



Love God



Love One Another



Do Mission Together

Home Group study: week beginning 7th November 2021

LOVE GOD, LOVE ONE ANOTHER, DO MISSION TOGETHER

THEME: LOVE GOD - THE WORD THAT CHANGES LIVES

PASSAGES: Various

LAUNCH

Has anyone had a pet or a toy they really loved? Ask about it. What did they love about it?

DISCOVERY & UNDERSTANDING

The Commandment to Love God

What did Jesus say was God's most important commandment? Look at it in Mark 12:30.

It comes from Deuteronomy 6:5. Have a look. Surprise! It isn't one of the 10 Commandments! They're in the previous chapter, and also back in Exodus 20:1-17. Get someone to quickly summarise them.

Get someone with a NIV Study Bible to look at the notes on Deuteronomy 6:5 and see that 'love' is more the loyal, grateful obedience shown to a good king than love like we tend to think of it.

But, when Jesus quoted this commandment we know there was about to be a fantastic new reality, one that required his death and resurrection to bring about. One in which we are now God's children. Read Ephesians 2:12 (note 'him' is 'Jesus' from the previous verse). We approach him with freedom and confidence because he's now our Father. So what does 'love' in Mark 12 mean for us, now?

NB - If you like, have a quick look at the 4 types of love in the Bible. They are communicated through four Greek words (Eros, Storge, Philia, and Agape) and are characterised by romantic love, family love, brotherly love, and God's divine love. Don't spend long on this.

Knowing God, and Loving Him

Read John 17:20-26. How can we know God? And how, now Jesus has gone to heaven, will he 'continue to make you (Father) known to them' (v26) so that the love the Father has for Jesus 'will be in' us - i.e., so we will love him as much as he loves us?

On Sunday we reminded ourselves that we have the Holy Spirit to help us understand the bible. With the Spirit's help, we can know God as Jesus intended by reading and meditating on the bible - especially the 4 gospels (read Hebrews 1:1-3a to see why that is) - and as we do that, we come to know God and as we see how wonderful his is, we come to love him more and more.

NB - moving from knowing about God to knowing God is vital. It takes time and revelation by the Spirit. As we prayerfully meditate, feed, ponder on the Word, asking for the Spirit's help, we come to know God and love him as a result. Discuss this, people's experience of it and hopes etc.

APPLICATION

Pray for each other - for a passion to know God through his word, and for the Spirit's help. We can be sure God wants this, and will help us love him as we go.