

GOD'S TRUE, AMAZING LOVE CHANGING OUR LIVES
God's Love – Study No.2

Questions for small group Bible study:

1) In the world, we often talk about "falling in love" with someone. This expression about romantic love sounds as if when "true love" happens, we can't resist it! However, in the Bible true love is never spoken about as a "warm, fuzzy feeling" taking over. How does love "happen" according to the Bible? And what does this teach us about the nature of true love -- what it isn't and what it is?

See Deut.6:5; 10:12; 30:16; Matt.22:37; Luke 10:27

2) The Bible teaches us HOW we are to love. What are some strong, descriptive words used in the following verses? And what do they mean to you in practical, everyday situations?

See Deut.6:5; Rom.12:9a; Phil.1:9; I Thess.2:8; 3:12; 1 Peter 1:22; 4:8

3) God commands us to love Him but He also tells us how we are to do this in practice. How does God want us to show Him that we truly love Him (see verses below)? Consider this thought: If you love someone very deeply, then you will want to please them by doing for them what really makes them glad. Also by NOT doing what makes them sad. How does this fact apply to our love relationship with God? Think of one or two practical examples of how we can love God by doing something that really makes Him glad, or not doing something that displeases Him.

See Deut.11:1,13; John 14:21,23

4) What are we to do? God also makes it very clear WHO we are to love. Who according to the following verses? Consider specific examples from your own personal lives.

See John 13:34-35; 15:12,17; 1 Peter 1:22; 4:8; 1 John 4:7-12,16-21
Eph.5:25-28,33; Titus 2:3-4
Lev.19:18; Matt.22:39; Luke 10:25-37; Gal.5:14 -- Who is your "neighbour"? Think of specific groups of people in your societies. Or specific individuals in your own lives.
Lev.19:34
Luke 6:27,32,35

5) The Bible also makes it clear what we are to do when we show love to all these people. What does REAL LOVE IN ACTION look like in everyday life? In other words, when other people look at our lives, what should they SEE that compels them to say: "Look at that Christian! He/She is such a loving person."

See I Cor.16:14
I Cor.13:4-8a; Gal.5:22-23
Micah 6:8

Psalm 97:10; 119:127-128

II Cor.2:8

II Cor.5:14

I Thess.1:3; Heb.10:24; John 13:1-17; Eph.5:25-28

John 15:13; 1 John 3:16-18

Eph.4:15-16

Rom.15:30-32

II Cor.8:7,8,24

Compare the example of Paul: I Thess.2:8; Philemon 1-2

6) Do all of these action steps just happen if and when we happen to be in the right, spiritual mood for them? What does the Bible say about our part in making all of this happen? Have you found this to be true in your life? When it's been very hard going to love someone, how have you responded? Did you give up or press on? How significant to you at such moments is the truth that God has given His Spirit to help and empower you?

See I Cor.14:1; Col.3:14; II Peter 1:5-8
Rom.5:5; Gal.5:22; II Tim.1:7

7) Love is what we are commanded to do. And deep down we know this is what brings us greatest joy and peace. But we battle each day with different "enemies" that can destroy true love and our enjoying God's blessings. What are some of these "enemies" that we must fight against and destroy? Think of some simple, practical examples from your own lives. Share together briefly some experiences of fighting these enemies? Help one another find some "keys" to winning in this war.

See I John 2:15-17; 11 Tim.4:10
Eph.5:1-5; Gal.5:19 (compare verses 16 & 22)
John 21:15-17; Rev.2:1-4
Jeremiah 2:2; 3:6-10
Luke 7:44-47

8) If we show that we have true love for our heavenly Father and Lord by doing what truly pleases Him, then what can we expect God will do? Look at some of the rewards the Bible refers to in the verses listed below. How can these rewards make a difference in practice when we have struggles to keep loving?

See Deut.11:13-15,22-23 (How can we apply these promises to our situation today?)
Psalm 145:20; 147:11
Rom.8:28
I Cor.2:9; James 1:12; 2:5

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