



College Park
Women

2024 College Park Church Women's Ministries

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ALL in

Loving God with ALL Your Heart, Soul, Mind, and Strength

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ALL in

Loving God with ALL Your Heart, Soul,
Mind, and Strength

Jesus answered,

“The most important (command) is,
‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.
And you shall love the Lord your God
with ALL your heart
and with ALL your soul
and with ALL your mind
and with ALL your strength.’
The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’

There is no other commandment greater than these.”

Mark 12:29-31



Week One

An Introduction to the Greatest Commandment

Welcome! We are so glad that you are joining us for this five-week study of what Jesus called, “The Greatest Commandment.”

For background, we turn to chapter 12 of the Gospel of Mark. It is the week of Jesus’s arrest and crucifixion, and He is being questioned by the Jewish leaders in an attempt to trap Him into saying something incriminating. They are desperate for a reason to justify His arrest. After confounding the priests, elders, Pharisees, and Sadducees with His parables and profound answers, an observant scribe asks, “Which commandment is the most important of all?”

Jesus answered by quoting a passage from Deuteronomy, “Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.” By listing these four facets of personhood, Jesus was emphasizing that we are to love God with ALL of our being. Not just with our emotions, not just with our spiritual life, not just with our intellect, and not just in a physical sense, but with every part of who we are.

Note, our personhood is not conveniently divided into these four compartments: heart, soul, mind, and strength. These four areas overlap and intertwine to describe our total personhood just as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control describe the single fruit of the Spirit working in our lives. By using these four words, Jesus was stating that we are to love God with ALL of ourselves—every bit, nothing kept back.

This study is going to delve into each of these four aspects that make us who we are and how each one functions in our relationship with the Lord. You will be challenged to examine areas of yourself that you may have held back or closed off in your relationship and walk with the Lord. Because the goal of this study is to increase our love for the Lord and grow in relationship with Him, you will be asked to spend time in prayer, often writing those prayers in your study book.

How is our love for God visible to others? Jesus answered that when He shared the second greatest commandment, *"You shall love your neighbor as yourself."* How we love God is evident in the ways we show love to others—our neighbors. To help us live out this truth, you will be asked these questions at the end of each week's study:

1. In one or two sentences, describe what it means to you to love the Lord your God with ALL your (heart, soul, mind, or strength).
2. How can you demonstrate this aspect of your love for God as you love those near you and those you encounter (in other words, your neighbor)?

Our prayer is that this study inspires you to love God with ALL of your being—your heart, soul, mind, and strength—and that your "ALL In" love for the Lord will be displayed in the way you love your neighbor.

As you begin this study, keep these things in mind:

- Begin with prayer: We ask that you begin your time with prayer, simply asking God to open your eyes to the truths you will discover in His Word and to show you how the truths can impact your relationship with Him.
- Pace yourself: Each week has five days of individual study to be completed before our class time (happening on the sixth day). The seventh day of study is for rest and reflection. We designed it this way to encourage you to spend time in the Word and prayer daily, allowing the Scriptures to saturate your week in preparation for class time.
- Memorize God's Word: Over the weeks ahead, we will be memorizing **Mark 12:29-31**. Memorizing verses can produce real joy as the words are woven into your heart. Take time each day to learn and review the verse presented in each lesson.
- Supplies: For ease of use, most Scriptures used in the study are printed in this lesson book. Occasionally, you may be asked to mark a passage looking for specific words, etc., so having a few colored pencils on hand is a good idea.
- You may occasionally be asked to use a dictionary to look up a definition, but otherwise, wait to do further study in commentaries or study notes until after our class discussion and teaching. The weekly Discussion Group time is designed for you and others in your group to share what you've learned in your study, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

"Love is part of the very being and nature of God. If we are united to God through faith in Christ, we share in His nature. And since His nature is love, love is the test of the reality of our spiritual life."

- Warren Wiersbe¹

MAY GOD BLESS YOUR STUDY OF
His Word!

Week One

Teaching Notes

Week Two

Loving God with ALL Your Heart

MEMORY VERSE

Jesus answered, “The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.’” Mark 12:29

Day One - Review

Write out this week's memory verse:

1. Look back over your notes from the teaching and last week's lesson. What are one or two of your main takeaways?

2. When Jesus reiterated the Old Testament command to love God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength, was He saying that our being has four separate parts? Explain.

*“In appreciating our neighbor,
we’re participating in
something truly sacred.”*

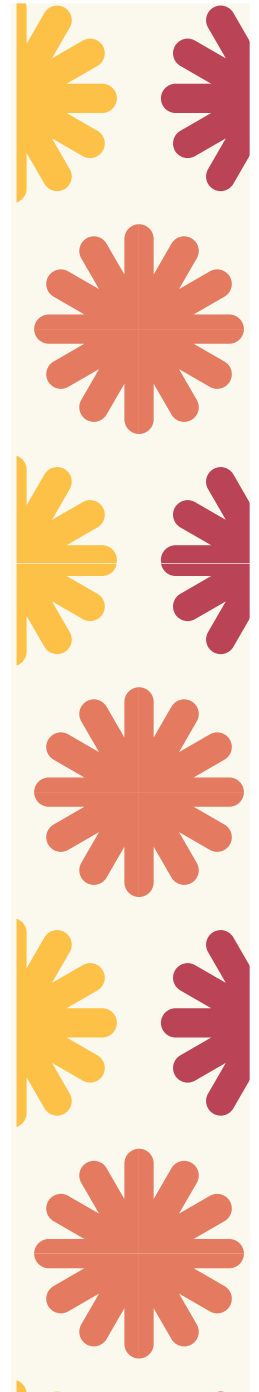
- Fred Rogers¹

3. How does Jesus define the term “neighbor”? See [Luke 10:25-37](#).

4. In what ways are you challenged by Jesus’s definition of who your neighbor is? Who do you consider your neighbors?

Day Two - A Heart That Seeks God’s Own Heart

Write out this week’s memory verse:



1. To love the Lord with ALL of our hearts, we must begin with a posture of submission to God as the ultimate authority over our lives. Is your posture one of submission to God as Lord? Or do you acknowledge Him as God, but struggle to submit fully?

Read the following verses and note the role and identity of God.

Deuteronomy 5:6 I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. Deuteronomy 6:4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Revelation 22:13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.	WHO DOES GOD SAY HE IS?
Mark 12:29-30 Jesus answered, "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'" John 10:30 I and the Father are one.	WHO DOES JESUS SAY GOD IS?
Psalms 63:1 O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.	WHO DOES DAVID SAY GOD IS?

2. David exhibited both dependency on and transparency before the Lord and is known as *a man after God's own heart*. Note the attributes you see in David that produced such an intimacy in his relationship with the Lord according to the passages below.



1 Samuel 13:14 (The prophet Samuel talking to King Saul) But now your kingdom shall not continue. The LORD has sought out a man after His own heart, and the LORD has commanded him to be prince over his people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you.	Samuel is relaying what God has said to Saul. How does God describe the one He sought out?
Psalms 44:20-21 If we had forgotten the name of our God or spread out our hands to a foreign god, would not God discover this? For he knows the secrets of the heart.	What does David know about God according to this Scripture?
Psalms 119:10-11 With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from your commandments! I have stored up your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.	What does David do to keep his heart pure?

