

Life Connect 1 God's Everlasting Love (Video Trailer & Lesson 1)

[Romans 8:1-17, 28-39](#)

Romans 8:1-17 (NIV)

- ¹ Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,
- ² because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.
- ³ For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man,
- ⁴ in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.
- ⁵ Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.
- ⁶ The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace;
- ⁷ the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.
- ⁸ Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.
- ⁹ You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.
- ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness.
- ¹¹ And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.
- ¹² Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation--but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it.
- ¹³ For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live,
- ¹⁴ because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.
- ¹⁵ For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "*Abba*, Father."
- ¹⁶ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.
- ¹⁷ Now if we are children, then we are heirs--heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

Romans 8:28-39 (NIV)

- ²⁸ And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.
- ²⁹ For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.
- ³⁰ And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.
- ³¹ What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us?
- ³² He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all--how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?
- ³³ Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies.
- ³⁴ Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died--more than that, who was raised to life--is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.
- ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or

famine or nakedness or danger or sword?

³⁶ **As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered."**

³⁷ **No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.**

³⁸ **For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers,**

³⁹ **neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

David Howard, a missionary in Latin America, once met President Figueres of Costa Rica. After that one meeting, whenever their paths crossed, the president would greet David by name. It was a thrill for David to have someone of such stature recognize him personally!

Have you ever stopped to think about God's stature when he says, "I know you. I love you"? It is one thing to be on a first name basis with the president of a country. But the God of the universe? Yet it is in fact this God of creation who says, "I know you. And more than know you, I love you so much I will do all I can to meet your deepest needs."

1. How do you know when someone really loves you?

How are you affected by being loved in this way?

2. Read [Romans 8:1-17](#). How does Paul describe our condition when we lived by the sinful nature ([Romans 8:5-8](#))?

3. What all did God do for us even while we were in this awful condition ([Romans 8:1-4](#), [9-11](#), [13-17](#))?

4. What does it mean to you that you can call God, "Abba," a term equivalent to "Daddy" ([Romans 8:15](#))?

5. How have you experienced the freedom from condemnation God's love brings?

How is this freedom different from or similar to what you have experienced of human love?

6. Read [Romans 8:28-39](#). According to these verses, what does God do for those who are led by the Spirit of God?

7. Look at Paul's explanation in [Romans 8:28-30](#). Why can he say with such conviction that in all things God works for our good?

How have you recently seen this to be true?

8. In your own words, how does Paul describe and respond to this love of God?

9. Why is being loved like this life-changing?

10. As you consider what it means to be a child of God, your future in heaven and your life now, what confidence do you have that God will provide for you?

11. How do you respond to the evidence in this passage of God's great love for you?

Use words from this passage to describe the love of God and praise him for it. Talk to him about the difficulty you have believing and experiencing his love. Pray that he will work in you so that you will believe his great love. Ask him to make very real to you the fact that "nothing can separate you from God's love."

LifeGuide Topical Bible Studies - Love: The Greatest Gift of All.

Life Connect 2 Responding to God's Love (Video Part 2)

[John 15:1-17](#)

John 15:1-17 (NIV)

- ¹ "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.
- ² He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.
- ³ You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you.
- ⁴ Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.
- ⁵ "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.
- ⁶ If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.
- ⁷ If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.
- ⁸ This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.
- ⁹ "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.
- ¹⁰ If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love.
- ¹¹ I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.
- ¹² My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.
- ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.
- ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command.
- ¹⁵ I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.
- ¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit--fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.
- ¹⁷ This is my command: Love each other.

When our children were small, "I love you, Mom" and "I love you, Dad" came out of their mouths with such ease. We were thrilled every time we heard them. As they reached the teen years, their expressions of affection were less frequent. That made their affirming words more meaningful than ever. God, our heavenly Father, enjoys our expressions of love for him every bit as much as, and more than, earthly parents do.

