

## Live Love(d) Introductory Bible Study



### Intro

**What is love?** Take 30 seconds to write down as much as you can to describe love. You may not mention the words “God” or “Jesus.” Ready? Go!

### Is this statement true or false?

“The greatest thing you’ll ever learn is just to love and be loved in return.”

(Quoted in the movie *Moulin Rouge!*, 2001)

### To the Scriptures

Read 1 John 4:7-12.

**Where does (true) love come from?** (verse 7)

**How does verse 8 describe God?**

- John says “God is love,” not “Love is God.” What is the difference?

**How do we know what “love” really is?** (verse 9)

**Why did God send his Son into the world?** (verse 9)

- What does it mean to live “through” Jesus?

**Reread verse 11. What do we do with the love God gives us?**

### Love Today

When it comes to love, we must constantly “unlearn” what we have been taught by the world even as we learn what God has to teach us.

**What are some of the false ideas about love in our society today?**

**Does false love always look ugly and disgusting, or can it look extremely attractive and seductive?**

**How did Jesus deal with people who were mixed up about love?** Think of specific encounters that Jesus had with such people in the Gospels, and discuss what we can learn from his example about reaching out to “de-loved” people today with the love of Christ.

### A Radical Redefinition of Love

The theme for the 2013 National Youth Gathering is *Live Love(d)*. In many ways this Gathering will try to redefine in biblical terms what it means to love and be loved. What is crucial to recognize is that in the theme “Live Love(d),” the “(d)” makes all the difference. We cannot even begin to know what it means to love others in the biblical sense of the term until and unless we know and trust God’s love for us in Jesus Christ. “We love,” says John, “because he first loved us” (1 John 4:19). By the same token, once we know God’s love in Christ we cannot help but love God *and* others; “whoever loves God must also love his brother” (1 John 4:21).



A quick look at the daily themes...

**Monday: BE-loved**

We gather together as sinners have become “beloved” as God’s forgiven children.

**Tuesday: DE-loved**

We confront twisted and distorted views of love that inevitably end in disappointment and despair.

**Wednesday: Love LIVED**

We take an up-close and personal look at Jesus, the love of God in the flesh.

**Thursday: Live LOVED**

We take a second look at our identity as ones who have been loved purely and completely by God in Christ.

- Luther: “Rather than seeking its own good, the love of God flows forth and bestows good. Therefore sinners are attractive because they are loved; they are not loved because they are attractive. . . . This is the love of the cross.”

**Friday: Live LOVE**

We look beyond ourselves to love others in the name of Jesus.

- Luther: “For where works and love do not break forth, there faith is not right, the gospel does not yet take hold, and Christ is not rightly known.”

**Conclusion**

Earlier we considered this quote: “The greatest thing you’ll ever learn is just to love and be loved in return.”

Let’s think about it again. **Is it true?**

**How might this revision be an improvement?**

“The greatest thing you’ll ever learn is that you *are* loved and that you are able to love in return.”

**Closing Prayer**