3. Though David made both honorable and sinful decisions in his lifetime, he is still known as a man after God's own heart. He is included in the genealogy of Jesus Christ (see **Matthew 1:6**), the account of his life is recorded in Scripture, and several of his writings are included in Scripture. While he made both honorable and sinful decisions, it's plain that his dependency on and transparency before the Lord fostered deep intimacy in his relationship with God.

Using your Bible, read **Psalms 51**. This psalm is believed to have been written after the prophet Nathan had confronted David about his adulterous relationship with Bathsheba (See **2 Samuel 11-12**). What does **Psalms 51** teach us about? Record your answers in the following table.

"Though David sometimes stumbled and slobbered along, he soared, too. Perhaps the distance between stumbling and soaring is not so great after all."

- Jean Fleming²

The heart of God	The heart of David

4. Consider the posture of your heart in your relationship with the Lord. How transparent are you? How authentic are you? Is there some darkness or sin that you believe is too shameful to reveal to Him? The Lord wants your whole heart! And He already knows it. Will you trust Him with it? Pour it out to Him in a written prayer here.

Day Three - Intimacy with God

Write out this week's memory verse:

1. **Psalm 139** gives us another glimpse into David's relationship with God. Prayerfully read the words below:

Psalm 139

For the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.

¹O LORD, you have searched me and known me! ²You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. ³You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. ⁴Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O LORD, you know it altogether. ⁵You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. ⁶Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it. ⁷Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? ⁸If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! ⁹If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, ¹⁰even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me. ¹¹If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night," ¹²even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you. ¹³For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. ¹⁴I praise you, for I am

fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. ¹⁵My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. ¹⁶Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them. ¹⁷How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! ¹⁸If I would count them, they are more than the sand. I awake, and I am still with you. ¹⁹Oh that you would slay the wicked, O God! O men of blood, depart from me! ²⁰They speak against you with malicious intent; your enemies take your name in vain. ²¹Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD? And do I not loathe those who rise up against you? ²²I hate them with complete hatred; I count them my enemies. ²³Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! (ESV footnote: cares) ²⁴And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!

"To those who are oblivious to or comfortable with sin and want to live in it without interference from God, His omniscience leaves them with nowhere to hide. What a disturbing thought! But to those who are burdened by sin and want to escape its clutches, God's omniscience means that He fully knows their repentant heart, their cries for forgiveness, and their commitment of their cause to Him. Such relief dispels their perennial guilt and nagging shame."

– Gavin Ortlund³

Read the psalm again, and mark each instance where David refers to himself (I, my, me) in blue and each instance he refers to God (God, you, LORD) in red.

2. Now write a one-sentence paraphrase of each section of the psalm:

Verses 1-6

Verses 7-12

Verses 13-16

Verses 17-18

Verses 19-22

Verses 23-24

*Her heart can see, her heart
can see! Well may she sing so
joyously! For the King Himself, in
His tender grace, Hath shown her
the brightness of His face.*

-Frances Ridley Havergal⁴

What observations can you make about David's relationship with the Lord from this psalm?

3. What is David's request of the Lord? (v. 23) How is God's penetrating knowledge of us a source of comfort, as it was to David in this psalm?

4. How might meditating on God's relentless omniscience help you fight secret sins and encourage obedience—even private obedience—to Him?

Day Four - Hearts That Feel

Write out this week's memory verse:

We often associate our hearts with our emotions, rather than our thoughts or logic. Does this mean our emotions are “less than” or not to be considered? What does the Bible say about our emotions? Does our sinless, perfect God experience compassion or anger? Did God in human form, Jesus, experience grief or anguish?

1. Read each passage below and identify the emotion expressed by God (Father, Jesus, or the Spirit) and note anything else you observe.

Scripture	Emotion	Observation
Genesis 6:6 And the LORD regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart.		
Exodus 34:14 For you shall worship no other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.		

Numbers 32:13 And the LORD's anger was kindled against Israel, and he made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until all the generation that had done evil in the sight of the LORD was gone.		
2 Samuel 22:20 He (God) brought me out into a broad place; he rescued me, because he delighted in me.		
Nehemiah 8:10 Then he said to them, "Go your way. Eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions to anyone who has nothing ready, for this day is holy to our Lord. And do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."		
Psalms 103:13 As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him.		
Jeremiah 31:3 I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you.		

"In the Bible, the emotional side of God is not hidden, but praised...God is not embarrassed about his emotions, but speaks about them boldly and frequently. God's people should do the same."

- David Lamb⁵

Zephaniah 3:17 The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.		
Matthew 9:36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.		
Mark 10:21 And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me."		
John 17:13 But now I (Jesus) am coming to you (the Father), and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves.		
Ephesians 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.		

"God doesn't censor the soul-raw moments of His best men. He refuses to airbrush fear, despair, failure, and discouragement. I wonder if he includes these spiritually X-rated parts to deflower my distorted picture of what it means to walk with Him."

- Jean Fleming⁶

Part of the beauty of being created in the image of God is that He created us to experience emotions. However, because all of humanity is affected by sin after the fall, emotions can be distorted and lead to more sin. We are not like God, who is able to experience a spectrum of emotions perfectly and sinlessly. As with everything else in our lives, our emotions need to be submitted to the authority of our Savior.

2. Perhaps one of the clearest accounts of Jesus's emotions happens the night before He was to be crucified. He experienced a wide range of powerful emotions and demonstrated His deep love for the disciples by washing their feet and breaking bread with them. Later, He walked with them to a garden to pray.

In your Bible, read [Matthew 26:36-46](#) (see also [Luke 22:39-46](#)). What emotions (both named and implied) does Jesus experience? Did Jesus allow His emotions to control Him? How did He respond?

3. We are instructed to love the Lord with ALL our hearts, which includes our emotions . . . but how? Read the following verses, identify the emotion described (there may be several or refer to emotion in general), and note how the emotion is to be appropriately expressed.

Scripture	Emotion	Observation
Psalm 118:24 This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.		
Proverbs 10:12 Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all offenses.		

Proverbs 29:11 A fool gives full vent to his spirit, but a wise man quietly holds it back.		
Isaiah 41:10 Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.		
John 13:34-35 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.		
Romans 12:15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.		
Ephesians 4:26-27 Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger.		
Philippians 4:6-7 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.		

Colossians 3:12-13 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.		
James 1:19-20 Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.		

4. Read through the emotions listed above. Is there one with which you particularly struggle? Put a star next to it.

Proverbs 4:23 states, "Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life." Awareness of our emotions, both negative and positive, is a first step in keeping our hearts with all vigilance.

Identify a recent instance where you handled the emotion you starred above inappropriately. Write an honest prayer to the Lord about it, asking for forgiveness and for His help the next time you experience this emotion.

"Remember that your emotions are gauges, not guides."

- Jon Bloom⁷

Day Five - To Draw from the Well

Review **Mark 12:29**

1. Ponder **Proverbs 20:5**, “The purpose in a man’s heart is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out.” How does this passage describe the purpose of the heart? What do you think is meant by a “man of understanding”?
2. There is so much to learn about the depth of God’s heart, our own hearts, and the hearts of others. Jesus was a master at drawing out the hearts of people, and we find a great illustration of how He does it in **John 4**.

It was mid-day and Jesus was likely hot and tired. He was resting by a well while His disciples went into town to gather some provisions when a lone woman arrived at the well. John recorded their conversation. Read each section and note how Jesus drew out the heart of the woman.

