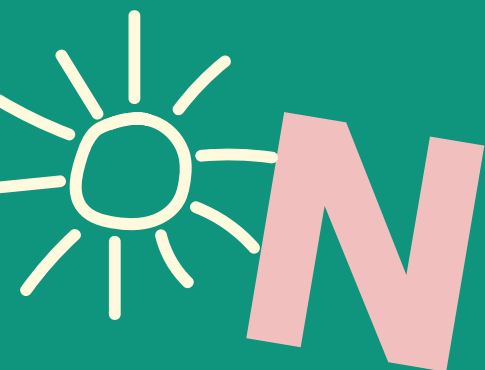


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*Practices*

*for  
Being  
Well*

# **NINE PRACTICES** *for Being Well*

*Elizabeth McDonald*

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# WELCOME

**We're so glad you're here! Maybe you picked up this guide because you're curious about Jesus, thinking about baptism, or just want to grow in your friendship with God. However you found this guide, we're excited that you've joined this journey and hope that by the end of your time, you may know that you are deeply loved and valued by God.**

**In the next nine lessons, you will have the chance to explore nine practices for being well, both as individuals and as a community. Each lesson is designed to help you understand, explore, and live out what you learn.**

**Each practice is divided into six sections:**

- 1. The Story**
- 2. Discussing It**
- 3. In the Word**
- 4. Applying It**
- 5. The Big Idea**
- 6. Putting It Into Practice**

**Over these nine lessons, you'll begin your time with reading a story about two kids, Holly and Matt, as they explore life, faith, and friendship. Holly and Matt go through real-life situations and begin to learn how to care for others, take care of themselves, and grow closer to God. Their stories will help you see how the Bible connects to your everyday life.**

**After the story, you'll dive into a few icebreaker questions and then transition into an interactive lesson where you'll open your Bible and explore a Scripture-based teaching that connects to the lesson's big picture.**

**Jesus didn't just teach people, but also showed them how to live. Being a follower of Jesus means using your heart, mind, and hands. That's why these lessons don't stop at reading. Each one gives you a chance to practice what you've learned. At the end of every lesson, you will find a special section with action steps you can try during that week. These might include journaling, acts of kindness, or spending time in God's word. All to help you grow in that week's big picture.**

**If you're going through this guide with your family or another grown-up, that's awesome. Love takes practice, and love also takes a community. Going through this Children's Edition together is a great opportunity to grow as a family, with a friend, or with a pastor. If you know someone who might enjoy learning with you, invite them to come along on this journey.**

**There are also Youth and Adult Editions of the guide available at AdventSource, so your whole family can do this together if you like!**

**May God your Creator, Jesus your Savior, and the Holy Spirit who is your Guide, grow you in love as you practice.**

**Be well,  
Elizabeth McDonald  
Associate Pastor for Children and Family  
La Sierra University Church**



**“MATT, I KNOW YOU TOOK IT!” Holly yelled down the hallway toward Matt’s room. Matt peeked his head out of his bedroom door and looked down the hall at Holly.**

**“What are you talking about, Holly?” Matt replied, his voice a little unsteady.**

**“You know exactly what I’m talking about, Matt. Don’t play with me,” Holly shot back, frustration in her voice. “I want my hat back. I saw you eyeing it the other day when you were in my room. You even tried it on, and now it’s gone, GONE.” She stormed down the hallway closer to Matt’s room.**

**“Matt, sometimes I wish you weren’t my brother.”**

**Matt’s heart sank as he looked at Holly, tears welling up in his eyes. “I’m really sorry, Holly. I just wanted to borrow it for a little while. I should have asked you first.”**

**Holly paused, taking a deep breath before walking out of the room. After a few minutes, she returned and sat on Matt’s bed next to him.**

**“Matt, do you know why that hat is so special to me?” Holly asked, her voice softer now.**

**Matt shook his head.**

**“It’s my favorite hat because last summer at camp, you and I decorated it together. Every time I wear it, I think about how lucky I am to have a brother like you.”**

