

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### ***Christian Leadership***

*How to influence the ideas, opinions and actions of others for Jesus Christ.*

#### **Lesson 2: Triple Love Poured Out (Day One) Love, Approval and Tough Times**

In lesson 1 we learned that Jesus is our leadership model. The instructions or blueprint for following Jesus is the Bible. By following the Bible in spirit and truth and building on Jesus, the Cornerstone, we can become purposeful leaders like Jesus having God's power released through us for good.

*And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."*  
Matthew 3:17

1. After Jesus was baptized in Matthew 3:17, God the Father said, "This is my \_\_\_\_\_ whom I \_\_\_\_\_: with him \_\_\_\_\_ well \_\_\_\_\_.

God spoke love and encouragement into Jesus' life. Jesus could be confident of His Father's love; He could rest in God's support of Him. The Greek verb for well pleased is eudokeo. It also means to take delight or pleasure in,<sup>1</sup> to think well of and to approve.<sup>2</sup> God's love and His approval defined Jesus' ministry and leadership. God's love and His approval should be the motivating factors in your ministry and leadership of His people.

2. How do you think God's love and approval affected Jesus' life and the choices He made?

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3. How will being confident of God's love and approval for you affect how you lead others?

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<sup>1</sup> Bibleworks 6, 2003.

<sup>2</sup> Strong, James, "The New Strong's Complete Dictionary of Bible Words, Thomas Nelson Publisher, Nashville, 1996.

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God affirmed His love and approval for Jesus at the very beginning of Jesus' public ministry. God had confidence in Jesus and expected Him to succeed and to be obedient. He took pleasure in His Son and was delighted in Him. Nevertheless, right after God spoke of His love and approval of His Son, the Spirit led Jesus in the desert to fast for 40 days and forty nights (Matthew 4:1-11). While there Jesus was tempted by the devil.

4. Do you view times of testing, struggles or pain as a sign of God's love and confidence in you?  
Y N (Circle one) Explain you answer.

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Many times when people face temptation or hardship, they immediately feel that God does not love them or care about them. This is far from the truth. Remember God created man; man did not create God. Have you heard the joke, "God created man in His image and man returned the favor." We try to understand God according to our frail minds. But the Bible is clear that our ways are not His ways (Isaiah 55:8-9).

However, sometimes you may be facing the Father's discipline. God may be taking you through a rough or difficult time in order to teach you obedience. He may have let things go bleak in order to correct, train or instruct you in His ways.

*because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son.*  
Hebrews 12:6

5. According to Hebrews 12:6, the Lord \_\_\_\_\_ those he \_\_\_\_\_  
and he \_\_\_\_\_ everyone he \_\_\_\_\_ as a \_\_\_\_\_.

When you are going through a particularly difficult time ask God if you have been disobedient or sinned in some way (Matthew 18:7-9, Psalm 39:11). If you have sinned, confess, repent and accept forgiveness in Christ (1 John 1:9). Then move on. Keep the focus on Jesus and not yourself. Self pity is a sin and morbid introspection is dangerous to your mental health. If you have not sinned, still keep your eyes upon Jesus and not yourself. He is your source of joy and peace!

You and those you will be leading must look at personal situations through the life of Jesus. He was loved and approved of completely by the Father and yet was immediately placed in a difficult situation in the desert. He faced difficult challenges in life and death. Don't ever forget that He was asked to take our sins into His body and suffer crucifixion. And He was without sin. Study Matthew, Mark, Luke and John and memorize verses from these books to keep your focus on Jesus the Christ.

God raised Jesus from the dead and He reigns over heaven and earth. We are promised eternal life and the gift of reigning with Jesus (2 Timothy 2:11-12, Revelation 20:6). God loves you so

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much that He wants to spend eternity with you. Think about what Paul said, *For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.*<sup>NIV 2</sup>  
Corinthians 4:17

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**Personal Application:**

Are you going through a rough or difficult season now? Y N (Circle one) If yes, please share as much as you would like and how we can pray for you.

