



## Quick Backdrop

Raise your hand if you've ever felt this way: Circumstances are good, so God loves me. Circumstances are bad, so God loves me not. Do you ever feel that your relationship with God is like a daisy plucking game of "he loves me/loves me not"? It's easy to feel that way, but maybe this devotional will shed some light on the unconditional, everlasting nature of God's love.

## 1 Digging In (God, Show Me!)

The passages below trace God's love through Scripture. The list culminates with verses from John's gospel and letters (John accounts for 30 percent of the New Testament's use of the word "love"). As you read these passages, journal your thoughts on these questions:

**How is God's love described?**

**How did God show His love?**



### Exodus 15:13

In your unfailing love you will lead the people you have redeemed. In your strength you will guide them to your holy dwelling.

### Romans 5:8

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

### 1 John 3:16

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.

### 1 John 4:9

This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.

### 1 John 4:10

This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

## 2 Taking It Inward (God, Teach Me!)

Meditate on this question a minute before responding: If you were to use these verses to describe love from scratch, how would you describe it?

If we're all honest, there are probably times when we don't feel loved by God—times of loss, or heartache, or disappointment. Sometimes it really does feel like a game of "He loves me, He loves me not." But try this little thought exercise: picture yourself playing that game. Except don't picture the game using a daisy (the traditional "loves me, loves me not" flower), picture playing that game with the plant that was part of the crucifixion, a crown of thorns. It's really hard to pluck off a thorn and say "He loves me not." Jesus settled His love for us on the cross. In fact, it's during our loss and heartache that Jesus cuddles us just a bit more (see John 11), like a parent with a sick child.

Take some time to reflect on Jesus' act of love. First, use your imagination to take that act as personally as possible.

- Imagine Jesus' eyes.
- Imagine your name rolling across His mind.
- Imagine His sacred blood pooling at the foot of the cross, creating puddles in the footprints from the soldiers.

Now, ask God this question and linger until something is impressed on your heart or mind.

*God, how much do you love me?*

## 3 Putting Into Practice (God, Change Me!)

Now express what was impressed on your heart or mind as you asked that question: Journal your thoughts. Paint a picture of what's in your mind. Create a dance. Compose a song. Write a poem. Draw a picture. Take a picture. The possibilities of expression are almost as endless as God's love. So, express away.

### Share the Wow!

Then share what you've expressed—with your youth group, on social media. In fact, we'd love to see it! Post it on InWord's Facebook page at:

[www.facebook.com/InwordResources](http://www.facebook.com/InwordResources).

Fold or Cut