1. Think of someone that you love dearly. What are some ways that you show your love to that person?

2. Read [John 15:1-8](#). In the analogy of the vineyard what represents the Father, Jesus and the disciples?
3. Why is it vital for branches to remain in the vine?
4. According to this passage, what does it mean to remain in Jesus ([John 15:2-3](#), [5](#), [7](#))?
- How does this happen?
5. When have you experienced pruning?
6. What role has the Word and prayer played in your bearing of fruit?
7. Read [John 15:9-17](#). In [John 15:9-10](#) what added dimensions does remaining in Christ take on?

- 8.** What are the results of obeying Jesus' commands?
- 9.** [John 15:12](#) tells us to love each other as Jesus loves us. How has Jesus loved us?
- 10.** As you consider how Jesus has loved you, how do you struggle to obey his command to love others?
- 11.** In [John 15:13-16](#) Jesus calls us his friends. How does what you learn about being Jesus' friend enrich your understanding of your connection to him?
- 12.** Jesus promises that as we abide in him the Father will give us what we ask for. What prayers have you seen answered recently?
- 13.** In this passage Jesus has told us how to be fruitful and that the fruit we bear will last ([John 15:16](#)). How does this help us understand what our priorities should be?

Praise Jesus who is the true vine and the Father who is the gardener. Thank them for the life they produce in you and for the fruit that lasts forever. Talk to the Lord about areas in your life where you long to see fruit. Ask God for the fruit of love and for him to show you how to love others more completely. Thank him for the privilege that is yours to respond to his love.

LifeGuide Topical Bible Studies - Love: The Greatest Gift of All.

Life Connect Lesson 3 Love That Serves (Video 3)

[2 Kings 4:8-37](#)

2 Kings 4:8-37 (NIV)

⁸ One day Elisha went to Shunem. And a well-to-do woman was there, who urged him to stay for a meal. So whenever he came by, he stopped there to eat.

⁹ She said to her husband, "I know that this man who often comes our way is a holy man of God.

¹⁰ Let's make a small room on the roof and put in it a bed and a table, a chair and a lamp for him. Then he can stay there whenever he comes to us."

¹¹ One day when Elisha came, he went up to his room and lay down there.

¹² He said to his servant Gehazi, "Call the Shunammite." So he called her, and she stood before him.

¹³ Elisha said to him, "Tell her, 'You have gone to all this trouble for us. Now what can be done for you? Can we speak on your behalf to the king or the commander of the army?'" She replied, "I have a home among my own people."

¹⁴ "What can be done for her?" Elisha asked. Gehazi said, "Well, she has no son and her husband is old."

¹⁵ Then Elisha said, "Call her." So he called her, and she stood in the doorway.

¹⁶ "About this time next year," Elisha said, "you will hold a son in your arms." "No, my lord," she objected. "Don't mislead your servant, O man of God!"

¹⁷ But the woman became pregnant, and the next year about that same time she gave birth to a son, just as Elisha had told her.

¹⁸ The child grew, and one day he went out to his father, who was with the reapers.

¹⁹ "My head! My head!" he said to his father. His father told a servant, "Carry him to his mother."

²⁰ After the servant had lifted him up and carried him to his mother, the boy sat on her lap until noon, and then he died.

²¹ She went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, then shut the door and went out.

²² She called her husband and said, "Please send me one of the servants and a donkey so I can go to the man of God quickly and return."

²³ "Why go to him today?" he asked. "It's not the New Moon or the Sabbath." "It's all right," she said.

²⁴ She saddled the donkey and said to her servant, "Lead on; don't slow down for me unless I tell you."

²⁵ So she set out and came to the man of God at Mount Carmel. When he saw her in the distance, the man of God said to his servant Gehazi, "Look! There's the Shunammite!

²⁶ Run to meet her and ask her, 'Are you all right? Is your husband all right? Is your child all right?'" "Everything is all right," she said.

²⁷ When she reached the man of God at the mountain, she took hold of his feet. Gehazi came over to push her away, but the man of God said, "Leave her alone! She is in bitter distress, but the LORD has hidden it from me and has not told me why."

²⁸ "Did I ask you for a son, my lord?" she said. "Didn't I tell you, 'Don't raise my hopes'?"

²⁹ Elisha said to Gehazi, "Tuck your cloak into your belt, take my staff in your hand and run. If you meet anyone, do not greet him, and if anyone greets you, do not answer. Lay my staff on the boy's face."

