



# Being Love

A LENTEN GUIDE  
WEEK 6

# How do we love God?

## SUNDAY: JOHN WESLEY'S 3 SIMPLE RULES

John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Movement, had three simple rules that he lived by:

1. Do no harm
2. Do good
3. Stay in love with God.

Seems pretty simple, right? But unless you have tried to live by these 3 rules, don't judge the person who has tried and had fallen short. You would think that it would be easy to love a God who loves us so completely, but it seems that we often find ourselves going through the motions of life and forgetting to connect with the very source of love and life itself. Maybe not spending time with God is not so much a scheduling problem in our world today, but really a **love** problem. Maybe we've forgotten how loved we are and to reflect that love back to God in return. This week, together as a church family, let us slow down, listen, and reflect the great love that God has for us.

DAY 29

MONDAY  
MARCH 22

SCRIPTURE READING

Have you not known? Have you not heard?

The Lord is the everlasting God,  
the Creator of the ends of the earth.

God does not faint or grow weary;  
his understanding is unsearchable.

God gives power to the faint,  
and strengthens the powerless.

Even youths will faint and be weary,  
and the young will fall exhausted;

but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength,  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,

they shall run and not be weary,  
they shall walk and not faint.

- *Isaiah 40:28-31*



TUESDAY  
MARCH 23

One of the ways that we can shine our love of God is through music. For many of us, this is one of the simplest ways that we experience the presence of God. When we're gathered on Sunday mornings, singing together and proclaiming the good news of God's love for all people, even us, in song. When we're driving in our car and singing at the top of our lungs not worried about what anyone thinks. When we find ourselves motivated by our favorite songs to just push through to the next right thing—this is worship. These moments of adoration, perseverance, raw emotion, and total vulnerability are us loving God by being our whole selves in God's presence.

*Worship Opportunity*

**LENTEN YOUTUBE PLAYLIST**

This week, our church staff has put together a YouTube playlist for you to jam to this week featuring music from our various communities. As you listen to all the different styles—all the different expressions of love for God—take pause to enjoy God's presence and reflect love back to the God who sees you, knows you, delights in you, and loves you fully just as you are. Find the playlist at [fumcdenton.com/stories](https://fumcdenton.com/stories).

DAY 31

WEDNESDAY  
MARCH 24

One purpose of worshipping together is to break the monotony of the week. Worship abruptly changes the beat of the drum we've been marching to all week. Because most of the time, we march to our own beat of individualism: I do things to provide security and comfort for myself; to meet my needs; to make a life for my own.

And when we worship God together, I am reminded that my faith, my life — it's not about me. It's never about me. I live for a greater purpose than to live for me. Worship connects me to God and, just as important, it connects me to you.

Worship reminds me that I am not alone; that I'm not the only person working on the harvest. It reminds me that not only do we gather together but we are sent into our world together.

Worship reminds me that Jesus is the center of my life.

And when Jesus is the center of my life, I am reminded that you matter deeply to me.

- Rev. Joseph Yoo



THURSDAY  
MARCH 25

The Bible tells us that when asked which was the greatest commandment in the law, Jesus answered, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.’” – Matthew 22:38-40

Personally, I have always found loving my neighbor the easier commandment. I mean we can see and touch and interact with neighbors, but interacting with God is much more difficult. Reading the Bible certainly helps me understand the heart of God. In the person of Jesus, I see God in the flesh and can definitely see a model for my own behavior. So the Bible helps me know God. But to love God? That involves more than just reading scripture.

To love something takes time and focus. Consider the love that develops between a child and its parent. A baby doesn't immediately love its parents. The child bonds with its parents as she learns that they can be trusted and will provide for her needs. The baby eventually learns to love because she experiences her parents' love. Likewise loving God takes time and intentionality. Like the love that develops between parent and child, the Bible tells us, “We love because [God] first loved us.” – 1 John 4:19

Therefore if we are to learn to love God, we must first experience God's love. How do we do that? One way to do that is through prayer. Talk with God like you would talk to a friend all day, anytime you want. Trust God with your greatest joy and your deepest sadness. Ask God to join you in your day, and watch to see where the unexpected happens. Be vulnerable. Be dependent. Be confident that God loves you.

John Wesley reminded us, “Now what is it to love God, but to delight in him, to rejoice in his will, to desire continually to please him, to seek and find our happiness in him and to thirst day and night for a fuller enjoyment of him?” This week I am going to “thirst day and night for a fuller enjoyment of God.” Will you join me?

– Floris UMC

DAY 33

FRIDAY  
MARCH 26

How good it is to center down!

To sit quietly and see one's self pass by!

The streets of our minds seethe with endless traffic;

Our spirits resound with clashing, with noisy silences,

While something deep within hungers and thirsts for the still moment and the resting lull.

With full intensity we seek, ere thicket passes, a fresh sense of order in our living;

A direction, a strong sure purpose that will structure our confusion and bring meaning in our chaos.

We look at ourselves in this waiting moment—the kinds of people we are.

The questions persist: what are we doing with our lives?—what are the motives that order our days?

What is the end of our doings? Where are we trying to go? Where do we put the emphasis and where are our values focused? For what end do we make sacrifices?

Where is my treasure and what do I love most in life?

What do I hate most in life and to what am I true? Over and over the questions beat upon the waiting moment.

As we listen, floating up through all of the jangling echoes of our turbulence, there is a sound of another kind—

A deeper note which only the stillness of the heart makes clear.

It moves directly to the core of our being. Our questions are answered,

Our spirits refreshed, and we move back into the traffic of our daily round

With the peace of the Eternal in our step.

How good it is to center down!

— Howard Thurman

SATURDAY  
MARCH 27

Jesus' Jewish tradition has a practice called Sabbath. A practice of ceasing, drawing near, delighting, and listening. It is more than time off, it is time to be truly on, to center our selves on the source. Sometimes that is in stillness, sometimes in delight, but always drawing near the center of the God who loves you.

Listen to the words of the great seeker Rachel Held Evans, "On the Sabbath, everything that is unessential bows to that which endures. On the Sabbath, one is not meant to do, but to be."

To sit at the feet of that which endures — and be. Loved.

To begin, Sabbath doesn't have to be a whole day. It can be a morning or an hour. Just start somewhere.

Wherever you start — Here are 4 words to frame your Sabbath moments. They come from a wise teacher named Marva Dawn's little book "Keeping the Sabbath Wholly".

[Cease] — Just cease/ Cease striving and doing for a little while. Cease trying to earn love — you are loved. Cease. But Remember, these things are not laws, but gifts — a chance to be free in a life that says you aren't.

[Rest] — Rest in the God who is with us, like Mary at Jesus' feet. Be still and know the Psalmist says. Rest in what endures. And think about how cool it is that Sabbath time, intentional time to connect with God, is to be about rest, not work — about simply being. That's simply beautiful when you think of it.

Third, [Embrace]. Embrace life — that is what we find at the source. Embrace delight. Dawn says, do things that delight you. Find a neighbor and embrace humanity. Embrace what endures. But most of all, in this time find and embrace God's love for you. When you do, you will find it has been embracing you all along.

Finally, [Feast]. Celebrate. This was/is a big part of Sabbath observance. Jews finish Sabbath with a glass of wine or juice, and smelling a sweet fragrance. And a celebration. Because this time is to be a foretaste of the world as it should be. A feast of life with enough for all. Embrace that joy and stubborn gladness that is a resistance to everything that seeks to steal life right now. Celebrate what endures.