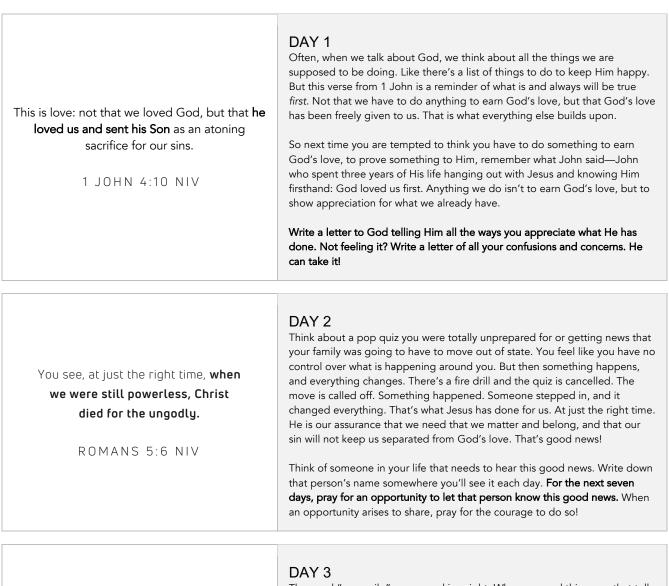
DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Christmas Lights / Week 2



That God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, **not counting people's sins against them.**

2 CORINTHIANS 5:19A NIV

The word "reconcile" means making right. When we read this verse that tells us God reconciled the world to Himself, it means this was God making right the relationship between the world and Himself, fixing what was broken, closing the gap in the relationship, drawing us to Himself. And it all started with the birth of Jesus. There was no way for us to know exactly what God thought of us, unless God showed up Himself to tell us. And that's what He did with Jesus.

Think about one relationship in your life that needs to be reconciled, or made right. Ask God to show you three ways to reconcile before the end of the year. You'll enter 2021 stronger than ever!

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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 8:39 NIV

DAY 4

We've all messed up. Maybe you accidentally scratched your parents' car or you lied to a friend. We could point to something that pushed us further from someone we cared about, which makes this verse amazing. Paul, the guy who wrote this, is saying that there is NOTHING we can do that separates us from God. And Paul should know. He had a bad past—it included being responsible for the death of people who followed Jesus. So it's true for Paul and it's true for you.

What a relief, right? Today, write down a few things you may have thought would separate you from God's love. Then put a big red "X" through them, writing below them, "nothing separates me from God's love." Isn't that a relief? God's love for us is unchanging, even when we are at our worst.

DAY 5

Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.

JOHN 15:13 NIV

The wages of the righteous is life,

but the earnings of the wicked are

sin and death.

PROVERBS 10:16 NIV

When we hear the word "love" we all probably have an idea that comes to mind. We would all probably describe it differently. But John, one of Jesus' closest friends, tells us in a letter that God is love. And in the verse we read today, John writes that the greatest kind of love involves sacrifice, which is exactly what Jesus did for us. He literally died to show us His love. But there are countless ways we show our love for our family and friends in a different kind of laying down of our lives. Every time we give up what we want for the sake of someone else, we are laying down our lives.

Ask God to give you three ways today to lay down your life for your friends. It may be giving up the prime parking spot when you hang out, calling a friend you know is going to talk forever but really needs it, or something even more sacrificial. Practice loving like Jesus has loved us.

DAY 6

Think about a paycheck. It's what someone earns for the work they've done. This proverb uses the words "wages" and "earnings" referring to life. The writer is suggesting that the life we want later is connected to the way we live now. However, that doesn't mean when bad things happen that we did something to deserve it. It isn't God punishing us because life isn't just what we've done wrong. It just means that what we do and say now` impacts later on. There are consequences or decisions, not because God is mad at us, but because poor choices lead to poor results.

Think about the kind of life you want later. What can you start doing now to invest in the kind of future you want later?

"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

LUKE 2:14 NIV

DAY 7

Record a voice memo on your phone of this verse from Luke and play it back any time you see a specific thing (you decide what) in your day (the cafeteria, the color red, your brother, etc). Think of it as a reminder to look for God's glory, His work, all around you.