Jesus named her shame, not her sin. He named her pain and sat with her in it. He started generously lifting her up. He sat at a well and waited for her. He reached out to her and spoke first—He bridged the gap . . . He respected her by talking theology of worship with her. She was the first person whom He told He was the Messiah. She became the missionary—a witness—to her community.”

- Kristi McLelland⁸

John 4:7-9 A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, “Give me a drink.” (For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, “How is that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?” (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)	
John 4:10-12 Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.” The woman said to him, “Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock.”	
John 4:13-15 Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” The woman said to him, “Sir give me this water so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water.”	
John 4:16-17a Jesus said to her, “Go, call your husband, and come here.” The woman answered him, “I have no husband.”	

John 4:17b-20 Jesus said to her, “You are right in saying, ‘I have no husband’; for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true.” The woman said to him, “Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.”	
John 4:21-25 Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things.”	
John 4:26 Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am he.”	
John 4:28-30, 39 So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, “Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?” They went out of the town and were coming to him Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me all that I ever did.”	

3. What was the result of Jesus's heart-to-heart conversation with the Samaritan woman?

4. How does this encounter illustrate the truth of **Proverbs 20:5**? How might Jesus's example encourage you to relate to those you encounter?

In one or two sentences, describe what it means to you to love the Lord your God, with ALL your HEART.

How can you demonstrate this aspect of your love for God as you love those near you and those you encounter?

"You see, before the love of God, through Christ, gets ahold of us and causes us to surrender, the heart is unaware of its deadness. We're unable to have hearts that beat for God, that are supple to His ways and His love for us . . . It takes the work of the Holy Spirit in you, the Father's love upon you, and the sacrifice of God's Son, Jesus, for you."

- Ruth Chou Simons⁹

Digging Deeper

1. When a believer speaks of the beginning of their relationship with God, or their salvation experience, he or she often says something like, “When I gave my heart to Jesus” or “When Jesus came into my heart.” This is our way of saying that our innermost being now knows, loves, and is owned by Jesus Christ. Our hearts have been transformed!

Read each passage and take note of the heart condition being described.

Ezekiel 36:25-27 I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleanness, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.	What was the original condition of our hearts? What is the transformed condition of our hearts? What are the blessings of this transformation?
Titus 3:4-7 But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.	What was the original condition of our hearts? What is the transformed condition of our hearts? What are the blessings of this transformation?

Regeneration is the catalyst that allows the Christian to interact with his Creator. It is the beginning step of an eternal walk with God. Regeneration allows the individual to have a relationship with God and thus stands at the beginning of the Christian life. ¹⁰

2. When we love the Lord our God with ALL our hearts, it is only possible because He has given that heart new life. He has transformed it so that it is even possible to love Him. Knowing this, read His invitation to an intimate heart-to-heart relationship with Him in Hebrews:

Hebrews 10:22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.

Using this verse and those above, list the encouragements you find to love the Lord your God more deeply.



Week Two

Teaching Notes

Jesus answered,

“The most important is, ‘Hear, o Israel:
The Lord our God, the Lord is one.’”

Mark 12:29

Week Three

Loving God with ALL Your Soul

MEMORY VERSE

Jesus answered, “The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. **And you shall love the Lord your God with ALL your heart and with ALL your soul and with ALL your mind and with ALL your strength.**’ Mark 12:29-30

Day One - Review

Write out this week’s memory verse:

1. Look back over your notes from the teaching and last week’s lesson. What are one or two of your main takeaways?
2. Why do you think Jesus values both our joy and our tears?

“A romanticized view of life in Christ is destructive, not to mention dishonoring to God. If soaring conjures up pictures of living above life’s circumstances, untouched by grief, discouragement, fear, and pain, then I’ve romanticized—and perverted—God’s intention.”

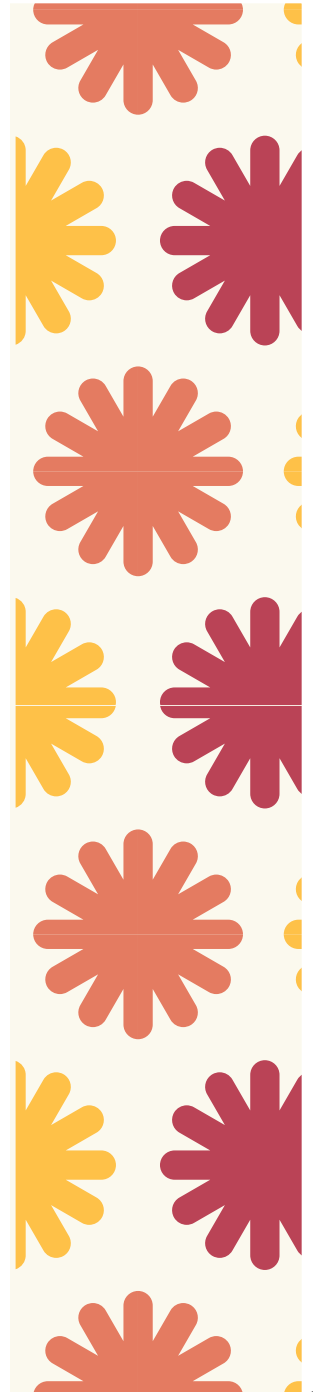
-Jean Fleming¹

3. Now that you've spent some time considering what it means to love God with all your heart, write out **Proverbs 4:23** in your own words and use it in a prayer to the Lord.

Day Two - Loving God and Our Soul as Described in Scripture

Write out this week's memory verse:

1. Loving God is a common theme throughout the Old Testament. Why do you suppose Jesus restated this commandment to the scribe? Why do you suppose the command to love the Lord your God needs to be restated to us?



2. Read the following verses, and underline anything that indicates why we should love God.

Scripture
Psalm 103:3-4 ... who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,
Micah 7:18 Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance? He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in steadfast love.
Romans 5:8 ... but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
1 John 4:19 We love because he first loved us.
1 John 5:14-15 And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.

Take a moment to examine your life in Christ and note a time/incident when God extended grace; showed mercy; provided peace, healing, or deliverance from trouble/sin; or bestowed a blessing on you. Write a prayer of praise and thanksgiving for who He is and what He has done for you.

3. Part of Jesus's response to the scribe is to "love the Lord your God with all your soul." Write out your understanding of this commandment in your own words.

"Our soul is the innermost, hidden, spiritual facet of our beings that points us toward the Lord. It is the motivator for seeking Him, loving Him, worshipping Him, and resting in His presence."

- Tara Dew²

What are practical examples of how you currently love God with all your soul?

4. Write what you learn about the soul from the following passages.

Scripture	Observation
Psalm 35:9 Then my soul will rejoice in the Lord, exulting in his salvation.	
Psalm 42:1-2 As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?	
Psalm 63:1 O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.	
Psalm 103:1-5 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.	

Psalm 119:20 My soul is consumed with longing for your rules at all times.	
Psalm 119:81 My soul longs for your salvation; I hope in your word.	
Luke 1:46b-47 My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.	

5. Look over your observations above. Has your understanding of loving the Lord God with all your soul changed from your answer to question 2? If so, write a new summary.

"The restless scrolling soul constantly asks, Am I entertained? Am I liked? Am I amused? The heaven-bound soul asks, Am I holy? Am I loved by God? Am I satisfied in Him?"

