

Week 6 | Loving

Begin with prayer

Find a quiet place and stand still for a moment. Dedicate your journey today to God, asking him to speak to you as you read, pray and walk.

*Lord, grant that I may always allow myself to be guided by you,
always follow your plans and perfectly follow your holy will.
Grant that in all things great and small,
I may do whatever you require of me.
May your will be done in time and in eternity,
by me, in me and through me. Amen*

Teresa of Ávila



Matthew 5:43–45, 48

‘You have heard that it was said, “You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.” But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have?... Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.’

Reflect

It seems like a tall order – we are asked to be perfect in our love, to extend our love to those most unworthy in our eyes, most undeserving, most difficult and demanding. We are asked to love without ceasing, to love without counting the cost, regardless of where this takes us or what effort it requires.

Through becoming human himself, Jesus taught us what true humanity looks like – and it involves love!

He looks at each one of us and sees in us all that we are able to become and how each one of us can change our own part of the world through the simple act of loving.

And in return we are promised the companionship of Christ, an engagement with all that is best and most precious and most profound in the world, a glimpse of the kingdom and an opportunity to share in that kingdom by sharing it with others.

Questions

Who are you going to love today?

Prayer

If we pray for those we do not love, we may or may not change them – that is up to God. What is certain is that we will change. Pray today for the gift of love and the opportunity to practice it.

‘God writes the gospel not in the Bible alone, but on trees and flowers and clouds and stars.’

Martin Luther

Evidence that God’s love extends throughout his creation is found in the entire Bible, rejoicing in the capacity of nature to reveal not only God’s love for the world and those who inhabit it, but also God’s endless creativity and imagination. Jesus constantly uses examples taken from nature to illustrate aspects of God’s kingdom and our own behaviour within it. We are taught to appreciate landscapes and to learn from the details of flowers and the behaviour of birds.

As you journey today, let your senses be filled with wonder at your surroundings, so that you learn from and rejoice in the gifts of the natural world.

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