³⁰ But the child's mother said, "As surely as the LORD lives and as you live, I will not leave you." So he got up and followed her.

³¹ Gehazi went on ahead and laid the staff on the boy's face, but there was no sound or

response. So Gehazi went back to meet Elisha and told him, "The boy has not awakened."

³² When Elisha reached the house, there was the boy lying dead on his couch.

³³ He went in, shut the door on the two of them and prayed to the LORD.

³⁴ Then he got on the bed and lay upon the boy, mouth to mouth, eyes to eyes, hands to hands. As he stretched himself out upon him, the boy's body grew warm.

³⁵ Elisha turned away and walked back and forth in the room and then got on the bed and stretched out upon him once more. The boy sneezed seven times and opened his eyes.

³⁶ Elisha summoned Gehazi and said, "Call the Shunammite." And he did. When she came, he said, "Take your son."

³⁷ She came in, fell at his feet and bowed to the ground. Then she took her son and went out.

Fat cells are servants to the rest of the body. By themselves they are useless and can even become hazardous when there are too many of them. But there is great value to fat. Every fat cell is a storehouse of oil. When famine comes to the body due to lack of other sources of energy, the signal of need is sent out by the brain. The fat cells then release the oil which is fuel for the needed energy. This energy is essential for the other cells of the body to do their jobs. So in a sense fat cells exist purely to serve the rest of the body.

In this study we see how love is demonstrated by serving others. So it is with the body of Christ. In a real sense, like fat cells, we exist to serve God and each other. Love is the core of serving in this way.

1. How have others served you in the last week?

2. Read [2 Kings 4:8-16](#). Describe the ways the Shunammite woman served Elisha.

3. What do you think motivated her to serve Elisha in this way ([2 Kings 4:9-10](#), [13](#))?

4. What motivates you to serve others?

What inhibits you from serving others?

5. What was Elisha's response to her acts of service?

6. How willing are you to make your needs known and to allow someone to serve you? Explain.

7. Though there were no "stated" needs, Elisha responded to her "felt" need of childlessness by offering her a son. Why do you think she responded in this way ([2 Kings 4:16](#))?

8. When have you felt suspicious when someone served you?

9. Read [2 Kings 4:17-37](#). In your own words tell what happened to this woman.

10. What evidence is there throughout these verses that she believed that Elisha would help her?

11. How do you see Elisha going beyond the call of duty to serve her?

12. How does this story illustrate the great value of serving one another?

13. Perhaps there is someone who has served you without expressing his or her own needs. How could you serve someone you know this week?

Thank Jesus, that he, Lord of the universe, came to serve. Ask God to give you the heart of a servant. Ask him to free you to be able to make your needs known to others as well as make you sensitive to the needs of others. Thank him for the privilege of loving others by serving them and for the benefits of serving one another.

LifeGuide Topical Bible Studies - Love: The Greatest Gift of All.

Lesson 4 Love That Submits (Video 4)

1 Samuel 3

1 Samuel 3:1-21 (NIV)

¹ The boy Samuel ministered before the LORD under Eli. In those days the word of the LORD was rare; there were not many visions.

² One night Eli, whose eyes were becoming so weak that he could barely see, was lying down in his usual place.

³ The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was.

⁴ Then the LORD called Samuel. Samuel answered, "Here I am."

⁵ And he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." But Eli said, "I did not call; go back and lie down." So he went and lay down.

⁶ Again the LORD called, "Samuel!" And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." "My son," Eli said, "I did not call; go back and lie down."

⁷ Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD: The word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him.

⁸ The LORD called Samuel a third time, and Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." Then Eli realized that the LORD was calling the boy.

⁹ So Eli told Samuel, "Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, 'Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

¹⁰ The LORD came and stood there, calling as at the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."

¹¹ And the LORD said to Samuel: "See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make the ears of everyone who hears of it tingle.

¹² At that time I will carry out against Eli everything I spoke against his family--from beginning to end.

¹³ For I told him that I would judge his family forever because of the sin he knew about; his sons made themselves contemptible, and he failed to restrain them.

