



## Small Group LEADER Sermon Guide

March 25 & 26, 2017, Pastor Jamie Rasmussen

### Love | 2 Peter 1:5-7

<sup>ESV</sup> **2 Peter 1:5-7** For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with *love*.

**Main Point:** *The primary thing that matters in life is the receiving and giving of God's love.*

*"Self-giving love is the Trinity's signature."*

--Roderick Leupp, *Knowing the Name of God*

### GETTING TO KNOW ME

*Instructions: The purpose of these questions is to generate responses that are self-revealing and informative. Feel free to ask all of these questions to your group or simply choose the one that best fits your group.*

1. What non-biblical story best describes love for you? (e.g., movie, novel, etc.)
2. Who loved you the most in life? What did they do that communicated this love to you?
3. What's your love language - gift giving, quality time, words of affirmation, acts of service, or physical touch?

### INTO THE BIBLE

*Instructions: The purpose of these questions is to draw group members into the Bible to discover truth from passages that were not the primary text for the weekend message.*

1. Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-3. What's Paul's point? How can you tell when your acts of service are done in love? What are you currently doing that's not done in love? How do you plan to change?
2. Read John 14:21. Is it possible to obey His commandments without love? Explain. Why is it dangerous to obey Him in order to experience His love? What's the difference between obeying Him in order to earn His love and obeying Him to please Him? If you're not obeying His commands, do you see this as lacking His love? Why or why not? What does it mean for Christ to "manifest" Himself to us?
3. Read Romain 5:1-5. Where do we find the love of God? What's the connection between love and suffering?
4. Read Luke 10:25-37. Why did the lawyer desire to "justify himself? What's the takeaway for your group? What did Good Samaritan sacrifice? How can you make similar sacrifices with the ones you're called to love? What's the connection with loving your neighbor and inheriting eternal life?

Answers:

1. *Paul is teaching that gifts and acts of service without love are useless.*
2. *It is possible to obey His commandments without loving Him since our motives may be selfish. It's dangerous to obey Him in order to experience His love since it assumes that we need to earn His approval, which is contradictory to the Gospel. Nonetheless, it's a good motive to desire to please your Heavenly Father as a child desires to please its father by obeying him. In regards to manifestation, Jesus could be alluding to the principle that He will show the disciples "all things" in the same way that the Father shows the Son "all things" out of love for one another. (John 5:20)*
3. *The Holy Spirit is the conduit of the love of God when we reflect on the suffering of Christ. It's critical that we know of the love of God in suffering since it's usually when we suffer that we doubt God's love for us.*
4. *The lawyer wanted to justify Himself because he wanted to limit the people he was called to love. He only wanted to love the deserving. Jesus expands that telling a story about nameless man who was naked and unconscious; therefore, it was impossible to determine whether he deserved help and love. The Good Samaritan had to sacrifice his plans, finances, time and comfort (i.e., risk). The connection between eternal life and love is fairly straightforward. Those who were touched by the love of God will naturally love others in the same way that the Good Samaritan loved the beaten man.*

#### **APPLICATION**

*Instructions: The purpose of these questions is to apply the main points from the weekend message.*

1. Pastor Jamie defined love as a relational activity that thinks, feels, and acts towards others in such a way that is always for their benefit. Who are you currently loving well? Who needs a great measure of this sort of love? What do you plan to do to show them this love?
2. How do you experience the love that God offers? How does your group help you? How can you group grow here?
3. What's distracting you from a "rabid pursuit of this love?" What will you do today to make love the main stain of our walk with Him and how we interact with others?

Answers:

2. *Pastor Jamie shared that we can experience the love of God through prayer, His Word, serving others, and authentic community.*

#### **PRAYER**

*Instructions: In addition to your normal time of prayer, please spend some time praying through the following points from the sermon.*

1. Pray that God would give us a greater sense of His love.
2. Pray that we would keep love at the center of our church.