



Show Me Your Ways Through Love (1 John 4:7-11)

One of the first songs I learned in the many summers of Vacation Bible Schools at my grandmother's church was called, "God is Love." It was a beautiful song that could be sung in a round:

*Love, love, love, love
The Gospel in one word is love.
Love your neighbor as yourself
for God is love.*

God's love reaches far beyond the boundaries that we as humans tend to set in order to define love. When asked to define love, most of us would first tend to describe it as a feeling. Upon probing further, most of us would find that it is about so much more than just feelings. Love is an action. This passage tells us something about the nature of God's love. We know that God loved the world that He gave us His only Son. God does not love us from some far away place. Rather, through Jesus, God comes to stand with us and by us, God comes to us as one of us to share our hurt and our suffering, our joys and our triumphs. From this we know that love involves giving. If we love, we give of ourselves.

God's love is **unconditional**. There are no strings attached to the love that God has for us. It is never a matter of "being good enough" for God's love. God loves everyone always and no matter what.

God's love is **faithful**. God never takes back His promise to love us. In the times of our lives where we have little faith, God's love remains faithful. We may turn away from God, but God never turns away from us. God's love is never ending.

God's love is **transforming**. God loves us and forgives us of our sins and accepts us as we are, no matter what our lives have entailed. God's love enables us to become "new." When we experience the saving love of God, we can't help but be transformed, become different than we were before, as we learn to live in a relationship with God and our fellow human beings.

By God's very nature, He is love. God *defines* love, not like a dictionary defines love, but God is the very definition of love itself. To understand what true love is and to be able to truly love others, we must know God and His love for us by being in relationship with Him, seeking His will for our lives, and by showing those around us His love by our actions towards them.

Discussion Questions and Reflection Activities

Below is a list of Scripture passages dealing with the love of God.

Allow each member of your group to choose a passage. Have them read it and take a few moments to reflect on what it says to us about God's love. Share your findings with the group.

Psalm 36:5; 36:7; 48:9; 52:8; 86:15; 136:26;
Jeremiah 31:3;
John 3:16;
John 15:9;
Romans 8:35-39;
Ephesians 2:4-5

1. How have you experienced God's amazing love?
2. How have you seen His love in action?
3. How has God's love for you inspired how you respond to the world around you?

Using the word **LOVE**, write an acrostic poem that helps define the word in the context of our lesson for today.

Prayer:

O God, we are so grateful for the love that you continuously and graciously bestow upon us even when we do not deserve such love. We give thanks that at the very core of Your being You are love. Express Your love through me today to all the people I meet, whomever You place into my path. In Your loving name we pray. Amen.