**Matt’s eyes filled with emotion as he leaned forward and wrapped his arms around her. “Holly, I’m really sorry I took your hat.”**

**Holly hugged him back tightly. “I’m sorry for what I said about wishing you weren’t my brother. I love having you as my brother, and I wouldn’t wish for anything different.”**

**Matt stood up from the bed and walked over to his closet. He pulled out the hat and brought it back to Holly, placing it gently on her head. “So you can remember how much you love me,” he said with a small smile.**

**Do you ever find it hard to love others or even yourself? God's love is unconditional and never wavering. It's through God's love that we find the strength to love others and ourselves fully, no matter the challenges we face.**

*Whoever does not love does not  
know God, for God is love.  
1 John 4:8 NIV*



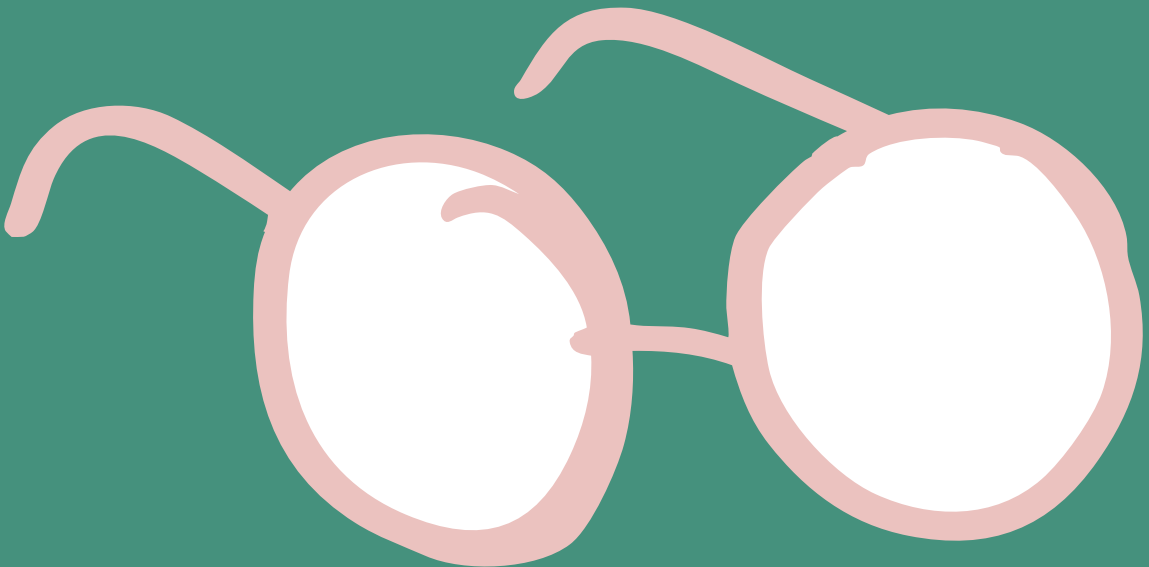
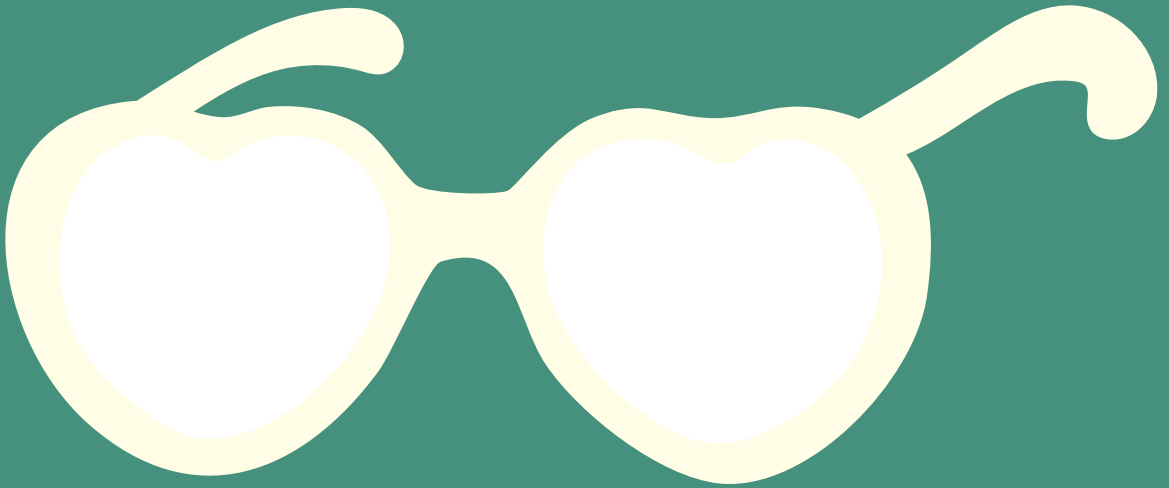


