

Intro next series

Explain Gospel/Resurrection community

I. Introduction

A. Love is

1. Love originates from and is defined by God Himself.
 - a. Love is not the same as affection, attraction, or affinity.
 - b. They may accompany love but they are not love.
2. Love is the intersection of patience, kindness, and honesty.
3. The definitive example of love is seen in the death of Jesus at the cross.
4. You are the object of God's love but not the reason.

*God's love for you and for me is not a reaction to our goodness but an act because of His nature. God loves us first and without cause (first-cause love).

B. Remember me

1. Communion - remembering the death of Jesus
 - a. No one wants to be remembered for their death—ever been to a funeral where the focus was about the process of how the person died?
 - b. People want to be remembered by their life—usually sugar coated.
2. Yet, we are commanded in Scripture to remember Jesus' death accurately and regularly.
 - a. The mainspring of love for others is the divine love shown to us in Christ's work on the cross. That's why we remember!
 - b. Once we begin to understand the incredible price paid for sin and the magnitude of our personal sin, we will understand the love of God and then be able to demonstrate it ourselves.

*When I know and experience God's love for me then there is nothing in the way of me expressing that same first-cause love toward others.

II. Love perfected

A. A command with compelling and freeing motivation

1. Love one another because God has already loved you this way.
2. We, as Jesus followers, should love, not because all those we meet are attractive or deserving people, but because the love of God has transformed us and made us loving people.

*We reflect the nature of God!

B. Revealing God

1. No human has ever seen God in His unveiled essence, glory, and majesty.

2. However, God can be seen reflected in the lives of those who demonstrate His love toward others.

C. How we are transformed

1. The engine of love is God abiding in us (and us in Him)
 - a. We are receiving and trusting all that God is for us in Christ.
 - b. We are receiving and believing and trusting in the words of Jesus.
2. God's love is perfected in us.
 - a. Perfect
 - 1) Our concept: state of bliss, no conflict, get everything desired, all done
 - 2) God's concept: completeness, wholeness of purpose, not an end but a place to continue forward
 - b. God's love for us finds its purpose completed when we love one another.

Warning: we are headed for insanity when we make this about loving better.

III. Love others first

A. People in your life

1. Family/friends
 - a. How do you love them?
 - b. How do you need to grow?
 - c. I need to grow in kindness and honesty, well, and patience sometimes.
2. Acquaintances
 - a. How do you love them?
 - b. How do you need to grow?
 - c. I need to grow in patience.
3. Strangers
 - a. How do you love them?
 - b. How do you need to grow?
 - c. I need to grow in patience.

B. Card in the information rack



LOVE PERFECTED

1 JOHN 4:11-12

APRIL 28, 2019 | PASTOR MATT WHITEFORD



GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER (USE JUST ONE OR ALL OF THESE QUESTIONS TO CONNECT AS YOU START YOUR CONVERSATION)

- 1 Describe your “perfect day.” What would you do, who would you do it with (or would it be on your own), and what would make it perfect?

As we wrap up this short series on love, we will dig into how God’s love is perfected in us. As you discuss what it looks like to love others together, we pray you begin the process of God’s transformation that starts with our obedience. This will also be the final discussion guide for the spring. We hope you have seen growth in how you trust Jesus and allow Him to continually transform you into who He is calling you to be. We look forward to this fall when we start home groups back up the week of September 8.

QUICK REVIEW (OPPORTUNITY FOR PEOPLE TO SHARE WHAT MOST STOOD OUT FROM SUNDAY’S MESSAGE)

Looking back at your notes from this week’s teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, encouraged, challenged, or confused you?

DIG DEEPER (OBSERVATIONS FROM THE SCRIPTURE OR COMPLEMENTARY SCRIPTURES FROM SUNDAY’S MESSAGE)

- 1 Someone read **1 John 4:11-12**

¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹² No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

Why does it matter that no one has ever seen God? What relevance does that fact have to John’s words about love?

Does v. 12 indicate that God’s love is somehow imperfect or incomplete? Why or why not?

What, then, does it mean that God’s love is made complete or perfected when we love one another?

How have you been the recipient of God’s love through one of His children? How did you respond?

There is no deficiency in the love of God. In fact, as John has already said, we find the very definition of love in the nature of God displayed through the cross of Jesus. As we love one another, that love of God becomes visible to those around us through the tangible and sacrificial expressions of love. In this way, the love of God is made complete, for it becomes visible when we love each other.

LIVE IT OUT (DISCUSS HOW YOU CAN LIVE OUT THE TRUTHS YOU JUST OBSERVED IN SCRIPTURE)

1 Think about the people in your life – family/friends, acquaintances, and strangers. How do you love them right now in the areas of kindness, honesty, and patience? In which of those areas do you need to grow the most?

2 Matt shared how God's love for you and for me is not a reaction to our goodness, but an act because of His nature. God loves us first and without cause (first-cause love). Think of someone in your life who you have been waiting for them to take a step towards you or maybe you find yourself making excuses for why you don't want to reach out to them. Who in your life do you believe Jesus wants you to show love to, in a first-cause way? How can this group come alongside you and help you with that?

3 This is the last week of home groups for the spring semester. What is one way you have grown the most this past year? How has the community you have built in this group impacted you?

CLOSING PRAYER

Close by asking God to perfect His love in you and help you better appreciate Jesus' sacrificial act of love on your behalf. Pray for the opportunity to put your Christ-like love into action in your relationships with your spouse, children, family, close friends, or coworkers. Pray for love to become the mark for which the people of our church are known.

HOME GROUPS RESTART IN FALL, 2019

GROUPS RESTART THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 8 THIS FALL!

We hope this year in your home group has been marked with growth and community. The next season of home groups will be this fall. If you will continue to meet this summer, make sure to let your coach know and let them know what you plan to study as a group. Thanks for a great year! We continue to pray for your growth! – The CrossPoint Home Groups Team

PRAISE/PRAYER REQUESTS (TRY TO HAVE ONE OR A FEW PEOPLE PRAY FOR ONE TOPIC AT A TIME)

Use this space or the back of this paper to write the requests and find a way to share those with the group so you can be praying for each other during the week.

How to Use this Discussion Guide

The guide is meant to serve you and your group as you intentionally create a healthy environment for Gospel community, growing in friendship, and living like Jesus together. Use the guide as a tool to help your unique group.

With that in mind, please review the guide before your group meets to see if some content or questions might resonate more or less with your group. Don't feel pressure to read all the content during your group discussion or to hit on all the questions. The guide is not meant to be something you power through for the sake of completing. Pick the content from the guide you feel will help your group grow in Gospel community.

In addition, spend some time praying for your group each week, preparing your heart, and asking God for wisdom and guidance as you lead. We are praying for you too!

Visit cpmodesto.org/groupleaders to download the sermon discussion guide every week. Not in a Home Group, but want to be in one? Visit cpmodesto.org/homegroups and use the Home Group Finder!

COMMENTARY

1 JOHN 4:11-12

God set the standard of love for us. Since we are children of God, we should love other people, especially fellow believers, just as God loved us. God has never been seen in his pure form (Exod. 33:20,23; Deut. 4:12; John 1:18; 5:37; 6:46; cf. John 12:45; 14:9; 17:24; 1 John 1:1-3; 4:14). If you want to know what God is like, you can look at what he has done for us and what we should do for one another. This invisible God actually lives in us. The love he has for us is made visible and complete as we love one another. This is the way the world sees God's love, as it is expressed by Him through our lives. Only as God's love completes its purpose of reaching out to those he loves - the world (John 3:16) - is His love complete or fulfilled.