- Jeff Mingee³

Day Three - Our Soul's Loving Relationship with God

Write out this week's memory verse:

1. As believers, our soul should always be seeking a relationship with God. Consider **Deuteronomy 4:29**, "But from there you will seek the Lord your God and you will find him, if you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul."

What instructions are found in this verse?

Who is taking the action?

What is the outcome of the action?

2. Read the following passages about seeking the Lord and complete the chart with your observations and key takeaways, along with any personal application to your life.

Scripture	Observation and/or Key Takeaways	Personal Application
Matthew 6:24 No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.		
Matthew 6:33 But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. (See Matthew 6:19-33 for context)		
1 John 2:16-17 For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.		

“The soul seeks God with its whole being. Because it is desperate to be whole, the soul is God-smitten and God-crazy and God-obsessed. My mind may be obsessed with idols; my will may be enslaved to habits; my body may be consumed with appetites. But my soul will never find rest until it rests in God.”

- John Ortberg⁴

3. Examine the following passages and write down your observations about how the soul interacts with God in relationship.

Scripture	Observation
Psalm 9:10 And those who know your name put their trust in you, for you, O LORD, have not forsaken those who seek you.	
John 15:1-5 I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.	
1 Peter 1:8-9 Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.	
1 John 2:24 Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you too will abide in the Son and in the Father.	

4. According to these Scriptures, what are the soul benefits of being in relationship with God?

Scripture	Observation
Psalm 23:3 He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.	
Psalm 131 O LORD, my heart is not lifted up; my eyes are not raised too high; I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvelous for me. But I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with its mother; like a weaned child is my soul within me. O Israel, hope in the LORD from this time forth and forevermore.	
Psalm 143:8 Let me hear in the morning of your steadfast love, for in you I trust. Make me know the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul.	
Matthew 11:28-29 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.	

Day Four - Our Soul's Loving Worship of God

Write out this week's memory verse:

Hebrews 10:24-25 states, "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near." This verse highlights an expectation that believers would come together corporately to show that our souls love our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, through worship.

1. Read the following passages and record your observations about the connection between loving the Lord with your soul and the corporate worship of God.

Scripture	Observation
Psalm 95:1-3 Oh come, let us sing to the LORD; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation! Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise! For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods.	
Psalm 100:1-5 Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth! Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into his presence with singing! Know that the LORD, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name! For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.	

*Oh Lord my God, when I
in awesome wonder,
Consider all the worlds
thy hands have made
I see the stars; I hear
the rolling thunder, Thy
power throughout the
universe displayed:*

*Then sings my soul, my
Savior God to thee:
How great Thou art!
How great Thou art!*

- Karl Boburg⁵

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

2. Evaluate your own attitudes, motivations, and actions when it comes to worshipping God as an expression of loving Him with your soul. Do they match up with God's desires based on the passages above? Prayerfully ask the Holy Spirit to help you identify any areas of your life that may be preventing your worship from aligning with His desires. Write out your prayer.



3. Reading, memorizing, and studying God's Word are also acts of worship that help build up our soul and increase our knowledge of who God is. These disciplines also help direct our paths by making His will known.

Consider the following verses and note the outcomes/benefits our souls derive from the study of the Bible.

Scripture	Outcome/Benefits
Psalm 119:9-11 How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word. With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from your commandments! I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.	
2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.	
Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.	

4. Describe a time in your life when reading, studying, or meditating on God's Word provided comfort, peace, or restoration of your soul in response to a specific situation.

"If Christ be anything He must be everything. O rest not till love and faith in Jesus be the master passions of your soul!"

- Charles H. Spurgeon⁶

5. Prayer is one of the ways we come to know God and hear His voice. It is essential to every part of our soul's relationship with God because it is crucial to abiding in Him and allowing Him to live through us. Examine the following Scriptures and note any observations you make about prayer.

Scripture	Outcome/Benefits
Philippians 4:6-7 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.	
1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.	
James 1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.	
James 5:16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.	
1 John 5:14 And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.	

Summarize why it is so important to view prayer as a vital part of your soul's relationship to and worship of God.

Day Five - Our Soul's Loving Service to God

Review **Mark 12:29-30**.

1. When our souls love God, we're motivated to imitate Him. One piece of Jesus's example to us was to walk alongside twelve disciples during His three years of ministry on earth. We too, as believers who love the Lord our God with ALL our souls, are called to make disciples and maintain discipleship relationships as part of our spiritual journey with Him.

In your own words, or using a dictionary, define the word "disciple."

What is discipleship?

Read the following verses. Using a green colored pencil, underline anything related to discipleship.

Scripture
Proverbs 15:22 Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed.
Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

"Serve God, but not by presuming to meet His need. He owns everything. He doesn't need your supply. We call on Him in need, not the other way around."

- John Piper⁷

John 13:34–35 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

1 Thessalonians 5:11 Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

Galatians 6:1 Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.

Hebrews 3:12-14 Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.

2. In what ways does discipleship fulfill the second commandment, as stated in **Mark 12:31**, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself”?

3. Loving the Lord God with all your soul involves seeking Him, abiding in Him, and resting in Him. It also includes worshipping Him through service and ministry. **Mark 10:45** states, “For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” Jesus’s example to us involved feeding, healing, and caring for the needy and broken amongst His community. If we are to imitate Christ, loving the Lord God with all our souls requires we have the same goal/desire to serve others.



Consider the following verses and note the connections between our souls and being called to serve the Lord.

Scripture	Observation
Matthew 25:35-36, 40b For I was hungry, and you gave me food, I was thirsty, and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me . . . Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.	
Hebrews 6:10 For God is not unjust so as to overlook your work and the love that you have shown for his name in serving the saints, as you still do.	
1 Peter 4:10-11 As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.	

*You're rich in love and
You're slow to anger;
Your Name is great, and
Your heart is kind; For
all Your goodness I will
keep on singing, Ten
thousand reasons for
my heart to find.*

*Bless the Lord, O my
soul, O my soul, worship
His holy Name. Sing like
never before, O my soul.
I'll worship Your holy
Name.*

*- Matt Redman and
Jonas Myrin⁸*

4. Describe a way your soul worships the Lord with service. If this is an area where you have not yet engaged your soul, take time now to pray and ask God to open an opportunity for you.

In one or two sentences, describe what it means to you to love the Lord your God with ALL your SOUL.

How can you demonstrate this aspect of your love for God as you love those near you and those you encounter?

Digging Deeper

All women are busy, right? From the moment we hear the alarm or are awakened by a husband, child, or pet, we hit the ground running in an effort to complete all the tasks set before us. Often, we start without seeking communion, guidance, and wisdom from the One who properly equips us both spiritually and physically to accomplish all the tasks He has set before us. When we skip this vital step, our souls are left weary and empty.

Perhaps you relate to Martha in the following passage:

Perhaps in all of our busyness, we have been ignoring the Lord. Martha's problem was not that she had too much work to do, but that she allowed her work to distract her and pull her apart. She was trying to serve two masters!

- Warren Wiersbe⁹

Luke 10:38-42

Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me." But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her."

1. Draw a box around Jesus's words to Martha. Read those boxed words again and let your mind meditate on them.
2. Is there an area of your life where your focus or desire is pointed toward something other than God? Write it here if you are comfortable.
3. Are you lonely or exhausted from being pulled in so many directions in your everyday life? What might help you enjoy deep communion with God again and enter His rest once more?
4. Take time now to pray the following prayer and include areas that come to mind when answering the previous questions.