# DISCUSS IT

**Who is someone in your life that you know loves you?**

**What are some ways that you show love to others?**

*Draw your answers in the glasses!*



# IN THE WORD

Have you ever looked through something like glasses, a magnifying glass, or even a pair of binoculars? They help us see things more clearly or in a whole new way. Sometimes when we look through the right lens we can better understand the things around us and sometimes see things in a new way.

What if we had an invisible pair of glasses that helped us see people the way God's love does?

When we choose to look with love first, we can be more caring, kind, and patient not just with other people, but with ourselves too!

Let's see what the Bible says about looking through a lens of love.



**7 Dear friends, let us**

**one another, for**

**comes from God.**

**who has**

**been born of God and**

**God. 8 Whoever does not**

**does not know God, because God is**

**love. 9 This is how God**

**his love among us: He sent his**

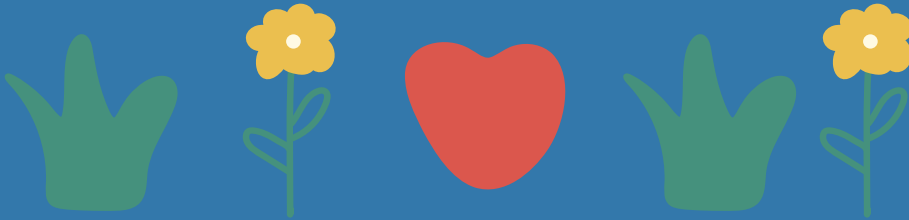
**and only Son into the**

**that we might live through him.**

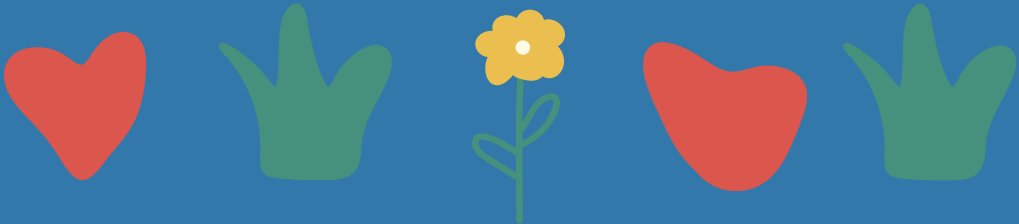
**1 John 4:7-9 NIV**



When we talk about seeing through the lens of love, we're talking about seeing others and even ourselves in the way God sees us. Did you know that you are loved by God? The Bible shares that love first starts with God, and because God loves us so much we should share that love with others.



**Match the following actions with how you would respond looking through the lens of love**



**Someone is having a hard time carrying something**

**Listen to how they are feeling, ask if they need anything**

**Your friend is having a hard day**

**Offer to help carry something**

**Your sibling takes your toy without asking**

**Forgive yourself and know you can try again**

**You make a mistake**

**Invite them to sit with you**

**Someone is eating alone at lunch**

**Tell them kindly how you feel and ask if they can return it**

When we look through the lens of love, we can not only see ourselves in a new way, but we begin to see the world around us differently too. The Bible doesn't just mention love here or there, it reveals love as a central theme. It shows us that love is the foundation of everything.