¹⁴ Therefore, I swore to the house of Eli, 'The guilt of Eli's house will never be atoned for by sacrifice or offering.'"

¹⁵ Samuel lay down until morning and then opened the doors of the house of the LORD. He was afraid to tell Eli the vision,

¹⁶ but Eli called him and said, "Samuel, my son." Samuel answered, "Here I am."

¹⁷ "What was it he said to you?" Eli asked. "Do not hide it from me. May God deal with you, be it ever so severely, if you hide from me anything he told you."

¹⁸ So Samuel told him everything, hiding nothing from him. Then Eli said, "He is the LORD; let him do what is good in his eyes."

¹⁹ The LORD was with Samuel as he grew up, and he let none of his words fall to the ground.

²⁰ And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba recognized that Samuel was attested as a prophet of the LORD.

²¹ The LORD continued to appear at Shiloh, and there he revealed himself to Samuel through his word.

"If anyone had any questions about our building campaign consultant, they should have been answered tonight," the moderator of the elders board told my husband, Andy.

"Well, I'll find out on my way home tonight," he replied, quite cautiously.

It was time to build a church. The elders had decided to hire a consultant. I not only thought this was a bad idea, I felt it strongly. It seemed to me that a consultant was not the best use of our money. I thought it would be best if our own leaders could prayerfully guide us through this process.

Andy, on the other hand, was not only totally in favor of hiring a consultant, he had taken the lead in persuading the congregation! I could not get him to change his mind. All my finest logic and persuasive words made absolutely no impact upon him. He had continued to vigorously type up his "propaganda" for the congregation even as I talked.

I had a choice to make. I could continue to battle them all, or I could bend my will toward that of my husband and the leaders of our church. What would be the godly choice at this point—to fight for my convictions or to submit to the wisdom of others? This passage helps us to understand the unnatural, but sometimes necessary, route of submission.

1. Why is it sometimes difficult to submit to someone else?

2. Read [1 Samuel 3](#). What basic facts do you learn about the two main characters in this story, Samuel and Eli?

3. What does [1 Samuel 3:1](#) tell you about the spiritual climate of their day?

4. Throughout this passage what evidence of an attitude of submission do you see in Samuel?

5. How did his relationship with Eli and submission to Eli affect his relationship with God?

6. How have you found that your relationship with God is affected by your willingness or lack of willingness to submit to others?

7. Why is submitting to others evidence of loving them?

8. Submission does not mean mindlessly doing what someone else says. When might it be wrong to submit to another?

9. What did Samuel hear from God ([1 Samuel 3:11-15](#))?

10. How do you listen to God?

What hinders you from listening to him?

11. When have you experienced the Lord speaking to you through another person or to another person through you?

12. What evidence do you see in Eli of an attitude of submission to God?

13. What were the long term results of submission in Samuel's life ([1 Samuel 3:19-21](#))?

14. How are you struggling with submitting to others?

to God?

Talk to God about your difficulty in bending your will to submit to godly leaders. Confess ways in which you fail to submit to God as well. Ask God to forgive you and make your heart soft and open to loving others by submitting to them.

LifeGuide Topical Bible Studies - Love: The Greatest Gift of All.

Matthew 18:21-35**Matthew 18:21-35 (NIV)**

- ²¹ Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?"
- ²² Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.
- ²³ "Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.
- ²⁴ As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him.
- ²⁵ Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.
- ²⁶ "The servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.'
- ²⁷ The servant's master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.
- ²⁸ "But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. He grabbed him and began to choke him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he demanded.
- ²⁹ "His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.'
- ³⁰ "But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt.
- ³¹ When the other servants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed and went and told their master everything that had happened.
- ³² "Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to.
- ³³ Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?'
- ³⁴ In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.
- ³⁵ "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart."

When Andy and I considered God's call to marriage, we were surrounded by love and wisdom from those in our Christian community. One particular bit of counsel that continues to affect the vitality of our relationship is, "Do not ever withhold forgiveness from one another." The urgency to forgive each other does not stop at marriage. In this passage Jesus demands that Christians forgive one another and that there be no limit to this love that forgives.

