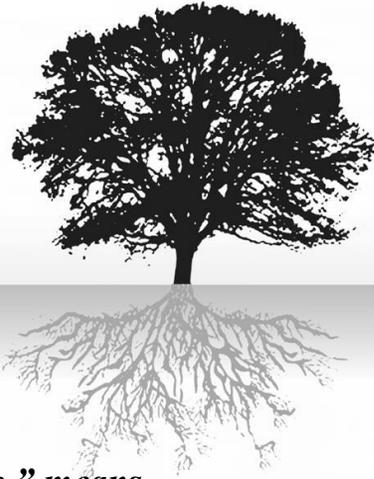


# The Simple Life



Christ's Simple Secret  
to Following God

## ***“The Lord is one.” means...***

1. God will not do American Idol.  
*Deuteronomy 4:23-24*
2. God is not interested in second place.  
*Exodus 20:1-3 & 34:19*
3. God can't be what you need unless he's first.  
*Matthew 6:33*

***Hear Oh Israel... the Lord is one!*** *Mark 12:30*

## **The thing about first...**

It leads all other choices!

*Deuteronomy 6:4-9*

It is the last word on value!

*Philippians 3:7*

It's the last thing you let go of!

*Deuteronomy 30:19-20 & Revelation 2:4-5*

*“Lord, be my first and greatest love,  
and let me grow in that love  
every day.”*

## Elemental Living Lesson 1



1. What do you remember of your “first love”? What do you remember about the first time you gave your heart to God? What things have changed?
2. Read Deuteronomy 6:23-24. What does the word “jealous” tell us about the nature of God? How is that seen in the first half of the 10 Commandments?
3. Read Matthew 6:33. What does it mean to “seek first”? What does Jesus say about the outcome of seeking God first? How have you experienced that promise?
4. How would you respond to someone who said: “God is just not a priority in my life right now, but I do still love Him.”
5. Which of the three things about first did you most need to hear in this lesson? Why? Recite the theme text (Mark 12:29-31) together and ask God to help you put Him in first place this week.

“Lord, plant my roots deep in the soil of your love.”

# The Simple Life



Christ's Simple Secret  
to Following God

## ***“Love the Lord with all...”***

1. Christ teaches that the core of my faith is my love for God. From it flows everything else.  
*Mark 12:29-31*
2. Where do I begin in loving God?

### **3 OPTIONS**

- I begin with my love. *Ephesians 2:1-5*  
I begin with your love. *Romans 7:18-19*  
I begin with God's love. *I John 4:7-11*

## **I. *God is love...***

1. Love comes from God
2. Love is defined by God
3. Love is modeled by God
4. Love is motivated by God

## **II. *With all your heart...***

Labab  
Naphash  
Deanoya  
M<sup>e</sup>hu

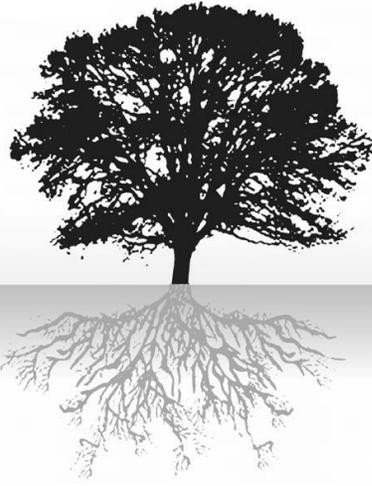
## Elemental Living Lesson 2



1. Where have you turned for motivation to love God more? Which is more motivating to you: Heaven or Hell? Why?
2. Read Ephesians 2:1-5. What do you think Paul means by “dead”? If we were dead, how could we respond to the call of Christ? What point is he trying to make?
3. Read Romans 7:18-19. How would you describe the dependability Paul has in his own spiritual strength? What's wrong with basing our love for God on how others love us?
4. Read John 4:7-11. Where does John say the power of love starts? What benefits do I find in trusting in the power of God's love over mine? How do Jesus' words in John 15:9 help us understand the holy history of our love?
5. Recite the theme text (Mark 12:29-31) together and share some ways that this passage is impacting your actions through the week. Pray together for a deep awareness of the greatness of God's love for us.

