

**5 BIBLE STUDIES**

**WHERE LOVE COMES TO LIFE – WEEK 1**

Special thanks to Dean Eaton, Church Planting Mentor and Mission Facilitator, for developing the training material.





## BIBLE STUDY 1: WHERE LOVE COMES TO LIFE

**Reading**: **1 John 4:7-21**

Open in prayer asking the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion together.

**Introduction**

When people fall in love, it’s as if they come remarkably to life. Their eyes sparkle with special lights, their breath comes more urgently and they seem somehow to be straining forward to meet life. Love breathes life into the everyday ordinariness of our existence.

Actually, love changes people. The experience of being loved, at any stage of life, brings with it a kind of newness that brings out the best in us. We become more open to the gifts of life and the needs of others, and we live in a new way, a renewed way. Love brings life.

1. **God is Love**

Of course, we can hardly think about love or life without thinking of God. 1 John 4:16b tells us that, *God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them*.

In the very beginning God brought life to the world, reshaping the primeval chaos into a habitable planet (Genesis 1).

Then God breathed his own life into our human bodies and brought us to life (Genesis 2).

1. **God is Life**

God even entered human life at a depth which no-one could have anticipated, becoming a human being and filling our humanity with his own life.

*The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighbourhood* (John 1.14 Message).

This flesh-taking (incarnation) was not an interesting experiment but God’s own project to rescue us from death and futility, and to renovate the whole world. In spite of our worst efforts, even when we killed him, God succeeded in bringing love back to life (John 1).

1. **God is on Mission**

To continue his work on earth, God created the church, whose task now is to celebrate love and life, and to be the vehicle for God’s continued work of bringing love to life in the world. The church lives on the gifts of God – God’s forgiveness, God’s love, God’s own life.

In its worship the church experiences the love of God in words and actions of forgiveness and of empowerment. Infused with the real presence of Jesus Christ, love comes decisively to life every time the people of God gather.

***Life in the church is really a preparation and empowerment for a life of love in the world.***

As we hear the good news of Jesus Christ, as we receive his body and blood, we become new people, with new potential for good, with new energy for a life of love wherever God gives us the opportunity.

Our families and our communities, our workplaces and our cultural settings might well experience through us something of God’s love as it comes to life again in us. That’s the plan. The life of a Christian is a life of faith active in love (Galatians 5), empowered by the love of Christ himself (1 Corinthians 13). Indeed, we have no other obligation, except to participate in this world transforming gift of God’s love (Romans 13).

**Conclusion**

A missional life participates in the shared life of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. As a consequence we are transformed to be a community where Gods love comes to life. The same love that transforms us is drawing our families, neighbours and friends into new life in Christ, thus we are compelled to include and invite all people to belong to Gods family.

**Group Discussion**

1. Discuss the statement – *“Life in the church is really a preparation and empowerment for a life of love in the world.”* How does life in the church prepare you and empower you for a life of love? In what ways is this statement true for you?
2. How comfortable are you with what was presented in this sermon?
3. What impacted you or stood out for you? Why?
4. What questions were raised for you?

**Prayer**

You mark us with your water, you scar us with your name, you brand us with your vision, and we ponder our baptism, your water, your name, your vision. While we ponder, we are otherwise branded. Our imagination is consumed by other brands, - winning with Nike, - pausing with Coca-Cola, - knowing and controlling with Microsoft. Re-brand us, transform our minds, and renew our imagination. That we may be more fully who we are marked and hoped to be, we pray with candour and courage. Amen.[[1]](#footnote-1)

1. Brueggemann, W. *Awed to Heaven, Rooted in Earth: The Prayers of Walter* (Augsburg Fortress, MN. 2003). P.524 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)