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Week 1: Love and Respect

Daily Devotional

As you read these daily scriptures, ask yourself these three questions:

1. What is God saying to me?
2. What do I want to say to God in response?
3. How will I live out this truth?

**Day 1**: **Matthew 19:4-6 (NIV)**

“Haven’t you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’? So, they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let no one separate.”

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**Day 2: 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (NIV)**

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

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**Day 3: Genesis 2:24 (NIV)**

That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.

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**Day 4: Romans 13:10 (NIV)**

Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore, love is the fulfillment of the law.

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**Day 5: John 13:34-35 (NIV)**

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

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Discussion Questions:

**1.** Read Ephesians 5:25. Now reflect on the verse, which calls husbands to love their wives as Christ loved the church. What does this sacrificial love look like in practical terms? One of our Core Values at Central Community is “Unconditional Love”, how can we show this unconditional love to those who are in our home, church, and community?

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**2.** Why do you think it's important for husbands and wives to try to understand each other's different perspectives, like the differences in how a woman and a man might express the same need?

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**3.** The sermon describes how without love, a wife reacts without respect, and vice versa, leading to the “crazy cycle” in relationships. What do you think the “crazy cycle” is, and how can it affect a marriage when love and respect are lacking? Have you identified any patterns like the “crazy cycle” in your own relationship? What steps can you take to break that cycle?

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**4.** Discuss how love and respect can influence communication styles and conflict resolution in relationships. What strategies can be practiced ensuring that both feel valued and heard?

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**5.** Examine the importance of mutual respect in relationships. How can couples cultivate an environment of respect, especially during challenging times?

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**6.** Consider how the principles of love and respect in Ephesians 5 can extend beyond romantic relationships to family dynamics. How can these principles shape interactions between parents and children?

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**7.** Encourage group members to share personal experiences where they felt loved and respected or where they struggled to show these qualities. What lessons can be learned from these experiences.?

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