“Lord, plant my roots deep in the soil of your love.”

# The Simple Life



Christ's Simple Secret  
to Following God

1. Christ's simple outline for following God has only two key elements:  
Love God,  
Love Others.

*Mark 12:29-31*

2. From the beginning God has expressed his desire for relationship with mankind. *Genesis 3:8-9*

## Drawing Closer to the One You Love

Spending time listening *John 10:2-4*

Spending time speaking. *Philippians 4:4-7*

Spending time in silence. *Psalms 119:97*

3. From our love for God flows our love for others. Jesus leaves no option of "Either/or." With him, its "both/and." Further this is simultaneous, not a consecutive command.

*Matthew 25:37-45*

## When I Love You...

I love God

I love you for God.

I love you with God's Love

I John 4:7-12 & John 15:9

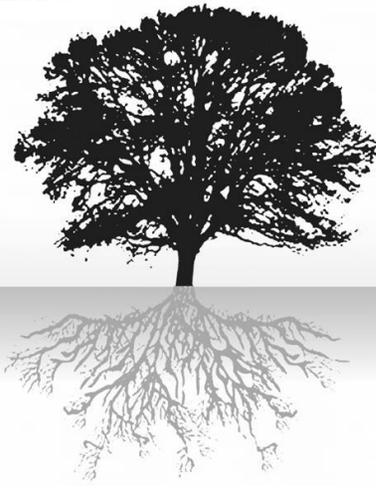
## Elemental Living Lesson 3



1. If you could sit down with God and ask him 2 questions, what would they be? What does the nature of those questions tell you about your relationship with Him?
2. Read Matthew 17:1-5. What is Peter's response to the amazing sight on the mountain? What does God command them to do? What ways can I fulfill that charge?
3. Read Philippians 4:4-7. What kinds of things are we encouraged to pray about? What is the results of that prayer? How have you experienced that in your life?
4. What keeps you from "time with the One you love"? How would setting regular time for the 3 parts of holy conversation described above bless your life?
5. Discuss the methods that different members use to set aside daily time for prayer and Bible study. Pray together for a consistency in your "holy conversation" with God.

"Lord, plant my roots deep in the soil of your love."

# The Simple Life



Christ's Simple Secret  
to Following God

## ***“Love the Lord with all...”***

From our love for God flows our love for others. Jesus leaves no option of “Either/or.” With him, its “both/and.” Further this is simultaneous, not a consecutive command. Christ’s simple outline for following

*Mark 12:29-31*

## **When I Love You...**

I love God

I love you for God.

I love you with God’s Love

I John 4:7-12 & John 15:9

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## **Two truths which must be respected:**

1. “I can never break the first command in order to accomplish the second.”
2. The words of my Lover must always guide my love.

## Elemental Living Lesson 4



1. Which of the two “loves” is harder for you? Loving God or loving others? Why is it important that we see them as simultaneous?
2. Read I John 4:7-12. How does it impact the way I love you if I think of loving you as I love God? In what way am I loving others “for God”? How should this change the way I think about loving others?
3. Read John 15:9. Trace the divine history of Christ’s love for us. What words would you use to describe the love a parent has for their child? How does it feel to know that God loves us like we are his children? How does it empower us to love others?
4. Jeff discussed the tension between loving God and loving people. What happens when we stop loving people but try to keep loving God? What happens when we stop loving God because we love people? How can we as a community of faith help each other maintain that important balance?
5. What are three practical things that we can do to hold one another accountable for loving God while we love people? Read Mark 12:29-31 out loud together, then recite it together. Share how focusing on this one scripture has impacted your thinking over the last 4 weeks. Finish by praying asking God to help us make it our goal every day for the rest of our lives.

“Lord, plant my roots deep in the soil of your love.”