



Read John 13:34. What is the real challenge in this command of Jesus? Why is that so difficult for a follower of Christ?

We all live in the context of relationships.

*“The quality of your life is determined by the quality of your relationships.” Harvey Mackay*

Security                      Acceptance  
Support                      Appreciation

Healthy relationships are hard.

1. Assault

*“We assault others when we act against what is good for them.” Dallas Willard*

2. Withdrawal

*“We withdraw from someone when we regard their well-being and goodness as matters of indifference.” Dallas Willard*

Much of human behavior is compensation for the deficits we have.

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you **must** love one another.” *John 13:34*

“And who is my neighbor?” In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he **passed by** on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, **passed by** on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he **took pity** on him. He **went to** him and **bandaged** his wounds, **pouring** on oil and wine. Then he **put** the man on his own donkey, **brought** him to an inn and **took care** of him. The next day he took out two denarii and **gave** them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will **reimburse** you for any extra expense you may have.’” *Luke 10:29-35*

Love is a verb.

Love: **caring** about and **doing** what is best for another

Dear children, let’s not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our **actions**. *1 John 3:18*

When you love like this, you close the deficit.

What **actions** do you need to take in your relationships?

**Did you complete the 21-Day Fast?** We want to hear from you!  
Share your story with us at [mystory@eclife.org](mailto:mystory@eclife.org) or via the church app.

**For Group Discussion**

Answer these questions prior to your Small Group meeting this week.

**Introduction**

We live our lives in the context of relationships. Your relationships make your life what it is – tolerable, joyful, or even painful. Because people are imperfect, having healthy relationships can be hard, but they are required of a Christ-follower. How do we ensure God is honored through the difficulties relationships can present?

**Discussion Questions**

1. Relationships are hard because we all have relational needs. Which of the relational needs shared this past weekend (security, support, acceptance or appreciation) resonates most with you? Where have you had those relational needs met in the past, and where would you say you are having those relational needs met currently?

2. Unfortunately, many people feel as though they have never had every relational need met. We could have experienced two other forms of treatment – assault (physical/emotional abuse) and withdrawal (lack of care for another’s well-being). Share a time when you’ve experienced either.

In order to make up for the relational deficit caused by unmet needs, we often compensate in different areas of our life (money, power, addiction, value, etc). What behaviors are you using to compensate for any relational deficit you may have experienced?

3. In your own words, describe what love is. Read Luke 10:29-35. Pull out some of the actions you notice Jesus using to describe love in His story. As a follower of Christ, why is it important to understand love as an action and not just an emotion or feeling? Read 1 John 3:18. Can you think of a recent time when you may have used the term “love” as just an emotion or feeling with no intended action?

4. Where in your life do you feel called to help someone “close the deficit” left by unmet relational needs? This coming week, what actions do you need to take in your marriage, friendships, family or work relationships?

**OUTREACH: GROUPS IN ACTION**

Our local missions partner, The Refuge, is in need of wrapped treats and valentine cards for the after-school program. As a group or family, gather your treats and cards by February 12 and bring them to the Information Desk at your campus. Also consider writing a note to let those served by The Refuge know they are loved and prayed for.

**Action Step**

Fill in the blanks below for this upcoming week.

My action steps are \_\_\_\_\_

I’m accountable for \_\_\_\_\_, and their action steps are \_\_\_\_\_

My memory verse is \_\_\_\_\_

This coming week, I’m praying for:

\_\_\_\_\_