



For the week of **March 16-21**

Bottom line: **when it comes to your crew,
relationships > revenge**

DAY ONE: Motivation Read 1 John 4:7-12

Sacrificially loving someone, even someone we want to love, is difficult. It always costs us something. It's not a trade or a bargain and it's not a win-win kind of deal. Love demands sacrifice for the simple purpose of blessing someone. The Apostle John understood this truth and shares with us the purest motivation—to know God and be known by him.

The height of human experience is to know and be known. Friendship is that state of mutual acceptance and knowledge, something we crave in our most meaningful human relationships. This intimacy is available with God when we love others as he loves us.

When we love others sacrificially, as Christ sacrificially died for us, we experience closeness with God that we couldn't have any other way. This is who God is and it is the language he speaks.

As you welcome God into your day, remember God loves you more than you can possibly imagine. He wants to draw you into incredible relationship with him. May his love fill you and spill over into all relationships in your life.

Take a moment to be encouraged as you listen to *You Are For Me* by Kari Jobe. God is for you and desires for you to know the fullness of life that comes through loving others as he has loved us.

DAY TWO: Reconciliation Read Romans 5:6-11

Read the passage and then choose **one verse** that seems important to you and answer one of these three questions:

1. What does it say about God?
2. What does it say about you?
3. What does it say about others?

Then talk to God about what you read/learned and respond appropriately to it.

DAY THREE: Peace Read Romans 12:17-19

Paul's words sound like a great idea in theory, but this goes directly against how we want to respond. We want to yell, ignore, talk trash, and start fights when people close to us hurt us. But to respond the way Paul is talking about? We think, Paul could pull that off, and Jesus could pull that off, but not us.

But what if you could do it?

- What if you could learn to go easy on the friend who hurt you?
- What if you didn't say things about them that you knew would hurt their reputation?
- What if you learned to have a calm, healthy, head-on conversation?
- What if you forgave them for what they did?
- What if you took Paul's advice and did EVERYTHING you could to make peace with them?

Because this response feels like something that only super-good people do. You know, the people who seem almost too nice to be human. But the truth is, this response is for all of us. In fact, what Paul says here is similar to what Jesus said when He told us to love and pray for our enemies. It's also closely connected to what Jesus said was most important—loving God and loving others. So even **when it comes to your crew, relationships > revenge.**

As you invite God into your day pray for the people who hurt you. It sounds crazy, but prayer has an amazing way of changing our heart toward people. God wants to move our attention from avoiding and fighting conflict to fixing the conflict. How? By caring about and empathizing with other people, or putting ourselves in their shoes. And the best way to empathize with someone is to pray for them.

DAY FOUR: Love Your Enemies Read Matthew 5:43-48

Read the passage and then choose **one verse** that seems important to you and answer the questions that apply:

- Is there a sin to avoid ?
- Is there a promise to claim?
- Is there a command to obey?
- Is there an application to make?
- Is there something new about God?

Then talk to God about what you read/learned and respond appropriately to it.