



WEEKLY DISCUSSION GUIDE

WEEK 1: The Love of God

SERIES OVERVIEW

In our God Gave series we are looking at John 3:16 through the lens of the Christmas story. As we break down this famous verse in John's Gospel, may our hearts and minds be refreshed knowing God's love for us and experiencing his gift of salvation through His son Jesus.

CONTEXT

In the context of the Christmas story, John 3:16 and 1 John 4:7-12 highlight God's immense love for humanity by sending His only Son, Jesus, as a gift of salvation. This act of divine love encourages us to love one another as God sacrificially loves us. In fact, our love for others is a direct reflection of our relationship with Jesus.

THE BIG IDEA

God gave his Son as an act of love for his world. The only reason we love God is because he loved us first.

ICE BREAKER

Looking back at all the Christmas gifts you have received throughout your life, what gift stands out as the one that you felt the most loved when you received it.

SCRIPTURE:

John 3:16

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

1 John 4:7-12

7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. 8 Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. 9 In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. 10 In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 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.

Sermon Quote

"The greatest sorrow and burden you can lay on the Father (God), the greatest unkindness you can do to Him is not to believe that He loves you." – John Owen



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GROUP DISCUSSION

ALL TO HIM: As we approach the 2 year mark of our ATH Discipleship Journey and reflect on all that God has done in and through us, what has been your favorite part of the journey? Share a moment when God did what only He can do during your discipleship journey.

What is one thing that stood out to you from the sermon and why do you think God wants you to remember this truth?

Read John 3:16. Commit this verse to memory. How does this verse tell the Gospel story?

Read 1 John 4:7-8 and compare it with Jesus' words in John 13:34-35. What are we commanded to do in these verses?

How is the world's love different from God's sacrificial (agape) love in these verses? Share a moment in your life when you experienced God's love for you and how can remembering that moment help you in difficult times?

Read 1 John 4:9-10. John knew that we needed proof of God's love for us. According to these verses, how did God ultimately prove his love for you?

How does it make you feel and live differently knowing that God initiated His love for you even before you loved him and before you were worthy of His love?

Read 1 John 4:11-12. As John circles back around to how we are to love others, why is it hard for you to do. What must we know and do to love others like He loves us?

Discussion continued:

Discuss the **Sermon Quote** on page 1. Do you agree? Disagree? Share a moment in your life when you didn't believe that God loves you.

PRAYER (In gender based groups)

*Share praises, answered prayers, and prayer requests. Share your love for God through praise, giving thanks and remembering what He did to prove His love for you.

Closing Prayer(come back together as a group)

God, show us our sin and help us to be grateful for your sacrificial love for us. We are in awe and wonder that you loved the world so much that you gave your one and only Son Jesus to save us. Help us, Holy Spirit to love others as you have loved us. God may everything we do, say and think honor You today, Amen.

CHRISTMAS GATHERINGS

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