

Praise: Start your time in worship together as a family by following the order of service posted by Westview.

Pray: Invite Holy Spirit to be with you and to reveal God's truth today. Pray for the love of Christ to be known in your heart and in our world.

Review: Last week we learned from Hebrews and were challenged to encourage someone, how did that go? We were also challenged to read all of 1 John, how was that?

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I3QkE6nKyIM>

Read: 1 John 4: 7 – 12

Questions/Discussion:

- Why does John say that we should love one another?
 - Answer: Because it is an important indicator that they belong to God. In a time of confusing beliefs, it is important to show evidence of genuine conversion in Christ.
- Based on this verse, it is true to say that God *is* love. Would it also be true to say the reverse, that love *is* God? Why or why not?
 - Answer: No. This was an important distinction in John's day as well as our own. God is love, but He is also many other things, such as: justice, life, light, wrath, creator . . . the list is long! To say that love is God makes love elevated to something that can stand apart from God as His equal. Many people, then and now, are confused by this and live as though love is the end result rather than love being an outcome of pursuing Christ.
- Do you think people who do not know Christ are capable of love? Based on this passage, what is the difference between those who know God and those who do not when it comes to our ability to love?
 - Answer: Yes. Of course people are capable of love, in a human sense, even if they are not in a relationship with Christ. But, God's Word is clear that our human love is very limited by our sinfulness. We cannot love in a way that reflects the love of God unless we are doing it in the power of God. We cannot give what we don't have. To share the love of God, you must first experience it for yourself. Our human love may draw others to us, but the love of God is intended to point others to Him.
- What do you think "atoning sacrifice" means in this passage?
 - Answer: Our sinfulness brings God's wrath. Because God is just, there must be a payment for sin. He shows love in that He is both just and merciful in providing His own son as the payment for the debt that we owe for our sin. On the cross, Christ was the propitiation, or substitute payment, that settled the debt that we owe before God. He took our punishment and gave us His righteousness.
- Understanding this, re-read verses 9-10 and describe how God's love is different from human love.
 - Answer: God's love cost Him a great deal. His love is final and permanent. He gave His Son once and for all so that we could have life in Him. Human love changes and is often based on our own wants and needs rather than a free gift to others. God gave us a love that we did not deserve and it is very hard for us to do that for others.
- How does understanding God's perfect love for us help us to know how to love others?
 - Answer: When we look at how undeserving we are of God's love, we are able to love the unlovable. We are no longer limited to love only those who love us or who we feel deserve our love, but we are free to love others through the power of the Gospel.
- How does loving people when they don't deserve it point them to God?
 - Answer: God's nature is not the same as ours. What makes His love perfect is that it does not have the limits that we have. When we love the way God loves, we show that we are different from the world. We show others that there is transforming power in a relationship with Christ and that His character can be trusted.
- We all have days where we feel more human than spirit-filled, but it must be our goal to live with an understanding of God's love in a way that it overflows from us to others. When it becomes difficult to love others, we need to draw near to God and ask Him to remind us of His great love for us. It may also be helpful to spend time in prayer asking God to show you sin in your own life that may need to be confessed. This is a great way for us to remember how much God forgives us and loves us unconditionally. When we keep that in perspective, it becomes easier to show love to others, even when they may not seem to deserve it.

Conclusion/ Challenge: Read John 13:34-35 - How can you love others so that they see Christ?

How is the Summer Devo Challenge going? Join [HERE](#)