel built the temple and tabernacle, God warned them not to enter the Holy of Holies except for a single specific time each year, and then only one person was allowed to enter under strict conditions ([Heb. 9:7](#)). There is a distance between man and God that cannot be breached.

Third, we are separated by light and fire ([1 John 1:5](#); [Deut. 4:24](#)). We know that staring into a giant spotlight can cause blindness, and standing near a flame can burn our skin. In a similar way, if we were to stand in the presence of holy God, we would be consumed.

Why did Jesus come to us? The reason is that only the perfect, sinless Son of God could reach the Father, come close to Him, and stand in His presence. And, in Christ, we can share in that intimacy.

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Daily Devotional, Tuesday, May 23, 2017 - Our Bridge to God

MAY 23RD 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

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John 14:1-6

The last verse in today's passage makes a powerful and unequivocal statement. Jesus clearly says, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."

People have taken exception to that statement for 2,000 years. Some say the Lord didn't mean for it to be taken literally. Others categorically reject His authority to make the claim at all. However, as believers in the lordship of Jesus Christ, we must take what He says as truth. So let's think for a moment about the word picture in that verse.

When Jesus calls Himself "the way," many people imagine a one-way street. They take this to mean that there are lots of roads, but He is the only one that leads to the Father. That's a good image, but I think we can do even better.

I like to think of Jesus not as a road but as a bridge—our bridge to God. Consider the apostle Paul's warning in [Romans 3:23](#): "For all have sinned and *fall short* of the glory of God" (emphasis added). The picture here is of a great chasm between us and God, and we cannot make it across. Unable to bridge the gap, we fall.

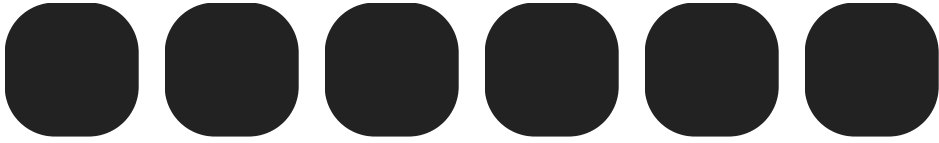
So, what is the only way across a chasm? A bridge, of course. And that's what Jesus is for us. He stands in the gap, providing safe passage across the void and into the loving arms of the Father.

Meditate on this mental image. When we imagine ourselves helpless and lost—with heaven just out of reach, beyond a great divide—we can begin to appreciate the true power of the cross.

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