



Because God Loves the World

Announcements

201 Dream Team Orientation – Sunday, October 13th, 5:00 pm at all campuses. Get connected and find your place to serve on the Dream Team.

Small Groups Week of Serving – November 2nd - 9th. Gather your group members together and find people in our community that you can serve as a way to practically share the love of God.

Warm-up

Did you have a nickname growing up as a kid? Who gave you your nickname, and why did they give it to you?

Usually we get nicknames because of something that easily identifies us. During our discussion today we are going to talk about how, if we are Christians, our identity and actions should come from our relationship with God. Therefore, the closer we get to God the more like him we should become.

Word and Application

“Therefore be imitators of God [copy Him and follow His example], as well-beloved children [imitate their father].” Ephesians 5:1 (Amplified Bible)

This verse makes it clear that we are to become more like God in our words and deeds, as we grow closer to him. What are some of the characteristics of God we should be trying to imitate?

Why is it important that we imitate God? How do we imitate God?

There are many qualities of God we should look to imitate. Today we are going to focus our discussion on one of the central characteristics of God – **love** (1 John 4:8).

How we view God directly affects whether or not we reach out to others and share God’s love. How has your view of God changed, as you have grown closer to him? How does your view of who God is affect how you see yourself and how you practically live out your faith?

If we truly believe God is love (1 John 4:8), then we should live our lives with God's love as an evident characteristic in our lives.

Read 1 John 4:11-12. If you know God loves you, how does that impact how you show love to others?

What qualities of God do others see in you? What do you want them to see?

God's love for us should be our most compelling reason for reaching people who need to experience his love and forgiveness.

Read Matthew 28:19-20. Jesus' final words to us before he left earth were to *"go and make disciples."* This means, out of God's compelling love for others, we should continually be reaching out to people who need to know about God's love.

What do you think are some barriers to people sharing God's love with others? Why do you think these are barriers?

Read Matthew 26:69-75 and Acts 2:14, 41. What is the difference between Peter's actions in Matthew 26 and his actions in Acts 2?

Peter was full of fear (Matthew 26), which was a barrier to him identifying himself as a follower of Christ. Peter was changed when he was filled with the Holy Spirit and God's love, which gave him a boldness to share the gospel (Acts 2).

Read James 2:17. This verse should compel us to action. If we are Christ-followers, then we should share God's love because we have experienced his love.

What can you do this week to reach out to someone and share God's love with them?

*November 2nd-9th is the **Small Groups Week of Serving**. Take time to plan a serving project for your small group to do together as a way to share God's love in a practical way.

Prayer

Ask God to help each person in your small group to have an opportunity to share God's love with someone this week. Also, take time to ask for specific prayer requests from those in your small group.