

**40**

# **Days of Love**



**We Were Made for Relationships**

**Lesson 5**

**LOVE IS NOT SELFISH**

**St. James Baptist Church**

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(1)

### Key Verse

Love isn't selfish.

1 Corinthians 13:5 (CEV)

### Love Is Not Selfish

We are a "self" conscious society.

*They all turn to their own way, each seeks his own gain.*

*(Isaiah 56:11 NIV)*

You can't be selfish and loving at the same time.

Selfishness only causes trouble.

**(Proverbs 28:25 TEV)**

### *Antidotes to Selfishness*

1. **Build relationships.**

*You are members of God's very own family...and you belong in God's household with every other Christian. (Ephesians 2:19 TLB)*

*Let us not give up the habit of meeting together...Instead, let us encourage one another. (Hebrews 10:25 TEV)*

2. **Give yourself away. (ministry/service)**

*[God has] given us new lives from Christ Jesus; and long ages ago he planned that we should spend these lives in helping others.*

**(Ephesians 2:10 TLB)**

*"Only those who throw away their lives for my sake and for the sake of the Good News will ever know what it means to really live."*

**(Mark 8:35 TLB)**

(2)

### 3. Practice **self denial**.

*Look out for one another's interests, not just for your own.*

*The attitude you should have is the one that Christ Jesus had.*

**(Philippians 2:4-5 TEV)**

*"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." (Luke 9:23 NIV)*

On the list, put a check beside the areas where God is challenging you to grow.

#### **Denying Yourself Is When...**

You can watch other people prosper and succeed without feeling jealous, but rather rejoice in their success.

You see other people's needs being met with abundance, while your needs are far greater, yet you don't question God or fail to be grateful for what you do have.

You choose to serve someone else and you choose to put their needs ahead of yours.

You share your faith knowing that you may be insulted or put down.

You don't seek praise or fish for compliments. You don't seek the approval of others. You can live without constantly being recognized and applauded.

You draw out the other person in conversation instead of telling your stories and opinions.

You can accept criticism willingly and learn from it with a teachable attitude.

You can be content with less than the best of circumstances without griping or complaining.

You accept interruptions that God places in your schedule and you patiently endure irritations.

(3)

### **Discovery Questions**

1. Turn to the checklist of your outline notes. Which example is the most challenging to you? Why? How will growth in this area affect your relationships?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Tell about a time when someone did something unselfish for you. How did it impact you?

### **Living on Purpose: Ministry**

When you serve together, you make a difference in the lives of others, and you build strong relationships in your group.

Take time now to finish planning your group's *40 Days of Love* ministry project, Reaching Out Together. For a list of suggestions and guidelines to get you started, turn to Session Two, page 35.

Then, use the checklist below:

\_\_\_ What are we going to do?

\_\_\_ Where?

(4)

\_\_\_ When (date and time)?

\_\_\_ Who will do what?

\_\_\_ What materials do we need (paint, cleaning supplies, etc.)?

**Putting It into Practice:  
The One Person Assignment**

How can you refocus your attention to really see that person? Think of an unselfish act of kindness you can do for them. Do it out of conviction, not your convenience. Give without expecting anything back. Take action this week.

(5)

**Prayer Direction**

Ask the Lord to help each of you be more sensitive to the needs of a specific person outside of your normal circle of friends and family. Pray for the Lord to help you serve that person, even though they may not return the favor. Conclude by thanking the Lord for showing you how to really live.