God's actions big or small are all rooted in love. God moves in and through love, teaching us how to love ourselves, each other, and the world around us.

# APPLYING IT

Let's read Matthew 22:36-39.

Now that we know that God is love, that everything starts with God being love and God loving us, how do we live this out?



## **Love God (Matthew 22:36-37)**

What are some ways that we can love God?

## **Love Yourself (Matthew 22:39)**

What are some ways that we can love ourselves?

## **Love Your Neighbor (Matthew 22:39)**

What are some ways that we can love the people around us?



*Big Idea:*  
**God loves me, so I can  
love others!**

# PRACTICE IT

Over the next few days, take time as a family to read, discuss, and do the following activities:

**1. Love God:**

Journal - Using the journal pages, write a letter to God. This could include thoughts or worries on your mind or things that have happened within your day.

**2. Loving Yourself:**

As a family, write sticky notes about things that you love about one another. When you are done place the sticky notes on your bathroom mirror so that as you get ready each day you remember that you are loved by God and others.

**3. Loving Your Neighbor:**

Choose to do something as a family this week that is “loving your neighbor.”



[illegible]





**“Grandma, can you tell us that story that I love again?” Holly and Matt begged, sitting on the couch as Grandma knitted away. Her face lit up as she tucked her knitting into the side of the couch for later. No matter how many times she told Holly and Matt the story of how she and Grandpa met, it still brought a smile to her face.**

**Holly and Matt snuggled up next to Grandma on the couch as she began the story.**

**“Well, you see, it all started when we were in college. I was working in the cafeteria, and Grandpa would come in every day asking for all sorts of things we had in obvious places, just so he could talk to me. One day, he came up asking where the forks were, as if they had moved in the two years he’d been there.”**

**Grandma continued for the next hour, sharing all sorts of little stories about her and Grandpa.**

**As she finished, she said, “Just think, those silly little questions turned into me marrying your grandpa and then creating all sorts of new stories for all of us to cherish forever.”**

**Holly and Matt hugged their grandma tight, and Holly said, “I just love that we now all get to make stories together.”**

You, too, may love hearing stories about your family. Stories connect people from all ages and walks of life. They have a beautiful way of preserving history and tradition, and inspiring us to learn, grow, and love. The Bible is a beautiful collection of messages that people have written about God that empower us to challenge our perspective, learn from others, and see and feel God's love.



*These are the very  
Scriptures that testify  
about me.  
John 5:39b NIV*





# DISCUSS IT

*Finish the sentences below:*

One thing that I wonder about the bible is...

My favorite Bible story or verse is...



The Bible is a collection of wonderful lessons and stories to help us understand God's love for us.

To find each of these lessons, the Bible uses special tools and terms to help us navigate, kind of like a map! Let's learn what these tools are called and how we can use them to explore the Bible for ourselves.

## IN THE WORD

The Bible is divided into two different sections.  
What are they called?

*Circle how many books you think  
are in the entire Bible.*

100

5

66

27

39

34

91



## *Law*

GENESIS  
EXODUS  
LEVITICUS

NUMBERS  
DEUTERONOMY

## *History*

JOSHUA  
JUDGES  
RUTH  
1 + 2 SAMUEL  
1 + 2 KINGS

1 + 2 CHRONICLES  
EZRA  
NEHEMIAH  
ESTHER

## *Poetry*

JOB  
PSALMS  
PROVERBS

ECCLESIASTES  
SONG OF SONGS

## *Prophets*

ISAIAH  
JEREMIAH  
LAMENTATIONS

EZEKIEL  
DANIEL  
HOSEA

JOEL  
AMOS  
OBADIAH  
JONAH  
MICAH  
NAHUM

HABAKKUK  
ZEPHANIAH  
HAGGAI  
ZECHARIAH  
MALACHI