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*May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope,<sup>17</sup> encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.* 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17

*But commission Joshua, and encourage and strengthen him, for he will lead this people across and will cause them to inherit the land that you will see." Deuteronomy 3:28*

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**Lesson 2: Triple Love Poured Out (Day Two) A New Creation**

In day one we looked at Jesus’ baptism and temptation in the desert. Notice how God the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit were working together. Recall from **Lesson One, Building a Leadership Model** that we learned that Jesus is part of a divine mystery that we call the Trinity. There is God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. They have a perfect loving and harmonious relationship. They are one. Jesus wants Christians to be one with God and even prayed to the Father “that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me.” (John 17:22-23)

In order to be one with God we must be born again and become a new creation. We are physically born into the old order because Adam and Eve disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden. They sinned by turning away from God and turning to their own selfish desires. They had free will, free choice. Thus Adam gave mankind sin as a legacy (inheritance).

*For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man.<sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.* 1 Corinthians 15:21-22

1. According to 1 Corinthians 15:21 what did Adam bring into the perfect world that God created? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. In Adam all \_\_\_\_\_, so in \_\_\_\_\_ all will be made \_\_\_\_\_

3. Why do you think this is important for you to know as a Christian leader?

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Original or inherited sin is a doctrine (belief) of Christianity (Romans 5:12-21). Sin is universal to mankind. It is part of our fallen nature due to Adam and Eve's first sin or rebellion against God. He told them what to do and they disobeyed. They had free choice and chose to believe Satan who was already in active rebellion against God.

The Bible is clear that we are conceived in sin (Psalm 51:5) but does not give us God's reason behind the inheritance of our sin nature from Adam and Eve. The Bible is also clear that God did not create sin nor does He cause mankind to sin. God did create the potential for evil, that is, man has the potential to turn away from God. If Adam and Eve had trusted and obeyed God we would all live in loving harmony in an idyllic (heavenly) garden. But God wanted, and still wants His creatures to desire His company and love Him freely and not in a forced or compulsory state.

*And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden;<sup>17</sup> but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."*<sup>NIV</sup> Genesis 2:16-17

4. What would you say to someone who said it wasn't fair that mankind had to pay the price for Adam and Eve's sin? \_\_\_\_\_

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If you and I were given the opportunity to be the first man and woman, we most likely would have committed the first sin also. Perhaps Adam and Eve lasted in their perfect state a lot longer than we would have under the same circumstances. Jesus Christ proved that God is not only honorable but extremely fair and just to all mankind. Ultimately those who accept God's free gift of Jesus' sacrifice do not pay the price for Adam and Eve's sin. Jesus paid the price for our inherited sin and all the evil things that we have done since we were born.

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!*  
2 Corinthians 5:17

5. According to 2 Corinthians 5:17, are you a new creation? Why or why not?

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We are born into sin and have a sinful nature (Psalm 51:5, Ephesians 2:3). Adam ate from the forbidden **tree**. However in Christ we are made brand new. Christ was crucified on the **tree** (cross) to pay for the sin of Adam and all the sins that have ever been committed.

When God the Father draws or attracts a person, he or she is given the opportunity to eat spiritually of Christ (John 6:44-47). However, when the invitation comes, one must accept the invitation to the gift of life. In the garden of Eden God said not to eat of a certain tree, in our “garden” we are told to eat from the tree (cross) of Christ. Those who believe and follow Christ are redeemed, bought back with a price through Jesus, the last Adam (1 Corinthians 15:45, Romans 5:12-21).

**6.** Why do you and other Christians still sin after trusting Jesus as Lord and Savior?

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After we are born again in Christ we are a new creation. Our sins are forgiven and we have God’s Spirit to lead us in all righteousness. We clearly have the ability to do what is right (Romans 6:11-14) but we do sin (1 John 1:8).

God does not take away our human nature and our ability to choose good from evil (Romans 6:19). We still have free will and we still have Satan and his followers who prowl around looking for someone to devour (1 Peter 5:8). In our natural body, we will always be tempted to put ourselves, our comfort and our own satisfaction above others. Plus we continue to live in a fallen and corrupted world which can give us cause to pause in our journey with Christ.

