



*EXPLORING REAL WAYS
TO LIVE IN AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY*

.....
STUDY GUIDE
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LOVE ONE ANOTHER // *John 13:34-35*

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

The Greek language has multiple words for love – eros, phileo, and agape. Eros is a kind of self love. Phileo is the love of a sibling. Agape is generous, self-sacrificing love. Jesus' command to love one other is agape love. We are called to love one another in the same way God has loved us – with generous, self-sacrificing love.

Love is the sum of all commands and teaching of Scripture

- Love is the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:36-40).
- Love is the way the Church witnesses to the world and fulfills the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20).
- Love is acknowledging Jesus as Lord – the Great Confession (Matthew 16:13-19).

Love is the first and summary fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). Love is the mark of Christian community and it is God's desired mark of a redeemed world.

Without love, any expression of Christianity is empty noise (I Corinthians 13).

PRAY:

Ask God to reveal something meaningful through this time of reflection.

READ:

Offer your full care and attention to reading the provided scripture passages.

DISCOVER:

Utilize the accompanying questions to seek truth and deeper understanding.

Romans 13:8 - Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.

1 Peter 1:22 - Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you have genuine mutual love, love one another deeply from the heart.

1 John 3:11, 18, 23 - For this is the message you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us.

1 John 4:7, 11, 12 - Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

Galatians 5:6 - For through the Spirit, by faith, we eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness.

DISCOVER, CONTINUED:

I Corinthians 13:1-13 - If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. 13 And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.¹

) What do these scriptures say about the purpose of love in the church?

- What is the nature of love?
- What is the function of love?

2) Reflect on a time when you have felt love from someone or a group of believers in the church:

- What was the event or need?
- How was love demonstrated?
- What was the result? How did you feel? What did you think?

3) Based on your story above, and the story of others if you are in a small group, make a list of what love looks like, or should look like, in the Body of Christ.

4) What is it within us that keeps us from loving one another?

5) How can you/we start loving one another today?
What, specifically, can you/we do?