Lord Jesus, help me make our relationship the greatest priority of my life. Help me not to put my everyday responsibilities or concerns ahead of a love relationship with You. Teach me that I can do nothing apart from You. May I never get so busy that I neglect time with You. Help me pray and abide close, that You may live through my life. You promised that if I come to you with my burdens, feelings of being overwhelmed, and hectic schedule that you will give me rest. Please refresh my soul.



“And you shall love the Lord your God
with all your heart and with all

your soul

and with all your mind and
with all your strength.”

Mark 12:30

Week Three

Teaching Notes

Week Four

Loving God with ALL Your Mind

MEMORY VERSE

Jesus answered, “The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with ALL your heart and with ALL your soul and with ALL your mind and with ALL your strength.’ **The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” Mark 12:29-31**

Day One - Review

Write out this week’s memory verse:

1. Look back over your notes from the teaching and last week’s lesson. What are one or two of your main takeaways?

*“For the soul to be well, it
needs to be with God.”*

- John Ortberg¹

2. Review your lesson from last week. When you consider your soul, what Bible verse resonates most with you? Why?

3. What convictions has God brought to mind as you consider how to care for your soul in this season of your life?

Day Two - Renew Your Mind

Write out this week's memory verse:

When the brain (or mind) is healthy, it functions to interpret our senses and control our thoughts, memories, speech, and body movements. That means there are many ways we can love the Lord our God with our minds! We will explore some (but not all) of those ways this week.

But first, if our minds are so important, why was the word “mind” not included in the original instruction to the Hebrews?

Deuteronomy 6:4-5 Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

We find clues if we look elsewhere in the Bible:

Genesis 6:5 The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

Deuteronomy 15:9a Take care lest there be an unworthy thought in your heart.

1 Chronicles 28:9 And you, Solomon my son, know the God of your father and serve him with a whole heart and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches all hearts and understands every plan and thought.

1. Using the Scriptures above and a blue pen or pencil, underline the word “thought(s).” Using a red pencil, draw a heart around the word “heart.” What conclusions can you draw about the biblical authors’ use of these words?

*“Christ calls us to love God
with our heart and our soul
and our mind and our strength.
He is not content with three
out of four.”*

- Rebecca McLaughlin²

As it turns out, there wasn’t a word in the Hebrew language for mind, like we know it today. However, by the time Jesus came, the common language of God’s people had changed to Aramaic and Greek, both of which have separate words for heart and mind. Therefore, when Jesus spoke, He used the language of the day to convey the same message that was conveyed to the Israelites over a thousand years prior: love God with all that you have.

When Jesus commanded us to love the Lord our God with all our minds in addition to heart, soul, and strength, He knew our minds were completely unable to do so apart from Him. Paul writes:

Ephesians 4:17-24 Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. ¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. ¹⁹ They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. ²⁰ But that is not the way you learned Christ!— ²¹ assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, ²² to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, ²³ and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, ²⁴ and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

2. Read the passage above again and, using a blue pencil, underline the words “minds,” “understanding,” “learned,” and “taught.” Using a red pencil, underline the words “true,” “truth,” and “new self.” Using a brown pencil, underline the words “deceitful” and “old self.” Circle the word “but” in **verse 20**.

Look up the words “futility” and “renew” in a dictionary or thesaurus and write definitions for them that fit the way they are used in the passage.

futility:

renew:



3. According to this passage, what are some characteristics of the mind of the old self compared to the mind of the new self?

Old Self Mind	New Self Mind

4. A few years before Paul wrote Ephesians, he wrote a letter to the Corinthians which includes this verse:

2 Corinthians 10:5 We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ.

Using a blue pencil, underline the words “knowledge” and “thought.”

Look up the following words in a dictionary or thesaurus, and write definitions for them that fit the way they are used in the passage.

destroy:

captive:

What does the Spirit do to “transform” us into the image of the God-exalting Son of God? He enables us to “behold the glory of the Lord.” This is how the mind is renewed—by steadfastly gazing at the glories of Christ for what they really are.

- John Piper³

5. Using the definitions you found, rewrite **2 Corinthians 10:5** in your own words. You might find a thesaurus helpful in choosing words that sound more like your own. Reading more than one Bible translation of the verse might also help.

6. Are there certain subjects, activities, or times of the day when your thoughts run wild? Or when your inner thought life sounds more like your old self than your new self in Christ? Give an example. Write a prayer asking God to help you to take these thoughts captive and asking for Him to renew your mind.

Day Three - Remember

Write out this week's memory verse:

Renewing our minds is rooted in putting on the new self and taking our thoughts captive. Another way Scripture calls us to engage our minds in our relationship with God is remembering.



1. Look back at the passage from Ephesians in yesterday's lesson. Paul says in **verse 20**, "But that is not the way you learned Christ!" What is Paul saying? What is he asking his readers to remember?

Paul isn't the only writer to ask us to remember. The Bible uses the word "remember" approximately 48 times to ask us to recall who God is, what He has done, or what He has instructed.

2. Consider the following:

2 Peter 3:1-3 This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, ² that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, ³ knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires.

Using a blue pencil, underline the words "mind," "reminder," and "remember." What is Peter calling us to remember?

*"What we dwell on in our minds will
shape the way we live our lives."*

-Timothy Keller⁴

Isaiah 46:8-10 Remember this and stand firm, recall it to mind, you transgressors,⁹ remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me,¹⁰ declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose

Using a blue pencil, underline the words “remember” and “recall.” To understand what “this” refers to in **Isaiah 46:8**, we must read what was said before. In your Bible, read **Isaiah 46:3-7**. How would you paraphrase what God is asking the people to remember?

3. God knows His people are a forgetful and distracted people, and so He did not leave us without help. How do these verses show God's leading?

John 14:15 If you love me, you will keep my commandments.	
John 14:16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever.	
John 14:26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.	

4. How can using your mind to remember help you to love God?

Day Four - Theological Study

Write out this week's memory verse:

Prior to Jesus's statement regarding the greatest commandment, Sadducees from among the temple court, priests, and teachers of the Law tried to test Jesus in a "gotcha" moment. Sadducees only recognized the first five books of Moses (*Genesis – Deuteronomy*) and did not believe in resurrection, angels, or spirits (*Acts 23:8*). Scripture tells us while the Sadducees did not believe in resurrection, they described a hypothetical situation to Jesus of a woman widowed seven times, each time marrying a brother of her husband. Then they asked Jesus, "In the resurrection, when they rise again, whose wife will she be? For the seven had her as wife." (*Mark 12:23*).

"If the whole of the Bible is God speaking to us, why would we ever settle for there being parts of the Bible that we write off as indiscernible, irrelevant, or not applicable? We want everything that God has to say to us! We want to see Christ from every angle."

– Nancy Guthrie⁵

Jesus's answer is striking:

Mark 12:24-27 Jesus said to them, "Is this not the reason you are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God? ²⁵ For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. ²⁶ And as for the dead being raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the bush, how God spoke to him, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? ²⁷ He is not God of the dead, but of the living. You are quite wrong."