Even Jesus, in His humanity was tempted. (Matthew 4:1-11) How was He tempted? He was tempted to turn rocks into bread when He was hungry, to receive His reward early (if He worshipped Satan) and avoid the cross (Matthew 26:38-39). Jesus was perfect and in every temptation He had, He never sinned. He always chose God’s way.

Jesus lives within the believer and helps us to resist temptation like He did. We need to allow Jesus to take over and work through us. (Philippians 4:13). Once we are saved we begin the process called sanctification. We grow in holiness and purity each day. (Hebrews 12:14-15, 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8) As a new creation we do not enjoy sin nor do we habitually sin but we do make wrong choices.

**7.** Are you cooperating with Jesus and His Spirit in the process of your sanctification? \_\_\_\_\_

**8.** How are you helping others in their process of being sanctified? \_\_\_\_\_

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Each member of the Blessed Trinity was involved in the creation of the world and each is involved with you as a new creation. They are interested in you and in your life. God loves you

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with a powerful and amazing love. No one comes close to loving you like your Triune God, Father, Jesus and Holy Spirit!

Now as a new creation you have the mind of Christ. (1 Corinthians 2:16). You are righteous and holy before God. You have the ability as a new creation to look upon people, circumstances and situations in an entirely different way. You can lead effectively!

### **How did you receive this new mind with different attitudes and emotions?**

*Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.* John 3:6

9. Who gives birth to your spirit? \_\_\_\_\_

*"No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.* John 6:44

10. Jesus says that no one can come to Him (believe & trust in Him) unless the \_\_\_\_\_ draws (attracts, pulls) him.

*I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."* John 6:51

11. In John 6:51 Jesus says that He is the \_\_\_\_\_ bread that came down from heaven.

If anyone \_\_\_\_\_ of this \_\_\_\_\_, he will \_\_\_\_\_ forever. This \_\_\_\_\_

is my \_\_\_\_\_, which I will \_\_\_\_\_ for the \_\_\_\_\_ of the world.

We must have food (bread) in order to physically live. We must have Jesus (spiritual food) to have an abundant (not wasted) life now and eternal life after our body dies. This is an excellent metaphor (symbol – one thing used to represent another). Our spiritual being (consciousness not associated with a physical body) depends wholly and unequivocally upon our continuing relationship with Jesus.

What happens if we just eat a few crumbs of bread each day? We may remain alive but we will be unhealthy and have very little energy. It is the same with eating spiritually of Jesus. We must partake of Jesus continually if we are to be healthy in our spirit.

A leader must be strong in his/her spiritual being in order to make an impact on our world. God uses people weak in body but not weak in spirit. He looks for those who are wholly committed to Him. Psalm 34:15 tells us that *The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their cry;*

God is looking for leaders who are righteous by taking in full and frequent meals of Jesus. He is looking for those who believe they are righteous in Christ and want God to use them for His glory. If you are lacking holy zeal for the Lord simply pray for it. What James 1:6-8 says about seeking wisdom is true in all holy things we ask for in Jesus' name: *But when he asks, he must*

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*believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind . That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.*

Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins. The first meal that you share with Jesus is when our spirits (thinking and understanding) believe\trust\place faith in the truth that Jesus in his human form (flesh) was crucified and took your sins into His body. This act was acceptable to God for the punishment you deserve for all of your sins.

Man can make, design and form but only God creates. No one but God can create a universe and no one but God can create a clean heart. Create means to bring into existence that which did not exist before. Prior to Christ in our lives, you and I were totally unclean. All our righteous acts were like filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6). Our choices may have seemed morally good, but anything done outside of God is self serving and therefore sin.

12. What are some ways that you are a new creation since becoming a Christian? In other words, what kinds of things do you now do and think? \_\_\_\_\_

13. What other kinds of things would you like to see developed from your new heart?

We have the choice to follow God’s ways and accept His grace or not. In other words we can grow spiritually with His help or not. Take a few minutes and ask Jesus to work through you and develop your character, attitudes and mind so that you continually have a pure and holy heart.

*Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Psalm 51:10*

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**Personal Application:**

*He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”<sup>5</sup> He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." Revelation 21:4-5*

Meditate and ask God to speak to you through Revelation 21:4-5. Write God’s response. Write your response to God. \_\_\_\_\_

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### Lesson 2: Triple Love Poured Out (Day Three) The Love of the Father

Love is one of those words that we all understand but might have difficulty coming up with a definition. Most of the time we think of feelings of love toward the opposite sex. But love is much more. It is the basis of our created world. God created the universe out of love. He created you out of love.

Love is a loyal, dependable, unselfish, generous and caring concern for another. It is also extreme liking, radical devotion and genuine affection. We learned that our Triune God has perfect love for each other and now we are going to see that God loves you also. The Father and Jesus and the Holy Spirit love you. Triune, Triple love is indeed poured out on you!

God is reliable and dependable in His relationship with you. He will never let you down. He is unselfish and generous towards you. He wants what is best for you. God cares deeply about you and is totally interested in all that you do. He never misses any special event in your life but is always there cheering you on and helping you succeed in life. In addition He is always by your side when everyone else has left and abandoned you. Even if you don't feel or see His presence, He is working on your behalf to make things right. He brings perfect peace and joy into your life. God is eternally giving. He always delights in giving you good gifts. Plus He really, really likes you, is radically devoted to you and has genuine affection for you.

*The LORD appeared to us in the past, saying: "I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness. Jeremiah 31:3*

1. In Jeremiah 31:3, the LORD was speaking to Israel but it most certainly applies to His people today. The LORD says: "I have \_\_\_\_\_ you with and an \_\_\_\_\_ love; I have \_\_\_\_\_ you with \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_.

*And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him. 1 John 4:16*

2. 1 John 4:16 tell us that God is \_\_\_\_\_. We \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ on the love God has for us.

Don't doubt God's love for you. We are told that we can know, understand and recognize with certainty that God loves us. We are also told that we can rely, depend, and trust on the love that God has for us. That means do not look at circumstances to determine God's love for you – look to Him.

When we think of God's attributes such as His power and wisdom, we are overwhelmed at how small our strength and intellect is in comparison to His. God is all powerful and all wise. In the same way, God's love is so amazing that we have a difficult time comprehending its magnitude. God is all-loving.

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3. Why do you think a leader needs to know and rely on God's love? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Have you considered how much your Heavenly Father loves you? Yes No (Circle one)

*The LORD your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing." Zephaniah 3:17*

5. Who takes great delight in you, calms all your fears, and sings celebration songs over you?

The \_\_\_\_\_ my \_\_\_\_\_. Is God with you sometimes, most of the time or always? (Circle one)

*But I am like an olive tree flourishing in the house of God; I trust in God's unfailing love for ever and ever. Psalm 52:8*

Olive trees were valuable for their strong wood, oil and of course olives. God gave the trees to bless mankind and animals with shelter, safety and fruit . In Psalm 52 David compares himself to an olive tree thriving in the house of God.

David had been anointed (oil from olive tree) to be king of Israel but Saul was still in power. Saul not only was in power but was always plotting to get rid of David. It is during this time that David compares himself to a tree that not only withstands the storms of life but actually prospers during difficult circumstances.

David is a leader who has confidence that God loves him. He knows God's love for him will never stop or fail. David finds his peace and prosperity in God and not in his circumstances.

6. According to Psalm 52:8, how long will God love you? For \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

7. Will His love fall short, be incomplete or fail you in some way? Yes No (Circle one)

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**Personal Application:** Meditate on the following scriptures and then sincerely pray the prayer that follows the verse.

*So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. Genesis 1:27*

*Many waters cannot quench love; rivers cannot wash it away. If one were to give all the wealth of his house for love, it would be utterly scorned. Song of Solomon 8:7*

*The LORD said to me, "Go, show your love to your wife again, though she is loved by another and is an adulteress. Love her as the LORD loves the Israelites, though they turn to other gods and love the sacred raisin cakes." Hosea 3:1*

O LOVE,

In love You created all mankind. In love, You created me in Your own image! And You reveal that many waters cannot quench Your love for me; rivers cannot wash it away. Though I have sinned and have turned away from you like a traitor, You still love me. You even make a way in Jesus for my sins to be forgiven.

