

Small Group Curriculum • 1 John • Hello, Life.

LOVE IS HERE • WEEK 6 • 1 John 4:7-12

Love is a core truth woven throughout John's 1st epistle. John understood well that love is foundational in our new life in Christ. He seeks to grow the reader's knowledge of God's love, beautifully and clearly teaching about the true flow or movement of love as coming from God first (with Jesus Christ being the greatest expression of His love), then to us, then unto others.

REMINDERS

Are you looking for a place to serve? Please consider joining our Connections Team that provides a welcoming environment for our Sunday services. To explore a volunteer role, email our Connections & Communications Director at sarina@awakeningchurch.com.

Are you ready to be baptized during one of our services on November 17? Register for our baptism class on November 4 at awakeningchurch.com/events.

Register online at awakeningchurch.com/events and join seasoned marriage mentors, Karen and Sherman Trigg, for a conversational 5-session journey through the book, *Vertical Marriage*, by Dave and Ann Wilson. Starting November 5.

ICEBREAKER

We live in a world that is well saturated with quotes or sayings on love. Share a love quote that you have heard (at any point in your life) and how it has influenced your understanding of love. (i.e. "love is blind," etc.)

INTRODUCTION

Love is fundamental to God's nature and central to our Christian faith. It is part of the intricate and mysterious design of humanity to experience love with God and with others. Good theology is critical, for the lack of such makes us blind and ignorant and produces a life of emptiness, loneliness, and unfulfilled longing.

On the flip side, when we mature and increase in our understanding of God's love, then we begin to truly grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ and we get to walk in it with great freedom. And we get to say with conviction, "Hello life! Love is here!"

REFLECTION and DISCUSSION:

1. What is more real to you right now, the presence of love or the absence of love? Why do you think that's the case?
2. Think about your knowledge and understanding of love within the context of your Christian faith. Do you notice any misalignment with Scripture? Any opportunities for growth and renewed understanding?

AWAKENING

3. It is one thing to know and understand, it is another to live it out. Are there barriers in your life that keep you from living in the truth of God's love?

Transition:

Let's do a short prayer pause right now. Read Ephesians 3:14-21 out loud.

DISCUSSION

READ 1 John 4:7-12

1. As part of Sunday's teaching, Ryan illustrated love as flowing from a source to a vessel and then from one vessel to another. Why is it critically important to know, believe, and grow in resolve that God is the one and only source of love? How does this lead to freedom?
2. What false sources of love does popular culture and society present?
3. Why is it impossible to comprehend God's love apart from Jesus Christ?
4. Ryan opened his teaching by surfacing humanity's deepest desire which is to be truly known and fully loved. How does this resonate with you?
5. Take 2 minutes of silence to think about this- truly known and fully loved are already true of you. **YOU ARE BELOVED JUST AS YOU ARE.**

When 2 minutes are up, share with the group. What came up for you? What lies or fears related to your identity surfaced?

6. How might we better understand God's love being made complete in us when we love one another? Are there other verses or stories in Scripture that point to the same truth?

RESPONSE and PRAYER

FROM HEAD TO HEART TO LIFE

1. What are practical ways to actively receive love from God and allow that inward flow into your life? Create a list of practices as a group and send it to everyone.
2. Love can be so powerfully displayed within community through prayer. Practice living out your belovedness by sharing a prayer request and allowing the group to pray for you. In the same way, you also get to practice loving another by praying for them, making love complete in real time. End this time of communal prayer by reading Ephesians 3:14-21 (again).

Discussion guide provided by Ministry Coordinator, Evita Cas. Thank you, Evita!