1. Using a blue pencil, underline the words "know" and "read." What does Jesus tell the Sadducees in **verse 24**?

Likely, none of us want to hear from Jesus, "You know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God." Instead, we want to love God with our minds, loving who He is and what He is like. In fact, this is what is meant by theology. Theology is "words about God"⁶ or "the study of God by men, women, and children."⁷

*"The heart cannot love what
the mind does not know."*

- Jen Wilkin¹⁰

In Jen Wilkin and J.T. English’s book *You Are a Theologian: An Invitation to Know and Love God Well*, they offer these helpful descriptions of who God is and what He is like:

“God eternally exists as one essence and three distinct persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Each person is fully God, yet there is one God.”⁸

“God is knowable. His nature and character are revealed to us through the Bible. We understand His character traits as both incommunicable (His alone) and communicable (able to become ours).”⁹

2. Re-read **Isaiah 46:8-10** from yesterday. What do you learn about God’s character from this passage? If you need help identifying God’s character traits (also called God’s attributes), visit <https://www.blueletterbible.org/faq/attributes.cfm>.

3. While not an exhaustive list, in days 2 through 4 alone, we saw many things God desires for us to know about Him. Let’s revisit some of those passages, noting what God desires for us to know:

Scripture	God wants us to know:
2 Corinthians 10:5 We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God and take every thought captive to obey Christ.	
Ephesians 4:20-21 But that is not the way you learned Christ!—assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus.	

John 14:15 If you love me, you will keep my commandments.	
2 Peter 3:2 ... that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles.	
Isaiah 46:9 ... remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me.	
Mark 12:24 Is this not the reason you are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God?	

4. It is a worthy endeavor to use what time and mental capacity we have to learn the things of God so that our hearts have a chance to love them. To know where you need to start, circle the responses below that best describes you.
 Note: A “yes” does not mean you are an expert. We cannot know everything about God. After all, God is infinite and incomprehensible!

I know the Trinity of God.	no	somewhat	yes
I know the attributes of God.	no	somewhat	yes
I know what the Bible is & how it is organized.	no	somewhat	yes
I know the Bible’s overarching story & timeline.	no	somewhat	yes
I know how to study the Bible using literary, historical, cultural & grammatical context.	no	somewhat	yes
I know biblical theology (tracing particular themes through the whole Bible).	no	somewhat	yes

*All I once held dear,
 built my life upon
 All this world reveres,
 and wars to own
 All I once thought gain
 I have counted loss
 Spent and worthless
 now, compared to this*

*Knowing You, Jesus
 Knowing You
 There is no greater
 thing
 You’re my all, You’re
 the best
 You’re my joy, my
 righteousness
 And I love You, Lord*

- Graham Kendrick¹¹

I know how the Old Testament foreshadows Jesus.	no	somewhat	yes
I have read or listened to the entire Bible.	no	somewhat	yes
I can articulate the gospel.	no	somewhat	yes

5. In what ways can you grow in your understanding of God? How will this help you to love Him with ALL your mind?

6. Take some time to pray. Looking at the statements for which you circled “no” or “somewhat,” ask God for wisdom. Here is a sample prayer, but feel free to write your own.

Dear Lord, thank You for all that You are teaching me regarding ways to love You. You are worthy of all my love and affection, and yet You know that I am prone to distraction and wandering. Forgive me. Thank You for Your faithfulness despite my own unfaithfulness. Lord, You know that I have _____ going on in my life right now. I would like to learn more about _____. Help me take the next steps. Give me wisdom to know how to utilize the time and mental capacity You have given me to learn more about You from the Book all about You. Along the way, if I have a lack of desire, Lord, please renew my mind and change my heart. If I have desire, I will praise You, Lord, because You did that. If I feel guilty, please help me take that thought captive and compare it to what I know of You, Your patience and loving kindness. You have given me a helper in the Holy Spirit and promised to give wisdom when I ask; therefore, I will rest assured that You will show me the way. Amen

Day Five - Priscilla

Review [Mark 12:29-31](#)

1. We have a good example in the Bible of a woman who knew her theology and was able to assist in the theological formation of an evangelist.
Her name? Priscilla.

If possible, refer to a map of Paul's second missionary journey as you read the following texts.

Scripture	Observations
Acts 18:1-4 After this Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. And he went to see them, and because he was of the same trade he stayed with them and worked, for they were tentmakers by trade. And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and tried to persuade Jews and Greeks.	What do you learn about Priscilla?

Acts 18:5-17 When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul was occupied with the word, testifying to the Jews that the Christ was Jesus. And when they opposed and reviled him, he shook out his garments and said to them, “Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent. From now on I will go to the Gentiles.” And he left there and went to the house of a man name Titius Justus, a worshiper of God. His house was next door to the synagogue. Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, together with his entire household. And many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized. And the Lord said to Paul one night in a vision, “Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, for I am with you and no one will attack you to harm you, for I have many in this city who are my people.” And he stayed a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

But when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews made a united attack on Paul and brought him before the tribunal, saying “This man is persuading people to worship God contrary to the law.” But when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, “If it were a matter of wrongdoing or vicious crime, O Jews, I would have reason to accept your complaint. But since it is a matter of questions about words and names and your own law, see to it yourselves. I refuse to be a judge of these things.” And he drove them from the tribunal. And they all seized Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him in front of the tribunal. But Gallio paid no attention to any of this.

How long were Priscilla, Aquila, and Paul together in Corinth?

What was the spiritual situation like there?

What does this suggest about what Priscilla and Aquila experienced there and why they remained with Paul? (See also **Romans 16:3-4**)

Acts 18:18-21 After this, Paul stayed many days longer and then took leave of the brothers (or brothers and sisters) and set sail for Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila. At Cenchreae he had cut his hair, for he was under a vow. And they came to Ephesus, and he left them there, but he himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. When they asked him to stay for a longer period, he declined. But on taking leave of them he said, "I will return to you if God wills," and he set sail from Ephesus.	Where do Priscilla and Aquila go, and why do you think they stay there?
Acts 18:24-28 Now a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord. And being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John. He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. And when he wished to cross to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him. When he arrived, he greatly helped those who through grace had believed, for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, showing by the Scriptures that the Christ was Jesus.	What do you note of Priscilla and Aquila's influence? Why do you think the author documented this? (See also 1 Corinthians 3:5-6)

"We don't just study the Bible to have more knowledge, we study it for transformation."

-Elizabeth Woodson¹²

2. How is Priscilla's life an inspiration to you? Which of her characteristics do you desire for God to develop in your life?

In one or two sentences, describe what it means to you to love the Lord your God with ALL your MIND.

How can you demonstrate this aspect of your love for God as you love those near you and those you encounter?

Digging Deeper

Biblical Theology & Old Testament Foreshadowing of Jesus

The story of David and Goliath is one of the best-known stories of the Old Testament. Even those who didn't grow up going to church probably know the giant Goliath was killed by young David with a stone and a slingshot.

1. How would you summarize the main point of the Bible story of David and Goliath? Be sure to answer this question before moving forward.

Let's take another look at this story. In your Bibles, read **1 Samuel 17:1-52**. Use it to complete the Old Testament example in the following chart. The other columns have been done for you.

