

Small Group Discussion Guide

Choosing to Love: For the week of June 21 - 27, 2020

Main Thought and Scriptures:

The Bible teaches us to love one another, those who are different than us, and even our enemies. Love is the essence and fulfillment of all of God's commands.

When we know God, we can then love like God because love comes "from God" and "God is love."

*"Beloved, let us love one another, for **love is from God**, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸He who does not love does not know God, because **God is love**. ⁹In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. ¹⁰In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (1 John 4:7-10 ESV)*

The characteristics of God's love is defined in Scripture.

"Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant ⁵or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. ⁷Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." (1 Corinthians 13:4-7 ESV)

Loving others is a choice to "put on" love. It is not a feeling.

*"**Put on** then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ¹³bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴And above all these **put on** love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony." (Colossians 3:12-14 ESV)*

Jesus demonstrated God's love throughout His life and when He willingly sacrificed Himself on the cross. Christians are called to demonstrate God's love to others.

Discussion Questions:

- Which of the characteristics of God's love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 did you find challenging to live out during these crises? Explain. Why do you think that is so?
- How do you think you can "put on" God's love in order to love others around you during this time? Who can you practically love, and what will you do?

Prayer:

- Pray for one another to "put on" God's love towards others.
- Pray for opportunities to demonstrate God's love to someone this week.