

## The Range of Love

As we watch Jesus love people, our imagination for what love looks like expands. As our range expands, we need wisdom how to love in any given moment. The only way to do this is to be like Jesus, dependent on the Spirit to lead. The questions and prayers below are designed to help you discern the Father's will when you're unsure how to love.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>#1 GOOD WALLS</b> (Saying “no” to others)</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Jesus’ brothers telling him to go to the Feast of Tabernacles (John 7).</p> <p><i>Questions to alert myself:</i> “Do I need to say ‘no’ to this person or need? Am I willing to risk his or her disapproval? Have I waited in prayer? Am I selfishly avoiding conflict?”</p> <p><i>Prayer:</i> “Father, give me the grace to say ‘no’ even if it means facing someone else’s disappointment. Show me what you want me to do so I’m not just reacting negatively to people. Keep me from withdrawing from people in the wrong way.”</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>#3 GENTLE INTRUSION</b> (Saying “yes” to God’s call to gently intrude)</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Jesus inviting himself over to Zacchaeus’ house (Luke 19).</p> <p><i>Questions to alert myself:</i> “Am I willing to look like a fool in caring for people? Is there any selfishness that would keep me from moving into their lives? Am I willing to face their disapproval by risking honesty?”</p> <p><i>Prayer:</i> “Father, show me if I should move toward this person. Let your concern for lost and lonely people flood my own soul. Give me the courage to enter into this mess even if I’m rejected or pushed away.”</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>#2 SELF-CONTROL</b> (Saying “no” to myself)</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Satan tempting Jesus to turn the stone into bread (Matthew 4).</p> <p><i>Questions to alert myself:</i> “Do I need to wait on God in prayer? Is some of my own emptiness driving me? Is there any ‘self’ in my desire to give advice or help? Am I trying to fix a situation that shouldn’t be fixed?”</p> <p><i>Prayer:</i> “Father, give me the grace to say ‘no’ to my own desires. Help me not to come in and ‘fix’ people or invade them. Give me the grace to see what sinful desires I might have in a relationship even when I’m helping.”</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>#4 SELFLESS OPENNESS</b> (Saying “yes” when others intrude on me)</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Bleeding woman touching Jesus (Mark 5, Luke 8).</p> <p><i>Questions to alert myself:</i> “Am I willing to allow another person’s needs invade my life? When someone comes around do I pull away because his or her needs seem endless?”</p> <p><i>Prayer:</i> “Father, give me the grace to love people whose needs seem endless and whose personalities are draining. Keep me from despising them. Help me to remember you were there for me when I was a mess—and you still are!”</p>