

accomplished. This frustration led me to the One who had paid the price for my acceptance on the cross, Jesus. He took down all the barriers that sin had caused and now nothing can separate me from His love, nothing except not being able to believe that it was really true.

I remember the day I realized that I was afraid to believe that God loved me. This was the turning point. I was afraid that He was like all the other people in my life who had told me that they loved me, but didn't really mean it--their actions proved otherwise. I had learned not to trust anyone. Now I had to make a decision to trust God. This was really hard, but I decided to believe, not because I felt good enough to be loved by God, or had achieved by my performance and deserved to be accepted, but because of what God had said in His Word, that is, for me to not believe Him would be really missing the mark for what He had for me; it is called sin.

From the deepest part of my being I turned to God and away from my fears, the fears that had held me captive all of my life. With trembling and tears, as an act of my will I said "I believe you love me Father, not because I feel it, but because you said that you do." At this point it was as though the door of my heart, which had long ago been sealed shut, began to open. Though only a crack of light could be seen, it was enough. From the other side a flood of light began to pour in, as if by the strength of some unseen divine hand, the rusty hinges gave way and the door of my heart swung wide open! It was the light of God's wonderful, unconditional love that was pouring into my being and setting me free!

God's love healed my hurting heart, not because I deserved it, but because I let Him. His love is greater than I can understand. It has changed my life.

Listen to what was said long ago about God's love...

"If God is for us, who can be against us? He that did not hesitate to spare his own Son but gave him up for us all - can we not trust such a God to give us, with him, everything that we can

need?...Can anything separate us from the love of Christ? Can trouble, pain, or persecution? Can lack of clothes and food, danger to life and limb, the threat of force of arms?...No, in all these things we win an overwhelming victory through him who has proved his love for us. I have become absolutely convinced that neither death nor life, neither messenger of Heaven nor monarch of earth, neither what happens today nor what may happen tomorrow, neither a power from on high nor a power from below, nor anything else in God's world has any power to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord!" (God's Word - Rom. 8:31-39).

The deepest need of my being, the need to be loved and to belong, has been fulfilled and satisfied by the One who is Love, the heavenly Father. He loves you, too. Would you turn your heart to Him and believe that Jesus died to give you that total acceptance you have been longing for?

Discipleship Questions

1. Wendy's thoughts would go something like this, "You don't fit in, you're not good enough, you don't belong, nobody cares." What she really longed for was to be _____.
2. God took down the barriers that sin has caused and now nothing can separate us from His love. Nothing except us not being _____.
3. Wendy said she remembered the day she realized that she was afraid to believe that _____. This was her turning point.
4. Wendy had to make a decision to _____.
5. With trembling and tears, as an act of Wendy's will she said, _____.

6. Read Ephesians 4:23. "And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;" How are we to be renewed?
7. Read Matthew 11:28. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." What does Jesus promise to those who come to Him?
8. Read Matthew 11:29. "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." What two things are we to do according to this verse?
9. Read Matthew 11:30. "For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Does Jesus offer us a burdensome load?
10. Would you be willing to give your load to Jesus right now?
11. Read Romans 5:8. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. How did God demonstrate His own love towards us?
12. Read 1 John 3:1. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." What is another way God shows His love for us?
13. Read John 1:12. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:" Have you received God's love by receiving His Son?
14. Read 1 John 4:18. "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love." Is there fear in love?
15. Read 1 John 4:18. "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love." What does love cast out?

16. Read 1 John 4:18. "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love." What does fear involve?

17. Read 1 John 4:19. "We love him, because he first loved us." Why is it we are able to love God?

18. Read Romans 8:35. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" List the seven things that will not separate us from the love of God.

19. Read Romans 8:38-39. "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, [39] Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." "For I am persuaded that neither ____ nor ____ nor ____ nor ____ nor ____ nor ____ nor ____ nor ____ nor ____ creature shall separate us from the ____ of God which is in ____."

20. Read Romans 8:38-39. "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, [39] Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Do you realize that there is nothing, absolutely nothing that is going on in your life that can't be overcome with the love of Christ?

Discipleship Answer Key

1. Loved unconditionally.
2. Able to believe that it is really true.
3. God loved her. This was her turning point.
4. Trust God and His love because of what God had said in His Word.
5. "I believe you love me Father, not because I feel it, but because you said that you do."
6. In the spirit of your mind.
7. He will give us rest.
8. Take His yoke upon yourself. Learn of Him.
9. No.
10. _____.
11. While we were still sinners Christ died for us.
12. By calling us sons of God.
13. _____.
14. No.
15. Fear.
16. Torment.
17. Because He loved us first.
18. Tribulation. Distress. Persecution. Famine (not having enough food). Nakedness (not having enough clothing). Peril (trouble). Sword (war or murder).
19. Death nor Life.
Angels nor Principalities (demons) nor Powers
Things present nor Things to come.
Height (things in heaven) nor Depth (things in hell)
Nor any other creature (or created thing) shall separate us from the Love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (or Master).
20. _____ Believe it!!!

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Somebody Loves Me!

By Wendy Krow
(Discipleship Lesson)

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Read the entire lesson and then
answer the questions that follow.

A breeze gently blew the curtains at my kitchen window. I felt so alive as I sat there feeling the cool fresh air against my face and thinking about all the things that had taken place in my life to bring me to this day--a day that caused me to turn to Christ, a day for me to believe that He really loved me.

For many years I had been fighting a continual battle in my mind from which there was little relief, and I had grown weary to the point of looking beyond myself for help. The thoughts would go something like this, "You don't fit in here...You're not good enough to be doing this or to be with these people...You don't belong here...Nobody cares what you say or do...Nobody really loves you...You should leave and find out where you really belong..." There was a constant fear of rejection that colored my thoughts.

What I longed for was to be loved unconditionally, but I never believed anyone could ever really love me this way. What I believed was that I just wasn't good enough to be loved for who I was.

The light of understanding began to shine into my thoughts as I began to look at God's Word and see what was said about the heavenly Father's love for those who belong to Him. A love and acceptance, given freely, not based upon performance, but on belonging. Somehow I thought that the most important thing in gaining acceptance was how I acted and how I looked, in other words, my performance. I was seeking performance based acceptance that could never be achieved. It was a dead-end road. It could never be