

## Daily Readings

**Monday, August 25** – Read *Matthew 22: 34-40, Mark 12:28-33, Luke 10:25-28.*

This is the great commandment as Jesus puts together the love of God and neighbor into one decree. Read the passage from each of the gospels. Keep a record of your emotions (heart), thoughts (mind) and intentions (soul) through out the day. Share your findings with someone. At the end of the day, focus your prayer time on your emotions, thoughts and intentions.

**Tuesday, August 26** – Read *1 Corinthians 13.*

Read this passage and put your name in the passage as you read the words. Release yourself for one day to love as Paul has encouraged us to love. Let love rule.

**Wednesday, August 27** – Read *John 13:1-20.*

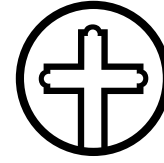
*For I have set for you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.* (John 13:15) Jesus sets the example of service to others in washing the disciple's feet. Ask the members of your family what one thing you can do for them (not including spending money). Afterward, discuss with them how your act of love impacted them.

**Thursday, August 28** – Read *John 15:1-17.*

This passage begins with the analogy of Jesus as the true vine. *"I am the true vine,"* says Jesus. Jesus goes on to tell his followers that we are the branches where the fruit is produced. In verse 12, Jesus continues, *"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."* At the end of your day, can you identify the fruits of love you have produced?

**Friday, August 29** – Read *Romans 13:8-10.*

Paul includes this call to love in his instructions on how the community should behave. All the commandments are based on the ethic of love. As you finish your work week, share with each member of your family how much you love them and what you love about them.



TRIETSCH

**August 24, 2008**  
**Study Guide & Daily Readings**

## Family Ties (Week 2)

### **"Win-Win"**

### **Dealing With Conflict in Relationships**

#### **Galatians 6:1-2**

*My friends, if anyone is detected in a transgression, you who have received the Spirit should restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness. Take care that you yourselves are not tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and in this fulfill the law of Christ.*

**The Book of Galatians.** Galatians is written by the apostle Paul. In Galatians, as in Romans, we meet many of the weightiest themes of Paul's preaching; justification by faith, life in Christ, the responsibilities of love, the meaning of the Cross, the function of the Mosaic Law, and the life in the Spirit. In this letter, Paul speaks more of himself, giving us personal biographical and historical data. However, the chief significance of Galatians now, as when it was first written and read, is what it declares about the meaning of the gospel for life.

**Galatians, Chapter 6.** In chapter 6 of Galatians, Paul sites examples of how the gospel is to translate into life for the believer. Paul applies the phrase *law of Christ* (6:2) to the central truth of the gospel, for which his letter has been a plea: that righteousness is given to those who live by faith. Paul says, *"...the only thing that counts is faith working through love"* (5:6). Faith becomes active in love as love seeks to reclaim and set right our mistakes. Love in action is the law of Christ, as Jesus shows us in His sacrifice on the cross.

**The Law of Christ.** Jesus is asked the question, "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" Jesus responds by joining two passages from the Law of Moses (Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18), *"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."* (Matthew 22:34-40, Mark 12:28-33, Luke 10:25-28)

The gospel of John does not record this specific incident in the life of Jesus. He instead focuses on a longer discourse that Jesus shares with his disciples at their Passover meal during the week before the crucifixion. Jesus begins this time by washing the disciple's feet (an extreme act of service, love and submission as recorded in John 13). He instructs them to

wash the feet of others as he has done it for them.

Later that evening, John quotes Jesus again, *“I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another”* (John 13:34). And again in John 15:12-13, *“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”*

This rule of love runs through all the words and actions of Jesus. Consequently, the letters of Paul, as well as the other New Testament writers, pick up on this imperative to love. The following is a sampling of passages concerning the law of love.

**Romans 13:8-10** – *Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. The commandments, “You shall not commit adultery; you shall not murder; you shall not steal; you shall not covet”; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, “Love you neighbor as yourself.” Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.*

**I Corinthians 12:31 -13:3** – *And I will show you a still more excellent way. If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. (I recommend reading the entire chapter. Paul goes into great detail to make his point about the importance of love.)*

**Galatians 5:14** – *For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”*

**James 2:8** – *You do well if you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”*

**I John 3:11** – *For this is the message you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.*

**I John 4:7** – *Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.*

## **Conflict, Love and Relationships**

At the heart of healthy relationships is the mutual consideration for all. “Love” is not just a feeling, passion or emotion; love is the concern for the welfare of another. We all deal with conflict in relationships. Husbands, wives, children and parents are the most common relationships. But the resolution of conflict is important everywhere two are more individuals are gathered to work or play.

**Think Win-Win.** This is the fundamental paradigm of seeking mutual benefit. It’s the underlying motive, the nurturing attitude out of which understanding grows. Thinking win-win is a fundamental shift in our think from “me” to “we.” This shift in thinking involves sacrifice – thinking about others, meeting their needs, making them happy. Any good relationship involves service and sacrifice. But along with this service mentality is the fundamental belief that what we have together is greater than the sum of what we would have apart. This is win-win.

**Seek first to understand and then to be understood.** This is the method by which we find mutual welfare. It’s the ability to step outside of your own autobiography and really get into the head and heart of someone else. When we understand, we don’t judge. The effort to understand causes us to look beneath the behavior or appearance to the person underneath. The act of understanding put us in a position to get in touch with the passion, pain, joy and expectations of those we love and respect.

**Bear one another’s burdens and in this fulfill the law of Christ.** (Galatians 6:2)

## **Discussion Questions for Families**

- What needs to happen for family members to be able to work together to come up with solutions that are better than any one family member could come up with alone?
- Discuss the consequences of win-lose and lose-win thinking. Can you think of any situation in which either of these alternatives would work better than win-win?
- How important is it to truly understand and empathize with each family member? How well do we really know the members of our family? Do we know their stresses, vulnerabilities, needs, hopes and expectations?

**Next Week’s Worship: Family Ties Week 3**

**“The Blessing”**

**Understanding, Communication and Encouragement**

**Scripture: Ephesians 5:21**