My struggle has always been with relationships. In high school, I invested my happiness into my friendships. This meant that my happiest moments were when my friends and I were together, laughing over dumb jokes or playing video games together. This also means that my lowest moments were when they left, and I was left to scrape the internet for any means of social connection. Thus, I loved my friends, but I loved them because they filled that hole; they made me feel like more than nothing. The person who suffered the most from this, besides me, was my best friend Ivy. We were constant friends, and she was the person I would always message if I felt alone or empty. For that, I loved her, but this was not a Godly love. During the summer before college, she became so busy with her job that we couldn’t talk regularly. This is where my love fell short. I became so embittered with her because she wouldn’t fill my loneliness any more, and I wanted her to suffer as deeply as I suffered.

Coming to college, I was hoping for a clean slate and for new friends, and God provided. A person in my lecture invited me to JCA, and I found the friends I was so desperately looking for. I had never met people who were so willing to sacrifice for you, whether it was their time or their money. I wanted to be around them, not only because of how lonely I was, but also because I wanted their love to flow into me. I went to services, and listened to sermons about a God who loved, and in His love, I saw how imperfect my love is. I saw how I withheld it from people I thought didn’t deserve it, and how I loved for myself. The clearest place where I was withholding love was with Ivy, the best friend on whom I turned my back, and I knew that God would want me to forgive her, but I couldn’t. There wasn’t enough of God’s love in my heart to overcome my love for myself. God kept working, pursuing me through family group hangouts, and through class hangouts. At the end of the spring of my freshman year, God had shown me much more love than I had ever received. My happiness was no longer stored in my relationships, and I finally forgave Ivy. God showed me that there are people who can love and love and love, but at the end of the day, God can love so much more than we can ever hope. 1 Corinthians 13.