





Theme: Authentic FAith in a World of Artificial Intelligence **“Real Love Leads to Real Relationships”**

Weekly Memory Verses:

14 For the whole law can be summed up in this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” – Galatians 5:14

Meditation Moments for Monday, February 2 – Read **John 13:34-35 and 15:9-17**. The love Jesus demonstrated had a quality of gritty determination that is necessary for any relationship to last. It was so bold that in the hours before his arrest and crucifixion, he could say, “No one has greater love than to give up one’s life for one’s friends.” He seemed to be on a resolute path that ended at the cross to show, as clearly as possible, his bold love for that first imperfect group of followers, and all of us who come after them.

 Jesus most likely spoke to his disciples in Aramaic, a common version of Hebrew. But he lived, and taught his followers to live, in a way John captured by using the Greek word “agape”—tough, tireless love. Jesus makes it clear that God does not merely tolerate imperfect and broken people. The gods of other ancient religions sought to punish people for their inability to follow the rules or worship them correctly. The God we see in Jesus Christ is not revolted by sinners. Instead, we see a costly love in the cross where Jesus died to save and redeem us. Why did it take boldness for Jesus to reach a broken world with his love?

 Suppose a spiritually curious or non-religious friend hesitated to join you at worship, asking, “Would your church want someone like me?” Instead of describing programs or facilities, could you authentically say what one person shared after joining Summit: “I cherish my church because I hear and feel the truth that God made me to love me”?

Prayer: O Lord, help me not to pretend to love as an outward disguise to hide my anger or pain. Let me love from my heart as your love overflows and bubbles out of me to bless others. Amen.

Tuesday, February 3 – Read **Philippians 2:5-11**. God in Christ boldly ignored human ideas. Jesus was not the type of “king” people expected. He was not the kind of “savior” human wisdom imagined. He was not “God with us” in a way meant to fit many of our visions of what it means to be God. This early Christian hymn quoted in today’s reading did not focus first on Jesus’ power or majesty. It said he “emptied himself,” the literal Greek verb used in verse 7, for us. Jesus set aside the divine privileges that were his by right and came to serve and even suffer.



The *New International Reader's Version* used simple English to show how this hymn pictured Jesus’ bold ministry pattern: “He made himself nothing.... He appeared as a man. He was humble and obeyed God completely. He did this even though it led to his death. Even worse, he died on a cross!” Does that kind of “career path,” or “life path,” strike you as foolish, or do you sense its bold courage? How does this deepen your understanding of what it means to want to “be like Jesus”? How would this kind of perspective change your relationships?



How can Jesus’ type of true humility open your heart to valuing “God with us”? Scholar H.C. Hewlett in the *New International Bible Commentary* defined humility as “the recognition of our true littleness as those dependent utterly on God.” This was more than just yielding outwardly while remaining inwardly resistant or resentful. What inner barriers to loving people boldly might this kind of humility help clear away?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, an old hymn says you could have called 10,000 angels to take you off the cross. But you chose to save me rather than cling to your own comfort or dignity. Grow your attitude in my heart so I might live that out towards others. Amen.

Wednesday, February 4 – Read **1 Thessalonians 5:10-15**. Writing to one of the earliest Christian communities he had raised up, the apostle Paul thanked God for the Thessalonians’ effort that came from love in [1 Thessalonians 1:3](#). In today’s reading, near the end of the letter, he expanded on the practical, everyday ways that love takes shape in community life. He mentioned loving not only leaders, but also all those who especially needed love because they weren’t likely to find it in society.



Scholar William Barclay said in his *Commentary on Thessalonians*, “Verse 14 picks out those who need special care and attention.” The apostle listed “those who are disorderly,” “the discouraged,” and “the weak,” knowing that at times they would need to “be patient with everyone.” How must that principle shape the ways we minister to people in 2026? To what current issues do you boldly apply Paul’s wisdom about loving “each other and everyone else”?





Paul urged the Thessalonians to respect those who are “working... leading... instructing.” Paul tells church members in 1 Corinthians 16:16 to love their leaders. This is not about putting them on a pedestal. It is to help them to serve better as leaders. In his day, there weren’t yet formal training processes for leaders, but there were already people who used their gifts in faithful service to others. How does Paul’s guidance speak to you given churches and other

institutions in our day which are more organized? How might you balance loving those in leadership while also expecting the best from them?