You are reliable and dependable in Your relationship with me. You will never let me down. You are unselfish and generous towards me. You want what is best for me. O God, You care deeply about me and are totally interested in all that I do. You never miss any special event in my lives but are always there cheering me on and helping me succeed in life. You are always by my sides when everyone else has left and abandoned me. Even if I don't feel or see Your presence, I know You are working on my behalf to make things right. You bring perfect peace and joy into my lives.

O God, You are eternally giving. Thank You for always delighting in me and giving me good gifts. I know that You really, really like me and are radically devoted to me. Thank You God for having genuine affection for me. In other words, thank You for loving me. Like all Your attributes Your love is overwhelmingly magnanimous. In Jesus, Amen.

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**Lesson 2: Triple Love Poured Out (Day Four) The Love of Christ**

“Jesus loves me this I know for the Bible tells me so. Little ones to Him belong, they are weak but He is strong. Yes, Jesus loves me, yes Jesus loves, yes Jesus loves me, the Bible tells me so.”

Perhaps when you began to read the above lyrics, you ended up singing this child's song to yourself. It is a good song to help children understand that Jesus does love them. It is a good song to let us know that Jesus loves us. Yes, Jesus loves you! You can know that Jesus loves you because of what the Bible tells us. You can be a leader for God when you feel weak because He is always strong and will work through you.

**1. Have you considered how much Christ Jesus loves you? Yes No (Circle one)**

*Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross! Philippians 2:6-8*

Although Jesus is the second Person of the Trinity and fully God, He did not demand or expect His divine rights. He put aside His glory and by the power of the Holy Spirit was born of a virgin named Mary. He stooped down from the most powerful and awesome position in the universe to become a lowly man on earth in a frail body. He could be bruised and cut both physically and emotionally. He experienced trauma and pain. But He never blamed you.

**2. Have you ever given up your rights for someone else? If so describe what you did? Has anyone ever given up their rights for you? If so describe what he/she did?**

3. Could you or anyone you know possibly take as deep a plunge in position as Jesus?

Yes No (Circle One) Why or Why not? \_\_\_\_\_

4. What are your thoughts when you consider how Jesus humbled Himself for you?

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‘Actions speak louder than words’ is an old saying. Jesus’ act of coming down from heaven, taking the form of a man and then dying a painful and horrible death speaks very loudly:

**“I LOVE YOU!!!!”**

*Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. John 15:13*

5. Jesus loves me this I know for the Bible tells me so. How does the Bible in John 15:13 tell us that Jesus loves you and me?

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*For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers,<sup>39</sup> neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:38-39*

6. Paul tells us in Romans 8:38 that neither \_\_\_\_\_ nor \_\_\_\_\_, neither \_\_\_\_\_ nor \_\_\_\_\_, neither the \_\_\_\_\_ nor the \_\_\_\_\_, nor any \_\_\_\_\_, neither \_\_\_\_\_ nor \_\_\_\_\_, nor \_\_\_\_\_ in all \_\_\_\_\_, will be able to \_\_\_\_\_ us from the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ that is in \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus our \_\_\_\_\_.

You can rest in God’s love that is in Christ Jesus. It is secure. God Himself protects you in His love. Indeed no one can snatch you out of His hand ( John 10:28-29). God’s love for you cannot be taken away by anyone or anything.

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*And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.<sup>29</sup> For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. Romans 8:28-29*

Please read Romans 8:28-29. God promises to work all things for our good because we love Him and He has called us to His purpose. Now our good is to be conformed into the image of Jesus Christ. Now think about *your* Leader and Savior. Hmmm. Being made in the likeness of our self- sacrificing Savior is not exactly how we usually interpret these verses is it?

But the meaning of these verses hold an eternal and enduring message of love for you. It is a promise of success in your leadership responsibilities. Success not as the world sees success but as the Eternal Kingdom of God views it. God is promising to conform you into the likeness of His Son. Whatever is going on in your life, God will use it so that you become more giving, loving, holy, compassionate, and kind. In other words, you will become God centered.

