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Bible Study | Faith in Action

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## Prepare

- Bible
- Journal
- Pen/pencil

## Get Started

To love is a tenet of the Christian faith and life. In Matthew 22:36–40, Jesus summed up all the Law and the Prophets by saying, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind,” and, “Love your neighbor as yourself” (vv. 37, 39), and in John 13:35, He said His followers would be known by their love. Sounds easy enough, right? Of course, we all want to be loved and to be loving toward others. But truly loving God and loving others is complicated. We can’t do it alone.

## Study and Learn

### • Read John 14:16–27.

Up to this point, Jesus had told His disciples of His impending death. Needless to say, they were upset by the idea of Jesus leaving them. They knew they still had so much to learn and were not ready to be left to continue ministry on their own. However, in this passage, Jesus reassured them that, though He had to physically go away, He would never actually leave them alone.

Jesus promised an “advocate” (or “helper,” as some translations say) who would “be with [them] forever” (v. 16). Jesus told His disciples that those who keep His commandments are the ones who really love Him (vv. 21, 23–24). And this advocate, or “Spirit of truth” (v. 17), would help them remember those commandments (v. 26).

### • Read Acts 1:4–9.

After Jesus’ Resurrection and before He ascended to heaven, He reminded His followers the Holy Spirit was coming, and when He did, the disciples would receive power to be Jesus’ witnesses (v. 8). The “gift” Jesus promised (v. 4) would not only help them *remember* what He commanded them but would also give them the *power* to actually obey Him.

Go back to John 14. Notice the mind-blowing promise recorded in verse 17—Jesus told the disciples the Spirit would not simply dwell *among* them; He would dwell *in* them. This is not just any spirit; this is the Spirit of God (v. 20)! If anyone is going to help us love people the way God loves them, it *must* be none other than God Himself.

Jesus said in verse 27, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” In a world of complicated, messy, sinful relationships among sinful people, Jesus gives us peace.

## Apply

What are some relationships in your life where you struggle to demonstrate love on a regular basis?

After learning what Jesus said about the Holy Spirit in these passages of Scripture, what are some ways you can pray for these relationships?

In what ways or areas of your life do you struggle to love and trust God? How can you pray, in light of these verses, for Him to help you love and obey Him more?

## Follow Up

Before Jesus' death, the disciples were timid, confused, and fearful about what Jesus was leading them into. Peter even denied Jesus, which he thought he would never do (John 18).

But everything changed in Acts 2, when the Holy Spirit came and filled the disciples, who immediately began supernaturally proclaiming truth.

- Read Acts 2, and take note of which disciple boldly responded to the crowd and explained what God was doing and how people could be saved.

## Commit to Memory

Verses: **John 14:16–17**

Challenge: **John 14:16–21**

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**MANDY HEWITT** works in communications for a ministry focused on helping Christians make their life count by following Jesus and making Him known. She loves reading, writing, and thinking deeply about God and His Word. Mandy lives in Birmingham, Alabama, and is a member of Christ Fellowship Church.

Social workers are trained professionals who assist vulnerable people as they navigate difficult circumstances. They can be found in hospitals, health-care agencies, government agencies (such as the Veterans Administration), child welfare services, courts, prisons, schools, and community outreach agencies, where they play an integral part in protecting and providing for those who are in greatest need.

Social workers are often involved in looking for solutions to issues those they serve are facing, including trauma, abuse, and other instability. It can be a stressful, thankless role that has historically led to high levels of burnout.

One way you, your missions group, or your family can minister to these community servants is by providing a simple spa kit to help a social worker de-stress and know he or she is loved.

## Creating Spa Kits for Social Workers

1. Connect with a person in your church who is a social worker or who has knowledge of a social worker who could use encouragement. Begin praying for the person who will receive the kit.
2. Choose a bag or basket, and review the list of ideas for items to include in your spa kit.
3. Write a note of encouragement and appreciation to include in the kit. Let the recipient know you are praying for him or her. If you select someone outside your church, provide information about your church and any groups or upcoming events that might be of interest to the person.
4. Make sure to write a verse from Scripture on the note, or obtain an illustrated Scripture card, and attach a magnet to the back. Following are examples of Scripture passages to include:
  - Isaiah 40:31
  - 2 Corinthians 1:3–4
  - Matthew 11:28
  - Psalm 121:1–2
5. Pray throughout the year for the recipient of your spa kit.

## Ideas for Items to Include

- Face or hand mask
- Bath salts or bath bombs
- Shower tablets
- Bubble bath
- Loofah or body brush
- Hand or body lotion
- Lip balm
- Nail polish
- Emery boards
- Toe separators
- Soft socks
- Sleep mask
- Plush blanket
- Scent diffuser
- Bottle of flavored water
- Individually wrapped herbal tea bags
- Encouraging devotional book
- Journal