

Series: What is Real?
Message: Growing in Love

May 5, 2013

From the beginning... LOVE.

1 John 3:11-13; Genesis 4:3-11; Hebrews 11:4

Love proves we're ALIVE!

1 John 3:14-15

Love is COSTLY.

1 John 3:13, 16; Hebrews 12:18-24

Love is shown by ACTION.

1 John 3:16-18; 1 Corinthians 13

Loving your brother is JUST THE BEGINNING.

Luke 10:25-37; Matthew 5:43-48

A mark of an authentic relationship with God: Am I growing in love for my brothers & sisters?

Food for thought

Review these questions in preparation for participating in a Life Group. All the questions may not be covered in their entirety. Prayer and connecting with each other are vital parts of spiritual growth.

Getting to know you...

Think of the most loving people you know... How do they show their love to you and others?

Can you think of a time when you saw love change another person's life? If so, how?

Digging Deeper

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus challenged a number of the common teachings of the day on such topics as prayer, anger, divorce, and love.

In Matthew 5:43-48, what misconceptions about love did Jesus address?

What motivations do you see in this passage for loving others?

What do you think it looks like in real life to love your enemy?

Wherever Jesus went, crowds flocked to Him. His response to these crowds earned Him the reputation of not only being a miracle worker but also a friend of sinners and outcasts.

Read Matthew 9:9-13 and Luke 7:36-50.

What do you notice about Jesus' response to the people?

In our culture, do you think Jesus is still thought of as a friend of sinners? Why or why not?

What are one or two practical ways we can be like Jesus and show love to those we see daily? ...to those marginalized?

Can you think of anything we should stop doing to show love?

Prayer Tips:

Use these prayer tips to talk it over with God:

- Heavenly Father, I thank you for bringing me from the kingdom of darkness into your kingdom of light through the death and powerful resurrection of Jesus! Help me this week to rely on Your power at work in me so I can love my brothers and sisters more.
- Please help me today to see people in need and respond as you would want me to understand that you have me in this place and at this time for a specific reason.
- Use the following space to list some people God is placing on your heart and how He's directing you to show them love.

• **THE PURPOSE OF LIFE GROUPS**

- Life Groups exist to promote spiritual maturity and personal growth through meaningful Christian relationships and the study of God's Word. (Romans 8:29 & Hebrews 10:24-25). Here's how it will happen:
- **SHARE**
Each week we'll take time to share what is happening in our lives. At first this sharing will include planned "sharing questions." But after the first few weeks, it will become more informal and personal, as we feel more comfortable.
-
- **STUDY**
Each week we'll study a section from God's Word that relates to the previous weekend's sermon or an appropriate personal growth topic. Our goal is to learn how to live out our Christianity in everyday life.
-
- **SUPPORT**
Each week we'll learn how to take care of one another as Christ commanded (John 15:9-13). This care can take many forms, such as prayer, encouragement, listening, challenging one another and meeting real needs.
-
- **SERVE**
Spiritual growth is fostered not only by what we gain through the support and input of others, but also through service to others. The role each of us fills is important to the health of the church and for us to be the hands and feet of Jesus to the community in which we live (Ephesians 4:11-16). Throughout the quarter, it is our hope that you can find and/or be affirmed in the ways God has designed you to serve and make a difference in God's Kingdom.