1. How are you affected you when you carry a grudge against someone?

2. Read [Matthew 18:21-35](#). Behind Peter's question in [Matthew 18:21](#) was the Jewish teaching that to forgive someone three times was reasonable. Knowing this, how would you describe the exchange between Peter and Jesus in [Matthew 18:21-22](#)?

3. What keeps Christians from forgiving each other?

4. Not content to let the matter rest with forgiving seventy-seven times, Jesus proceeded to elaborate his statement with a parable. Why did the king in the parable originally forgive the servant's debt ([Matthew 18:27](#))?

5. How did the king go far beyond what the servant requested ([Matthew 18:26-27](#))?

6. What is your reaction to the servant's actions toward his fellow servant in [Matthew 18:28-30](#)? Why?

7. How did the first servant's debt compare with that of the second servant?

8. In this parable who do each of the characters represent?

What does each of their debts represent?

9. How do your wrongs against God compare with the ways others have wronged you?

10. How do you reconcile that Jesus seems to be advocating unlimited forgiveness while in the parable, the king retracts his forgiveness of the servant who didn't forgive his fellow servant ([Matthew 18:32-35](#))?

11. What does it mean to forgive one another "from the heart"?

12. How does Jesus demonstrate throughout this passage the seriousness with which he takes forgiving one another?

13. How do you need to grow in loving others by forgiving them?

Praise God that you are free from the debt you owed him because of the death of Jesus. Ask him to give you a heart overflowing with forgiveness for others. Ask him to bring to your mind those you need to forgive and those you need to ask for forgiveness.

LifeGuide Topical Bible Studies - Love: The Greatest Gift of All.

Life Connect 6 Love That Unites (Videos 7-8)

Romans 12:1-21

Romans 12:1-21 (NIV)

- ¹ Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship.**
- ² Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.**
- ³ For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.**
- ⁴ Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function,**
- ⁵ so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.**
- ⁶ We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith.**
- ⁷ If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach;**
- ⁸ if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.**
- ⁹ Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.**
- ¹⁰ Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.**
- ¹¹ Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.**
- ¹² Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.**
- ¹³ Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.**
- ¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.**
- ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.**
- ¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.**
- ¹⁷ Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody.**
- ¹⁸ If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.**
- ¹⁹ Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.**
- ²⁰ On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head."**
- ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.**

World War I, the massive conflict at the beginning of the twentieth century that resulted in the deaths of over ten million soldiers, began with the death of a single individual. On July 28, 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the Austrian throne, was shot while riding in a motorcar through Sarajevo. This incident triggered the network of alliances that were in place among the European nations and war raged for the next four years.

Huge conflict can also break out in our homes and Christian communities because of small incidents that get blown out of proportion. We are called as Christians to love one another. This love is lived out in the small practicalities of life. The ultimate outcome of loving this way is a life of peace and unity.

1. How are you affected when you hear music with beautiful harmony?

2. Read [Romans 12:1-8](#). What aspects of God's character are the foundation for all that Paul calls us to in this passage ([Romans 12:1](#), [3](#), [6](#))?

3. How are the body and mind shown to be vitally linked in spiritual worship?

4. According to [Romans 12:3-8](#), how is harmony found within the body of Christ?

5. Read [Romans 12:9-21](#). These verses continue to give practical direction for living out God's good, pleasing and perfect will. List the instructions that are given.

6. What do you think it means to "honor one another above yourselves" ([Romans 12:10](#))?

- 7.** How would being "joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer" affect your relationship with others ([Romans 12:12](#))?
- 8.** How can you practice hospitality and share with others who are in need ([Romans 12:13](#))?
- 9.** How are the instructions in [Romans 12:14-21](#) particularly helpful in living at peace with everyone?
- 10.** How would being "devoted to one another in brotherly love" support and undergird all that we are called to be in this chapter ([Romans 12:10](#))?
- 11.** As you look back over the instructions given in this passage, in what areas do you need to grow the most?
- 12.** The ultimate outcome of loving one another is living in peace and unity—in harmony. How have you experienced this unity in relationships with other Christians?

Ask God to fill you with his love by his Holy Spirit. Pray that he will make you a conduit of his love and that those around you will know him better. Ask him for harmony in your Christian community and in the church around the world.

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