	Creation	David and Goliath, Old Testament example	New Testament – Today	Future - New Heaven & New Earth
Who is the Christ or who foreshadows the Christ?	Offspring of woman		Jesus	Jesus
How does the Christ or foreshadowed Christ defeat the serpent figure?	... strikes the head of...		... endured the cross to destroy the power of death ...	... throws out forever and ever ...
Who is the serpent fig- ure (aka enemy of God)?	the offspring of the Serpent (Genesis 3:15)		the Devil (Hebrews 2:14)	the Devil (Revelation 20:10)

Biblical theology is the study of how the books of the Bible work together to tell one overarching story through the interconnection of various themes that can be traced from Genesis through Revelation. The theme of the serpent is found throughout Scripture and the story of David and Goliath is just one example. This chart traces that theme. You might have been surprised to see Goliath as a serpent-like figure in God's overarching story. The author of **1 Samuel** gives us clues that help us make this connection. Notice Goliath wears bronze and his bronze coat is made of scale armor (**v. 5 NIV**). He defies God and His people (**v. 10, 26, 45**) and attempts to destroy or enslave all of God's people (**v. 9**) over forty days and nights (**v. 16**). Finally, we see David, a foreshadow of Christ, defeat this serpent enemy by striking his head (**v. 49, 51**).

2. In what other ways does David foreshadow Jesus in this story? Complete the following statements:

David and Jesus were from _____ (**v. 12**)

David and Jesus were literal/spiritual _____ (**v. 15**)

David and Jesus were sent to the battle by their _____ (**v. 17-18**)

David and Jesus's own people did not receive them (**v. 28**) and they were _____ (**v. 42-44**)

David and Jesus expressed _____ as they faced the enemy. (**v. 37**)

David and Jesus went out _____, only with God, to face the enemy. (**v. 48**)

David and Jesus used their enemies' deathly _____ to achieve their ultimate victory. (**v. 45, 50-51**)

David and Jesus's victory saved God's people from becoming lifelong/eternal _____ of the enemy. (**v. 9**)

3. Take a look back at your answer to the first question. After completing the above work, are there any changes you would make to your answer? If so, note your changes and explain why.

4. How does seeing this story's connection to the overall narrative of the Bible, specifically that of Jesus Christ, affect your view of and love for God?



Week Four

Teaching Notes

“The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor
as yourself.’ There is no commandment
greater than these.”

Mark 12:31

Week Five

Loving God with ALL Your Strength

MEMORY VERSE

Jesus answered, “The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with ALL your heart and with ALL your soul and with ALL your mind and with ALL your strength.’ The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” Mark 12:29-31

Day One - Review

Review [Mark 12:29-31](#).

1. Look back over your notes from the teaching and last week’s lesson. What are one or two of your main takeaways?
2. What instructions does Paul give to believers to renew their mind? Fill in the blanks.

“Any model for theological reflection that does not drive us to love God and love our neighbor is theology severed from its biblical anchor and purpose.”

– Christy Thornton¹

_____ the old self ([Ephesians 4:22](#))
_____ the new self ([Ephesians 4:24](#))
_____ arguments against the knowledge of God ([2 Corinthians 10:5](#))
_____ every thought _____ to obey Christ ([2 Corinthians 10:5](#))

3. What are some things that God wants us to remember ([2 Peter 3:1-3](#), [Isaiah 46:3-10](#))? What help do we have?

4. What is one attribute of God you saw on display in last week's lesson? How does knowing this about God change the way you live or think?

5. Why is the story of Priscilla important?



Day Two - Glorify God in Your Body

Review [Mark 12:29-31](#).

We have deeply studied the topics of loving God with our hearts, minds, and souls. We are now adding the physical component, the body. As embodied creatures considering how to love God, we should ask, “What does it look like to be a follower of Jesus with our strength?” Scripture has the answer.

1. Read straight through the following verses. Then read through them a second time underlining key words and recording your main takeaways. Refer to the surrounding passage in your Bible for greater context if needed.

Scripture	Key Takeaways
1 Corinthians 6:12-13 “All things are lawful for me,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful for me,” but I will not be dominated by anything. “Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food”—and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.	
1 Corinthians 6:18-20 Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.	
Romans 12:1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.	

2. Two key phrases in these verses are “living sacrifice” and “temple of the Holy Spirit.” What is your understanding of these phrases? Summarize them below.

3. According to 1 Corinthians 6:13, our present physical bodies are going to be destroyed. Is that an argument that we can find physical sources of satisfaction and expression in this world without spiritual consequences? How would you craft a response to that perspective?

“We are to love him with all our strength, that is, actively. I am to throw my whole soul into the worship and adoration of God. I am not to keep back a single hour, or a single farthing of my wealth, or a single talent that I have, or a single atom of strength, bodily or mental, from the worship of God. I am to love him with all my strength.”

- Charles Spurgeon²

4. Based on your observations of the verses above, share one or two sentences that articulate what it means to love God with your body.

5. Look at your answer above. Are your statements congruent with your present life? Or is what you've articulated challenging for you? Explain.

Day Three – With All You've Got

Review [Mark 12:29-31](#).

The importance of a good night's sleep, a healthy diet, and physical exercise is not typically controversial. We can all agree these choices promote a healthy body and that a healthy body aids us in serving the Lord and the community around us.

Poor physical health can happen irrespective of our personal choices and places limits on our physical abilities. Be it a season of chronic illness, aging, pregnancy, post-partum, or menopause, we can find ourselves physically weak. Can God be pleased with those whose limits prevent them from filling their calendars with ministry or volunteer activities?

Even those in good health may very well end the day with feelings of guilt for not accomplishing “enough.” We may not ask this question out loud, but many women wonder, “Do I need to do more? Is God pleased with the degree of my love for Him and service to others?”

So, we must ask,

- 1. Is loving the Lord with all our strength exclusive to physical, bodily strength?
- 2. How do our limitations factor into our love of God and serving Him?

Let’s take a look at the Hebrew and Greek words for strength:

	Deuteronomy 6:5	Mark 12:30
Original Word	Maod (pronounced meh-ode)- Might, force, abundance (noun) with force, exceedingly, very much, with muchness, to a great degree (adverb)	Ischus (pronounced is-khoos’)- ability, force, strength, might, power

The Lord wants us to love Him with the force of our will, with all our abilities, to the greatest degree, and with all our might. The phrase that comes to mind is “Love the Lord with all you’ve got!” This certainly encompasses our bodies but is not limited to them.

We are talking about loving God with all our might even when life is filled with drudgery, overwhelming responsibilities, loss, and relational pain. This is not easy! Where does the strength come from to love the Lord “with all we’ve got” in the ups and downs of daily life? Does this inner fortitude spring from our own grit and effort?

“Our bodies are active participants in ascribing honor and glory to God. They are either used to worship Him or serve ourselves. We are to sacrificially use our bodies for His glory rather than our own.”

- Kristin L. Kellen³

1. In the following Scriptures, using a red pencil, circle the words “strength,” “strong,” and “might.”

1 Peter 4:11b . . . whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 6:10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.

Ephesians 1:19-21 . . . and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places.

Who can we confidently say is the source of our strength?

2. According to 1 Peter 4:11, why is God the supplier of our strength?



We now know who strength comes from, but how do we get it? Does the Holy Spirit download it into us in times of need? Do we need to pray for it without ceasing so that God finally gives in and shares it with us?

