

October 19, 2026

Love Moved First

October Series: Love Your Neighbor

Week Focus: Don't Just Say It

Scripture – 1 John 3:16 – *“This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us.”*

Devotional Reflection

Before God ever called us to demonstrate love toward others, He demonstrated His love toward us. John reminds us that genuine love is not merely something we feel, discuss, or promise. It is something Jesus Christ revealed through His sacrifice. When we look at the cross, we see the clearest expression of God's love. Jesus did not simply tell humanity that He loved us. He willingly gave His life so that sinners could be forgiven and reconciled to God. **LOVE MOVED FIRST.**

This matters because our understanding of love can easily become shaped by convenience, comfort, or personal preference. We may love people when they agree with us, appreciate us, or respond the way we expect. But Jesus demonstrated His love while we were still sinners. His sacrifice challenges us to move beyond a love that depends on what others can offer in return. Christlike love begins with grace, not with someone else's ability to earn our compassion.

Yet we must remember that we do not demonstrate love in order to earn salvation. We are saved by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Our acts of kindness cannot replace His finished work. Instead, the love we have received becomes the foundation for how we live. As the Holy Spirit transforms our hearts, we begin to see people differently. We become more willing to forgive, more sensitive to suffering, and more attentive to opportunities to serve.

As you begin this week, do not start by asking how much you can accomplish for God. Start by remembering what Christ has already done for you. Let gratitude for His sacrifice shape your attitude toward the people around you. When we truly receive His love, we begin to understand why that love must become visible through our lives. **BEFORE WE CAN FAITHFULLY DEMONSTRATE CHRISTLIKE LOVE, WE MUST REMEMBER THE LOVE CHRIST HAS DEMONSTRATED TO US.**

FOCUS FOR TODAY

Before we can faithfully demonstrate Christlike love, we must remember the love Christ has demonstrated to us.

PRACTICE

- Spend a few moments thanking Jesus for His sacrifice.
 - Identify one relationship where remembering His love could change your response.
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PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You for loving me through Jesus Christ. Help me receive Your grace with gratitude and allow Your love to transform my heart. Teach me to love others with humility, sincerity, and compassion.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

REFLECTION QUESTION

How is Christ's sacrificial love changing the way I love people who may be difficult to love?