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, shape me into a person who can warn, comfort, help and be patient with others. Guide me to always pursue the good for others and for your kingdom. Amen.*


Thursday, February 5 – Read **Galatians 5:13-14 and 22 to 6:2**. The apostle Paul's call remains bold for our time, just as it was in the Roman Empire, using words like these: "don't let this freedom be an opportunity to indulge your selfish impulses, but serve each other through love." Paul urged his readers to claim their spiritual freedom in Christ. But that freedom is not a license for selfishness, but an invitation to boldly extend love to everyone we meet. It is defined by what Jesus identified as one of the "great commandments": "love your neighbor as yourself."

 Paul echoed Jesus' teaching in [Matthew 22:35-40](#) where he gives the great commandments. He added a broad claim: "All the Law has been fulfilled in a single statement." Many Christians wrestle with whether love alone can truly fulfill all the law, wondering if more specific practices or doctrines are required. In God's world of grace, can you trust that 'love your neighbor as yourself' is indeed enough—both for yourself and for others?

 Scholar N. T. Wright said in his commentary *Paul for Everyone* that Paul's counsel, "says the public image of the Christian church should be of a gentle, gracious community." It should not be a place "which squashes sensitive souls and offends those who are by nature quiet and reserved." Does it take more boldness to be gentle or to lash out and hurt those who frustrate you, disagree with you, or do things you believe are wrong? When have you seen this kind of gentleness uplift you or someone else?

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, thank you for the privilege and the challenge of being a member of your family. Teach me how to keep valuing and serving my brothers and sisters, both those who are easy to love and those I find challenging. Amen.*

Friday, February 6 – Read **Colossians 3:12-16**. Paul and his protégé Timothy seem to have composed this letter to the Colossians together, probably from a prison cell in Rome. Paul had not been to Colossae himself based on his own words in [Colossians 2:1](#), but knew about the issues the church there faced. He wrote to encourage embracing the new life and identity that Christians were to put on as they followed Jesus's example. He urged them to embody forgiveness, peacefulness, and thankfulness, even in tough situations.

 Verse 14 noted that "love" is over all the other virtues and binds them as the common thread. Like Jesus, Paul set love as the standard with which all followers of Jesus should treat people. The idea is that there is an expected way to live that is different than what the world often claims. We are to live a life that bears witness to the truth of the gospel WITHIN us. We are saved by Christ's work on the cross, so we live differently. How can "over all these things put on love" make your daily decisions more straightforward, though not always easier to live out?



Verses 15 and 16 identify gratitude as essential to this life of love. We have talked in the series about the importance of worship and prayer in staying grounded in a fast-changing world. Doing so helps us stay centered on recognizing God's love for us and God's gifts to us and then responding with thanks. When have you noticed how gratitude helped you love more boldly or see a difficult situation through new eyes? When has gratitude helped you see another person in a different light?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank you for loving me. Help me love myself and others as boldly as you do. Amen.

Saturday, February 7 – Read **Romans 12:9-18, 13:8, 14:7-9 and 15:7-9**. The apostle Paul's letters usually included what many scholars call a "therefore" section, laying out how to apply the big truths he'd shared in the letter's first part. Today's readings from the extensive four-chapter "therefore" section of Romans show how the apostle wove the key idea of loving boldly through all his practical commands. Romans 12:10 stood Roman and Greek culture on its head. As philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre noted, humility wasn't considered a virtue in that world. Cicero wrote, "Rank must be preserved," and Aristotle's ideal man was "extremely proud." Paul's call to show honor to one another was radically counter-cultural. Paul ended the section by stressing that we don't accept others because we are "nice." Romans 15:7 reminds us that we accept others **because** God in Christ has accepted us.



Read what various churches put in their "What We Believe" statements (it's easy on the Internet). You'll generally find lists of at least 8 to 15 items. Yet in Romans 14:17, to smaller "house churches" in Rome that Paul refers to in [Romans 16:5, 10, 15](#), Paul conveyed the central truth of life in God's kingdom in just 3 elements: "God's kingdom is... about righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." When have you experienced these three things in your life?



In Romans 13:8, he said the only binding Christian obligation is, "the obligation to love each other." He repeated his expansive principle from [Galatians 5:14](#), saying, "Whoever loves another person has fulfilled the Law." How did Paul's searching discussion of how divine love can shape your life make, "love others boldly," not a hollow sentiment but a challenge to join in Jesus' world-changing way of loving?

Prayer: God who **is** love, guide and shape me by infusing my mind and heart with your bold love. Teach me how to reach beyond distrust and division often found in our AI driven world to make this a more loving place that reflects Your will for us. Amen.