



SUMMIT HEIGHTS

METHODIST CHURCH

FIVE-DAY DEVOTIONAL

The Emotional Rollercoaster: Love is NOT an Emotion

Matthew 22:34-40

Pastor Chris Howlett

June 1, 2025

Day 1 – Love Is a Command, Not a Feeling

Scripture:

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” — Matthew 22:37-39 (ESV)

Devotional Thought

Jesus links love to obedience, not to warm fuzzy-feelings. When he names the greatest commandment, he shows that love is a choice of allegiance and action that engages every part of us—heart, soul, and mind. Feelings may follow, but love’s engine is the will. As we decide to love God first, our outlook toward neighbors is transformed, training our emotions to serve, not steer, our lives.

Life-Application Questions

- Where do your emotions usually sit—in the driver’s seat or the passenger seat?
- What is one practical way you can choose to honor God with your mind today?
- How might loving a difficult neighbor reshape your understanding of obedience?
- Which competing “first loves” do you need to surrender so God stays first?

Day 2 – Love Begins with Receiving

Scripture:

“In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” — 1 John 4:9-10 (ESV)

Devotional Thought

Before we can give love, we must let love in. God moved first, sending Jesus so we could truly live. Shame, the performance trap, or pride may block the flow, but none of these obstacles intimidate him. Opening our hearts to receive Christ’s sacrifice recharges our capacity to love others from overflow rather than emptiness.

Life-Application Questions

- Which obstacle—shame, performance, or pride—most hinders you from receiving love?
- How does knowing God moved first change the way you see your worth?
- What daily practice could help you “plug in” to Christ’s love?
- Who around you needs to see the difference that received love makes?

Day 3 – Love Over Lust and Approval

Scripture:

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” — John 3:16 (ESV)

Devotional Thought

Love gives; lust grabs. Love seeks the other’s best; approval merely seeks applause. At the cross, God demonstrates a cruciform love that costs him everything for our gain. Choosing that same self-giving way exposes our culture’s counterfeit loves and frees us to treat people as image-bearers, never vending machines for our cravings.

Life-Application Questions

- Where do you notice “what’s in it for me” thinking creeping into relationships?
- How can Christ’s giving love reshape the way you approach sexuality, friendship, or family?
- What is one step you can take today to give without expecting a return?
- How might redefining love protect you from the pressure to approve everything you see?

Day 4 – Resolve and Reflect Love

Scripture:

“Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.” — 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (ESV)

Devotional Thought

Paul paints love in verbs, not vibes. Patience, kindness, endurance—each requires deliberate choice. When we pause between stimulus and response and pray, “my feelings may zig-zag, but love is my lane,” we move from reaction to reflection. Like a mirror catching sunlight, our decisions begin to reflect Christ to a watching world.

Life-Application Questions

- Which verb in today’s passage is hardest for you to live out right now?
- How can a ten-second prayer reset your reactions before entering a tense space?
- Recall a recent win where you chose patience or kindness—what fruit followed?

- Whom can you ask to hold you accountable for “staying in the love lane”?

Day 5 – Review and Rest in Love

Scripture:

“But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” — Romans 5:8 (ESV)

Devotional Thought

Love’s review starts at the cross: Christ loved us when we had nothing to offer. Each evening, replay the day—celebrate where love led, confess where feelings drove, and rest in grace. This rhythm keeps your heart plugged into the gospel and readies you to choose love again tomorrow.

Life-Application Questions

- How does remembering Christ’s proactive love silence self-condemnation?
- Tonight, what “highlight reel” moments of love can you celebrate?
- Where did emotions steer you off course, and how will you invite grace there?
- What simple habit could help you end each day with review, confession, and rest?

“You can’t choose your feelings, but you can choose love.” May these five days train your heart to keep love in the driver’s seat.