

Loving God, Loving Others

By Daphne Myers

for use as
STEP 1



Lesson 13

Focus:

Scripture teaches us how to love.

Lesson 13

Bible Basis:

Leviticus 19:18;
Deuteronomy 6:4-9;
Mark 12:28-34

Lesson 13

Memory Verse:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”

—Mark 12:30-31

Students will discuss how Scripture teaches us about God’s love.

OPENING ACTIVITY: *Words of Love*

Write on a board or sheet of newsprint, “What are some other words or terms you would associate with the word *love*?” Allow your adults a few minutes to share. They might give you words such as “affection,” “spouse,” “kindness,” and “sacrifice.”

Memorial Day is a time when we might associate *sacrifice* with the word *love* as we think of the sacrifices of brave soldiers who fought and died for the love of their country. This week’s story is about a soldier’s sacrifice for love—but not on the battlefield.

OPENING STORY: [make copies for your students or read it aloud]

IRAQ VETERAN DIED SAVING HIS DAUGHTER

The deadly tornadoes that buffeted the South at the end of April killed 34 people across six states. The storms brought horrible devastation, leaving behind not just a trail of destruction, but entire communities grieving.

One of the hardest hit towns was Vilonia, Arkansas, a small town of less than 4,000 people just north of Little Rock where 8 people died. One of those who died was Daniel Wassom, 31, the father of two daughters: Lorelei, 5, and Sydney, 7. Wassom died sheltering his family from the tornado. The man who everybody called “Bud” was with his wife, Suzanne, and his girls in a hallway in the center of their home when a large beam of wood came toward him. He shielded Lorelei from the beam and it went through his chest, killing him instantly.

Master Sgt. Wassom served in the Arkansas Air National Guard’s 189th Airlift Wing for 12 years as a loadmaster. He moved cargo in and out of planes, had been deployed to Iraq, and received a commendation for his service in Afghanistan. He had a college degree and could have trained to be a pilot, but he liked being a loadmaster too much, said his mother, Pamela Wassom.

“We’re a military family,” she said. “His father is retired Air Force. His grandfather was in the Navy. He joined right after 9/11. That boy loved his country.”

After the tornado, at the hospital, Lorelai told anyone who would listen that her father had saved her life, Mrs. Wassom said. “Lorelai kept telling the emergency room people, she said, ‘My daddy saved me; the house exploded and my daddy saved me; he’s a hero.’ And he is. He’s a true hero.”

Wassom’s wife Suzanne is also a hero, said her sister, Teresa Cole. Suzanne shielded their 7-year-old daughter, Sydney, when the tornado tore through the home. Afterward, she moved both daughters to safety and also helped a little boy who lived across the street before going to the hospital herself to receive more than a dozen staples on her head injuries.

Wassom and his father shared a passion for old cars, his mother said. They rebuilt a 1934 Ford that was in his garage when the tornado destroyed their home.

“It actually survived,” Mrs. Wassom said. “He and his dad worked on that car. They both loved cars. Just a couple of weeks ago, they went on a little mini-trip together to a car show in Oklahoma City. I’m so grateful that they had that memory now of that time they spent.”

Growing up, Wassom was always happy to show his mother how much he loved her, even when doing so made other boys feel socially awkward. That’s the type of kindness that he showed everyone, his mother said. But above everything else, he was a dedicated father and husband who adored his daughters and shared every responsibility for raising them with his wife.

“Even before he died, he was a hero,” Mrs. Wassom said. “He served his country, loved his family, loved God, and he died doing what he did best: being a good father.”

[Ask your students to form small groups to answer these questions.]

- **What do Wassom’s actions teach us about love?**
- **How was his love similar to God’s love?**
- **What have you read in Scripture that shows you how to love?**

(When you are finished with the questions, go on to Step 2 in your *Adult Teacher’s Guide*.)

News Sources:

<http://www.navytimes.com/article/20140501/NEWS/305010056/Airman-dies-saving-his-5-year-old-daughter-s-life>

<http://woundedtimes.blogspot.com/2014/04/iraq-veteran-national-guardian-died.html>

<http://www.katv.com/story/25385718/arkansas-air-national-guardian-killed-in-sundays-tornado-while-saving-his-child>



ADULT

Lesson 13 / May 25, 2014

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for use as
STEP 4 

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LEARNING HOW TO LOVE

We thank God that He gave us Scripture, for it is a record of how much He loved us in the past and continues to loves us. Jesus’ relationship with the Father is the perfect example of what love involves—obedience and sacrifice. Scripture shows that our love flows out of our obedient relationship with God into how we relate to our neighbors. Loving my neighbor means I do not devise evil against him; I do not strive with him without cause; I act toward him as I want him to act toward me. I consider his needs before my own. I won’t pound him over the head with the Gospel, but because I want to show him God loves him I will live my faith before him.

- **What are some coming opportunities you know about for you to love God and others?**
- **What can you do with God's Word for help, encouragement, or direction for responding in love for others through those opportunities?**

Close the class in prayer. Thank God for His Word that He has authored so clearly for our help and instruction and preserved for us to have at our fingertips through each day this coming week as we go out to study and obey His instruction to love.

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THE BIBLE IN THE NEWS

A *Titanic* museum in Tennessee is displaying a Bible that survived the sinking of the ship:
<http://www.christianpost.com/news/bible-that-survived-titanic-finds-home-in-tenn-museum-119051/>