

LOVE ONE ANOTHER MAY 28

What will make this the best summer ever won't be the destinations we go or the pictures we take, but rather the people we do life with- those we impact and those that impact us. Love is perhaps the most used and misused word in the world. Today we explore what love means in the context of a Christian community.

Work through the following questions and scriptures on your own or get together with your group, spiritual running partners, or family to talk through what you are learning.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Share about a situation where you really struggled to be around someone and love them, but over time that changed. What caused the change?
- 2. What stood out to you from the message?
- Read Acts 2:41-47.

Make some observations about this passage (What does the text say?):

- Who is talking?
- · What is the circumstance?
- Any repeated phrases?
- · What surprised you?
- What stood out to you?

Make some interpretations (What does the passage mean?):

- Who is talking?
- What questions do you have?
- Summarize the passage in 1-3 sentences what are the main points?
- · What do you learn about the nature and character of God as you read this?
- · What do you learn about yourself and your choices?

Now make some applications (what's my response?):

- How do you respond to what you are reading?
- How does this apply to your life?
- What is the central truth that you could put into practice from this?
- Who could you share this with for the sake of encouragement?
- 4. Read **John 13:34-35**. Unfortunately, we only have one word for "love" in the English language, whereas many languages include several words to describe different types and degrees of love. The Greek word for love Jesus uses is, *agape*. *Agape* love is not a feeling, but an action. Agape love is not something that happens to you, but that you choose to *do* to others.
 - How did Jesus love His disciples and what will He ultimately do to show His love?
 - In what ways is this love different from how our culture would define love?
 - How does loving one another like Jesus does identify us as His disciples?

5. Read 1 John 4:7-11.

- · Have you considered the connection between loving God and loving one another?
- How are you doing at loving others? Are you better at loving your neighbors or loving those in the church? Why is that?
- Why is it necessary to be good at loving one another if we are going to reach the city with His love?

KEY SCRIPTURE

Acts 21:41-47 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

John 13:34-35 A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.

1 John 4:7-11 Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

PRAYER

Read slowly through 1 Corinthians 13:3-7 from The Message, then take time to confess the ways you have not loved others and ask for God's help to grow your love. If you can, be specific about the people you are not loving well, or write their name down.

If I give everything I own to the poor and even go to the stake to be burned as a martyr, but I don't love, I've gotten nowhere. So, no matter what I say, what I believe, and what I do, I'm bankrupt without love.

Love never gives up.

Love cares more for others than for self.
Love doesn't want what it doesn't have.
Love doesn't strut,
Doesn't have a swelled head,
Doesn't force itself on others,
Isn't always "me first,"
Doesn't fly off the handle,
Doesn't keep score of the sins of others,
Doesn't revel when others grovel,
Takes pleasure in the flowering of truth,
Puts up with anything,
Trusts God always,
Always looks for the best,
Never looks back,
But keeps going to the end.

-1 Corinthians 13:3-7 from The Message paraphrase

TAKE A NEXT STEP

- Spend this week meditating on the prayers of Paul in his letter to the Ephesians (3:14-19). His desire is that we would grow in our strength to comprehend the love of Jesus. Pray daily for this strength. It's only as we grow in the knowledge of Jesus' love for us that we can truly grow in our love for one another.
- Pray specifically for those that you struggle to love with *agape* love. Pray for their good and for God to show up in their lives in the ways you would want Him to show up in yours.
- As we prepare for going out into our neighborhoods on July 4th weekend, follow along with the Acts devotionals on the Gateway youtube channel: https://www.youtube.com/@gatewaychurchaustin
- For further information on the "love one anothers" of scripture, check out this infographic: https://overviewbible.com/one-another-infographic/
 #:~:text=Here's%20all%20that%20info%20in,in%2094%20New%20Testament%20verses

FOR THE PARENTS

Hey, families! Here's a look at what we're covering with your kids so you can help them continue to grow at home during the week.

THIS WEEK

This week, kids learn about the Holy Spirit coming to the Early Church at Pentecost.

- THE BIBLE: The Holy Spirit Comes at Pentecost: Acts 2:1-12
- THE BIG IDEA: Anyone can do great things for God.

ASK THIS

Because sometimes you and your kid need a conversation-starter that isn't,

"So . . . how was church?"

- Do you enjoy working in a team? What do you find enjoyable? What do you find challenging?
- What gift has the Holy Spirit given to you? Or what gift would you like to ask God to give you?

REMEMBER THIS

This month, your kids are memorizing the Bible verse

2 Timothy 1:7 (NIV), in case you want to work on them together.

Preschool: "For the Spirit...gives us power, love and self-discipline." 2 Timothy 1:7

Elementary: "For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline." 2 Timothy 1:7

NEXT WEEK

Next week, we're starting a new series! Check your email for next month's monthly view of what's coming up.