7. According to Romans 8:28-29 what result is God looking for as He works for our good?

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### **Personal Application:**

Even though Jesus was sent to die a horrible death, He trusts in the Father's love for Him. Even though our sins placed Him on the cross, He still loves us and wants to be with us. Even though we sometimes fail God, He invites us to place our burdens at His feet because He always cares.

### **Mediate on and memorize John 17:24 and 1 Peter 5:7.**

*"Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. John 17:24*

*Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. 1 Peter 5:7*

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## **Lesson 2: Triple Love Poured Out (Day Five) The Love of the Holy Spirit**

**1. Have you considered how much the Holy Spirit loves you? Yes No (Circle one)**

Eternal life with God is a gift of love. Believers are given a forever life of perfect joy and satisfaction. No tears, nor sorrow, no pain, but eternal bliss.

*The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. John 6:63*

**2. According to John 6:63 who is a major Partner in giving you eternal life? \_\_\_\_\_**

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*For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Romans 8:15*

3. By Whom are we enabled to cry out to God as "Abba Father"? \_\_\_\_\_

4 Who testifies with your spirit that you are a child of God? \_\_\_\_\_

*In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. Romans 8:26*

5. Who helps you to pray and even intervenes and pleads for you? \_\_\_\_\_

The Holy Spirit reveals His love for you throughout the Bible. He wants you in His family. He wants you to be a full member of the family with full inheritance rights. You are called a son of God. Yes, even if you are a woman, you are called a son of God to indicate that you are a full member in God's household. In ancient times, women did not have the right to inherit property and in some cases were considered property themselves. The Spirit of God gives you full status in God's family.

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### **Personal Application:**

Read 1 Corinthians 12:7-11.

*Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.<sup>8</sup> To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit,<sup>9</sup> to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit,<sup>10</sup> to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues.<sup>11</sup> All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines. 1 Corinthians 12:7-11*

Consider the Spirit's love and the gifts He makes available to you for leading God's people for their good. Ask the Spirit to manifest Himself in Your life as He desires and for the glory of our Triune God.

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Many people struggle with questions about God's love for them. Even though I was born into a family in which I felt loved, I struggled with believing that God really cared about me that much. There are others who have been abused, neglected, abandoned, suffered loss or born with a deformity or disability. If God loved me, I wouldn't have had this particular experience or circumstance in my life. Surprisingly there are even folks who have not been mistreated in any way who have a terrible time accepting and believing in God's love for them.

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6. Do you truly believe that God love and cares for you? Totally Sometimes Never (Circle One)

If you answered sometimes or never, why do you think you are insecure in God's love for you?

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How can we pray for you so that you rest in God's unfailing love?

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Believing and accepting God's pure and holy love for you is critical in the life of a Christian leader. You must come to a place in your life where you know without a doubt that God loves you. You trust in His unfailing love every day no matter what seems to be happening. Everything that you think, do and plan is dependent on your trust in God's love.

It doesn't matter if every person you have ever known has failed you. It doesn't matter if you have never been loved by any other person in this world. It doesn't matter what people think of you. These earthly things are not a barometer (indicator) of God's love for you.

One of the measurements of God's love for you is that you exist at all. He formed you and knew you before you were born (Jeremiah 1:5, Psalm 139:14-16). He made you in His image (Genesis 1:26). Yes, no matter what you look like or what you can do, God designed you in and for His love. Plus He made you with the capacity to accept and trust in His love.

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### **Personal Application:**

Just as your salvation is an act of faith so is your belief and trust in God's unfailing love. Actually anything that does not come from faith is sin (Romans 14:23). Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you in faith and pray right now.

Father, Jesus and Holy Spirit,

I believe that You love me and care for me in a real and personal way. Your love is grand, holy, pure and eternal. I ask that I may experience and rest in your love everyday. I pray God Most High that I never doubt Your love for me at any time or in any circumstance of my life or in the circumstances other people's lives. Thank You for loving me and answering my prayer of faith. I know that You love me and I trust in Your unfailing love. Amen.

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### **Next: Lesson 3: Fruit and Leadership**

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