



THIS IS HOW YOU KNOW: SHOW GOD'S LOVE PERSONAL STUDY GUIDE

NOVEMBER 15, 2020

TAKEAWAY:

God has demonstrated genuine love through the person of Jesus, and He calls us to love others with our lives.

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT:

The Christian life will always include self-sacrifice as we seek to point others to the person and work of Christ.

GOSPEL CONNECTION:

As Christ laid down His life for our sake, we are called to lay down our lives for others.

INTRODUCTION

- 1 How would you define love?
- 2 What are the people or things you love most in this world? How do you demonstrate that love in different ways?

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

> Read 1 John 3:11-24.

This is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another. ¹² Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother's were righteous. ¹³ Do not be surprised, my brothers, if the world hates you. ¹⁴ We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death. ¹⁵ Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him. ¹⁶ This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. ¹⁷ If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? ¹⁸ Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. ¹⁹ This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence ²⁰ whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. ²¹ Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God ²² and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him. ²³ And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. ²⁴ Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.

- Why did John use Cain as an example of “what not to do”? What did Cain do wrong (Gen. 4:1-16)?

- How do you typically respond when you find it difficult to love a Christian brother or sister?
- How does the Christian life look altogether different from what Cain demonstrated?
- How has Christ demonstrated a different kind of love? How should we respond to Christ's display of love?
- How does this kind of love look different from the world's definition?
- How does Christ reassure us, even when our heart is torn between obedience and the flesh?
- How does the reminder of this truth empower us to walk in obedience?

> Read 1 John 4:1-6.

Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. ² This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, ³ but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world. ⁴ You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. ⁵ They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them. ⁶ We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood.

- According to John, what is the determining factor for whether or not a teaching is sound?
- Why is Jesus the determining factor for truth? What does that tell us about the significance of Jesus in determining our theology?
- How does verse 4 give us confidence as believers?
- How do these verses encourage us in confronting false teaching?
- What role does Christian community play in this process?

> Read 1 John 4:7-16.

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹ This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. ¹⁰ This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹ Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹² No one has ever seen God; but if

we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. ¹³ We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴ And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. ¹⁵ If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God. ¹⁶ And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.

- What does it mean that “God is love”? What does that tell us about God’s nature?
- How has Christ demonstrated God’s love to us? How did the cross define love for us?
- Why would it have been important for believers to be able to recognize genuine love of God during the time of John’s writing? Why is it important today?
- According to John, how do we reflect that God abides in us?

APPLICATION

- 1 How does God’s love for us—as demonstrated through Jesus Christ—call us to love differently than the world? How might it also involve sacrifice and suffering to love others with the love of Christ?
- 2 Where do you find it difficult to love others with this kind of love? How do you struggle to love someone, even in their brokenness? How have others loved you in your own brokenness?
- 3 Why does God’s love require us to share about Him with others?

THIS WEEK

- Memorize 1 John 4:7
- Read 1 John 3:11-15 on Monday
- Read 1 John 3:16-20 on Tuesday
- Read 1 John 3:21-24 on Wednesday
- Read 1 John 4:1-6 on Thursday
- Read 1 John 4:7-12 on Friday
- Read 1 John 4:13-16 on Saturday