

CULTIVATE LOVE

Hosea 11:1-9

Love does not begin with us: it's rooted in God, who first loves us. The Book of Hosea tells the story of a prophet whose marriage becomes a living picture of God's relationship with God's people. The people turn away repeatedly, the relationship is strained, but God refuses to walk away. Hosea reveals a God whose love is both deeply wounded and fiercely committed.

Day 1: Read Hosea 1:1-11.

God calls Hosea into a broken, heartbreaking, extraordinarily messy relationship that becomes a living picture of God's relationship with God's people.

Where are the messes in your life or in the world that seem to you to be too messy or too broken to have any hope?

Day 2: Read Hosea 3:1-5.

God tells Hosea to love again despite the risk of heartbreak.

What makes persistent love difficult, and where do you most need God's help to keep loving?

Day 3: Read Hosea 11:1-2.

God remembers loving Israel from the very beginning, yet even as God calls, the people wander away.

When have you experienced someone continuing to love you even when you were distant or distracted?

Day 4: Read Hosea 11:3-4.

Hosea presents an image of God as a nurturing parent walking patiently beside a child.

Where do you see signs that God has been gently guiding or carrying you through life?

Day 5: Read Hosea 11:5-7.

The people resist God's love, but God continues speaking to them.

Who in your life may need patient, steady love instead of frustration or quick judgment?

Day 6: Read Hosea 11:8-9.

While God's heartbreak becomes visible, compassion and mercy overcome anger and frustration.

What would it look like to let compassion have the final word in one difficult relationship or situation?

When we are angry, when we feel hopeless, when we aren't sure we have any more love to give, we're invited to lean into a love that won't let go. We're invited to do everything in our power to cultivate the persistent and unrelenting love of God in the world.

We cultivate love by reflecting the deep, persistent compassion of God.

CULTIVATE COMMUNITY

1 Thessalonians 3:9-13, 4:9-12

How does a church grow? Community doesn't happen by accident; it's cultivated. The goal isn't just to believe, but to grow together. The Thessalonians have been through something difficult. Paul tells them they're already loving well, but urges them to do so more and more. He knows a growing church is made up of growing Christians, people who are committed to growing in their faith and love for each other through prayer, serving others, and accountability in relationships.

Day 1: 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3.

Before Paul teaches the church, he begins by expressing gratitude.

Who has encouraged your faith simply by noticing the good God was already cultivating in you?

Day 2: Read 1 Thessalonians 2:7-12.

Paul describes caring in the church like a parent caring for children.

What relationships in your life have helped you feel genuinely cared for and supported?

Day 3: Read 1 Thessalonians 3:6-10.

Paul gives thanks for the gifts of being a community and longs to be present with them.

How can you intentionally strengthen one relationship in your church or community this week by encouraging and being present?

Day 4: Read 1 Thessalonians 3:11-13.

Paul prays that the love of the community would "increase and overflow."

What helps love "increase and overflow" in a community, family, church, or friendship?

Day 5: Read 1 Thessalonians 4:9-10

Paul tells the church they are already loving well, but encourages them not to stop there.

Where is God inviting you to grow "more and more" in your love for others?

Day 6: Read 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12

Paul encourages simple, steady faithfulness: live peacefully, work faithfully, and live with integrity.

How is God calling you, today, to cultivate community?

Scripture invites us to live as cultivators for Christ; not simply maintaining the Church, but growing together as faithful disciples.

We don't grow alone; we grow when we help each other grow.

CULTIVATE PRAYER

Ephesians 1:15-23

Prayer is not a passive practice but a shared work of spiritual cultivation. In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul models prayer that nurtures faith, deepens wisdom, and opens our hearts to the transforming power of God.

Day 1: Read Ephesians 1:3-6.

Before Paul teaches or talks about prayer, he praises God and offers a reminder to the church that they are already loved and chosen by God.

How might prayer change if we begin with gratitude and claiming our identity instead of worry and urgency?

Day 2: Read Ephesians 1:15-16.

Paul expresses gratitude and constant prayer for the people.

Who is someone you can intentionally thank God for today?

Day 3: Read Ephesians 1:17.

Paul prays for wisdom and deeper knowledge of God for the church.

What does it mean to you to know God better?

Day 4: Read Ephesians 1:18.

Paul next prays for eyes to be opened to know the hope God offers.

Where do you most need hope or fresh vision in your life of prayer today?

Day 5: Read Ephesians 1:19-20.

As Paul begins to complete this prayer, he points to the power of God revealed in the resurrection.

How can prayer connect you to the resurrection power of God?

Day 6: Read Ephesians 1:21-23.

As he concludes his prayer, Paul describes Christ as above all things and all powers of this world, including the church.

How can your prayers put Christ above all things and connect you to the needs of the church and the world, beyond just your own needs?

As we cultivate prayer together, we learn to notice where God is already at work and to grow more fully into the hope, purpose, and life God intends for us.

Through prayer, we participate in God's ongoing work of shaping a flourishing community.

CULTIVATE GENEROSITY

2 Corinthians 9:6-15

To cultivate is to prepare the ground for life to take root and grow. That's what God calls us to be as followers of Jesus: cultivators. What we plant shapes what grows. Paul reminds the Corinthians of this when their initial excitement for generosity begins to fade. He points them back to a simple image: planting and harvesting. What and how we sow matters.

Day 1: Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-5.

Paul highlights the churches in Macedonia, who were generous even during hardship. What is the connection between generosity, trust, and joy?

Day 2: Read 2 Corinthians 8:6-12.

Paul points to Jesus, who gave generously and sacrificially for others. How does the example of Christ shape the way you think about generosity?

Day 3: Read 2 Corinthians 9:6.

Paul uses the image of planting and harvesting. What kinds of "seeds" are you planting in your relationships, faith, and community right now?

Day 4: Read 2 Corinthians 9:7.

Generosity is not meant to grow from guilt or pressure, but from a willing and joyful heart. What makes generosity joyful instead of burdensome?

Day 5: Read 2 Corinthians 9:8-11

Paul teaches that God provides what is needed so we can continue doing good in the world. Where do you struggle to trust that there will be enough to continue doing good?

Day 6: Read 2 Corinthians 9:12-15.

Paul says generosity leads people to thanksgiving and praise to God. How have you seen generosity create ripple effects beyond the original gift?

Generosity isn't just about meeting a budget or fixing a problem. It's about the heart. As we give, God is at work, growing gratitude and trust and expanding life in and around us.

What we plant shapes what grows.