Throughout the New Testament, the Christian life is often compared to a marathon. The strength of a long-distance runner is not curated after one day or even one month of intense exercise. Their cardiovascular system and skeletal muscles have been pushed repeatedly over years of straining to run just a little bit farther. What quality have they cultivated? Endurance.

3. In your Bible, read **Romans 5:1-5**. According to **verse 3**, what is the catalyst for endurance?

4. Look up the definition of the word “endurance” in the dictionary and write it here. Include 2-3 synonyms.

5. Do you think that suffering can produce endurance if it is uncoupled from faith in the Lord? (Look back at **verses 1-2**.)

6. Name a few individuals who have been an example to you of loving the Lord while walking through suffering. What have you seen it produce in them?

“There’s no way around it. We attain every form of increased stamina only by the discipline of forcing ourselves (or being forced) to push beyond our current limits and persevere through an arduous, significant, sometimes agonizing, experience of discomfort.”

- Jon Bloom⁴

7. None of us are strangers to suffering. Gratefully, the Lord uses the school of suffering to produce love and endurance in us over time. He doesn't leave us to muster up strength on our own. No, the God who gives us the greatest commandment is also the God whose "love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us." Spend a few minutes in prayer, recalling times of suffering in your life and reflect on how God worked on your behalf.

Day Four – He Must Win the Battle

Review [Mark 12:29-31](#).

The apostle Paul is an obvious example of loving the Lord with all your strength. He spread the gospel by foot over hundreds of miles, wrote letters that would become a sizeable part of the New Testament, endured tortuous beating and imprisonments, and great physical pain for the name of Christ! And yet, even in the greatness of his zeal and passion for Jesus, in the providence of God, Paul was intentionally weakened.

"You do not have to fear or deny your weakness. You do not need to swindle yourself into thinking that you are strong. You can face your weakness with joy because you know that you have been given grace for that weakness; grace that is not a thing, but a person - the Holy Spirit, who makes you the place where he dwells in power."

- Paul David Tripp⁵

1. In the following passage, using a purple pencil, underline the words “weak,” “weakness(es),” and “thorn.” Draw an orange circle around the words “power” and “strong.”

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

How did Paul initially interact with the Lord regarding the “thorn” in his flesh? After he heard from the Lord, what did his response to this weakness become?

2. From the passage above, what is the danger of trying to serve and love the Lord in your own strength?

*Did we in our own strength
confide, our striving would
be losing, were not the right
Man on our side, the Man of
God's own choosing.*

*Dost ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus, it is He;
Lord Sabaoth His name,
from age to age the same;
and He must win the battle.*

- Martin Luther⁶

3. The Lord is not surprised by your weaknesses, limitations, and hardships. Write them here:

How is the grace of God sufficient for you in these difficulties?

4. We should approach the Lord in prayer to ask for relief, healing, and deliverance. Paul was not wrong to do so. Use the space below to write a prayer to the Lord about any “thorn in the flesh” that is in your life, be it physical, relational, or situational. Ask the Lord to help you accept the possibility that He desires to move you to greater dependence on Him by walking you through this trial, instead of removing you from it.



Day Five – Love One Another

Review **Mark 12:29-31**.

Christ-centered community is a place of both giving and receiving love. In fact, one of the amazing ways the Lord gives us strength is through community! You probably don't need much convincing that meaningful relationships are a blessing and a considerable source of strength. Our need for camaraderie is not evidence of inadequacy but is part of God's good design! We need the assistance, love, and fellowship of other human beings to thrive.

1. Let's turn again to **1 Peter 4**, looking at the larger context of **verses 8-11**. Underline each phrase containing a command in red; using a blue pencil underline how that command is to be carried out. Draw an orange circle around the word "strength."

1 Peter 4:8-11 Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies – in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

What do you learn from these verses and what it means to love one another?

2. The word “strength” that you circled above is the same Greek word for strength (ischys) that we find in our **Mark 12** passage. If the strength to serve one another was not supplied by God, what would be the result?

In one or two sentences, describe what it means to you to love the Lord your God, with ALL your STRENGTH.

How can you demonstrate this aspect of your love for God as you love those near you and those you encounter?

Digging Deeper

Situational trials and difficulties aren’t the only limitations we face. We also are bound by the general limitations of humanity. We are finite beings. Creatures, in fact. Only the Creator is without limit. This means we cannot meet every need, maintain a spotless household, volunteer for every ministry, and meet every other societal expectation for being a successful woman. We are confined by space and time, and our expectations for ourselves must reflect that.

“Love is the overflow of joy in God that gladly meets the needs of others.”

- John Piper⁷

In his book *You're Only Human: How Your Limits Reflect God's Design and Why That's Good News*, Kelly Kopic states, "We are never asked to relate to God in any way other than as human creatures."⁸

God knows your limits. He made them.

1. Do you find it easy or challenging to live within your limits?

Are you prone to err on the side of hoarding your time or on the side of overcommitting to service and activities?

What are you loving when you err in that way?

Read the following passages and record your observations.

Scripture	Observations
2 Corinthians 1:9-10 Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead.	

We are not under any requirement to be infinite—infinity is reserved for God alone. Rather, in and through our creaturely limits we are called to love God with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength and to love our neighbor as ourselves. In other words, loving both God and neighbor falls completely within the range of creaturely finitude.

-Kelly Kopic⁸

Scripture	Observations
Philippians 4:11-13 Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me.	

If you are in a season of intense caregiving (for example young children or elderly parents) or any crisis that saps your physical strength, take a moment to commune with God about the limits this season places on your life. Write that prayer below.

If you are not experiencing these challenges now, write a prayer for someone in your life who is, asking the Lord to strengthen them for the task at hand and to give you the willingness and the opportunities to help them.

Week Five

Teaching Notes

Jesus answered,

*“The most important (command) is,
‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.
And you shall love the Lord your God
with **ALL** your heart
and with **ALL** your soul
and with **ALL** your mind
and with **ALL** your strength.’
The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’
There is no other commandment greater than these.”*

Mark 12:29-31

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Meet Our Writing Team

Abby Dubois is passionate about building community through Women's Ministries where she serves as a Bible study facilitator and Titus 2 Mentor. She frequently hosts friends and family around the table or the fire pit where food, fellowship, life, and laughter are shared. From deep heart-dives in a home full of five daughters to outdoor family adventures, she and her husband, Mark, lean into the Lord, who is their life.

Camille Lewis has been happily married to her husband, Garlando, for nineteen years. Born in Los Angeles, Cami relocated to Indianapolis to pursue a career in electrical engineering. She currently serves as a facilitator of Woven, an usher, and a small group leader alongside her husband. Cami loves studying the Bible, immersing herself in documentaries, literature on history, and cultural facts and information. She also enjoys home decorating.

Angela Lehman and her husband, Craig, have two children, Nolan (14) and Isla (12). She is a clinical pharmacist for IU Health, currently working part-time to help patients with multiple sclerosis. One of her favorite things is to lead Women's Bible Study, which she has been doing at College Park Church since 2019. Additionally, she enjoys organization, travel, and her favorite food—which is anything she doesn't have to make.

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Karen Pourcho (editor) and her husband, Bob, have three grown children. After serving and teaching for many years in Community Bible Study, Karen accepted the position of Director of Women's Ministries at College Park in 2015. Besides loving Bible study, Karen enjoys playing the piano, baking, hiking, needlepoint, spending time with her grandchildren, and traveling with her best friend, Bob.

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