In high school, I had a lot of friends of circumstance: my math friends, my track friends, my band friends, etc. My only consistent friend was my best friend Ivy. All throughout high school, we were each other’s comforts through bad tests, hard classes, and messy relationships. I loved Ivy because she was my anchor through the storms of life. When I felt alone or broken, our conversations would remind me that I was worthy of love. It was a selfish relationship because she was just a temporary fix to my loneliness. The summer before college, she became so busy with her job that she couldn’t talk to me. When she couldn’t comfort me, I wanted her to feel as abandoned as I did. My conditional love for her ran out, and I didn’t talk to her for a year because I wanted my best friend to suffer as I suffered.

A person in my first college lecture invited me to JCA, where God provided me with the friends I so desperately needed. I wanted to be around them, not only because of my loneliness, but also because of how they loved, and how I wanted to be loved. Through family group and sermons, I learned about a loving God, and in His love, I saw how imperfect mine was. Where I only loved “deserving” people, God loved indiscriminately. Where I loved because of what people did, God loved because of who He is. Where I turned away from the people that hurt me, God loved us so much that He sent His son down so that we could have victory through Jesus.

As I was experiencing His love, God told me to forgive Ivy, but there wasn’t enough of God’s love in my heart, so God kept working, pursuing me through family group and class relationships. At the end of my freshman year, God had shown me that His love was greater than my loneliness, and for the first time, I felt free. He saved me, and when I went back home, I forgave Ivy.

God’s love is not self-serving, His love keeps no record of wrongs, and His love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things. In loneliness, I was hopeless and believed that I wasn’t worthy of love, but in Christ, I have hope in eternal love and eternal redemption.