

Week 4 - Devotional Guide: *Loving the Right Way*

Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for loving us so completely through Jesus. As we open Your Word, help us to hear Your voice. Teach us how to love rightly — not with a love that clings to temporary things, but with a heart anchored in You. Speak to us today and show us what it means to love You first. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Read again the passage from Sunday's harvest Service: 1 John 2:12–17 (NIV)

Summary of the Passage

John begins this section of his letter by addressing three groups — children, young people, and adults, acknowledging their faith journeys and reminding them of their spiritual standing. Then, he shifts to a loving but clear warning: *do not love the world or anything in it*. John is not saying we shouldn't care about creation or people — rather, he warns against a kind of *misplaced love* that is rooted in desires for pleasure, possessions, and pride. These things don't come from God, and they don't last. John wants believers to remember that true life — eternal life — is found in doing the will of God, not in chasing after worldly satisfaction.

Reflection Summary: *Loving the Right Way*

This message calls us to examine what — or who — holds first place in our hearts. God calls us to love people, creation, and enjoy His gifts. But He also warns us not to let the gifts replace the Giver. It's easy to become distracted by the demands and delights of daily life — work, family schedules, goals, and comfort. Yet, slowly, these things can start to take over our time, affection, and loyalty. Like Demas, we might not even notice the shift until our love for the world has eclipsed our love for God. John calls us back: to remember who we are, to resist the pull of temporary things, and to live in the fullness that only comes through loving God first.

Discussion / Reflection Questions

1. **Which verse stood out to you most in this passage, and why?**
2. **What does “loving the world” look like in your own life?** Are there any areas where the temporary things have started to compete with your love for God?

3. **How do we balance enjoying life and God's good gifts without becoming overly attached to them?**
4. **Think about your weekly routines.** Where does God fit in? What might it look like to "seek first His kingdom" (Matthew 6:33)?
5. **Which of the worldly temptations listed — cravings, pride, possessions — do you find most challenging?**
6. **What helps you realign your heart with God when life starts to feel spiritually out of balance?**
7. **Who in your life models this kind of God-first love well? What can you learn from them?**

Action Point

Take time this week to *fast* from something that's been taking up too much space in your heart — social media, shopping, entertainment, and use that time to reconnect with God in prayer, worship, or Scripture.

Ask yourself: **What is one practical way I can love God more fully this week?**

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for loving us so deeply. Help us to love You above all else. Teach us to enjoy Your gifts without letting them become idols. Keep our hearts focused on what lasts — Your love, Your truth, and Your presence. When we are tempted to drift, draw us back. Help us seek Your kingdom first in all we do. In Your precious name, Amen.