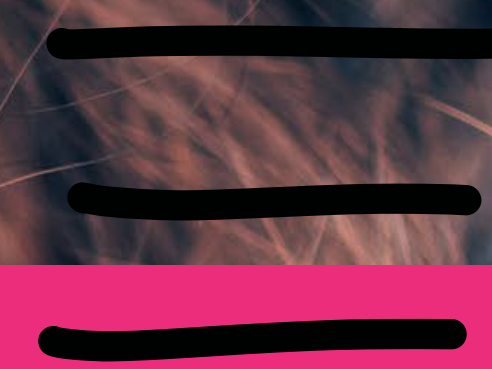


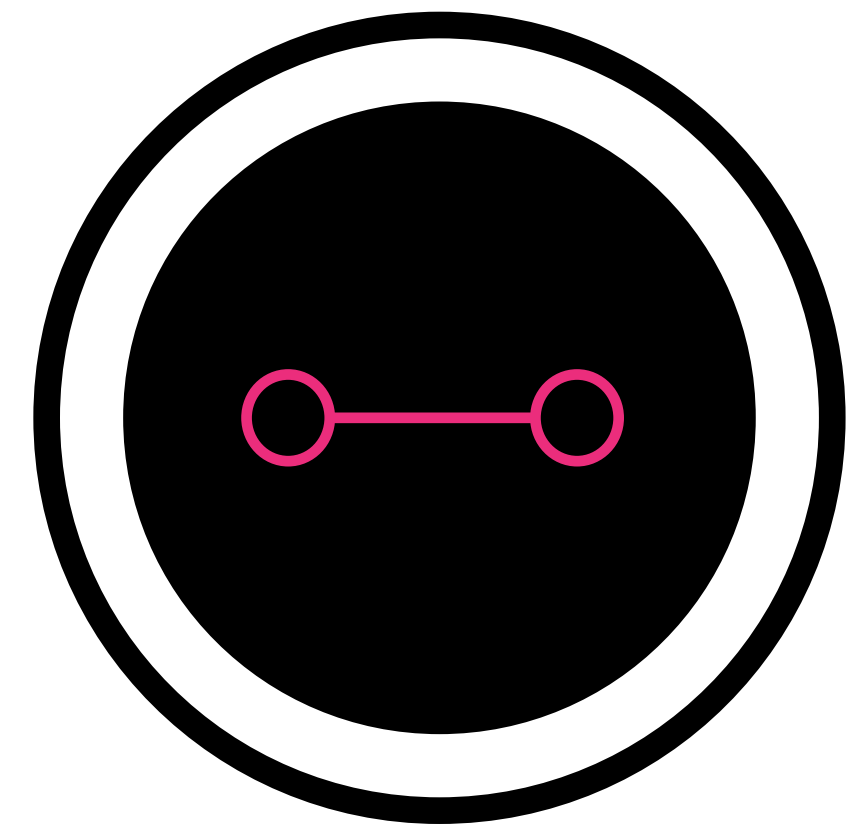
Feed



GOD'S LOVE

LESSON 1





LEADER PREPARATION

Dear small group leader:

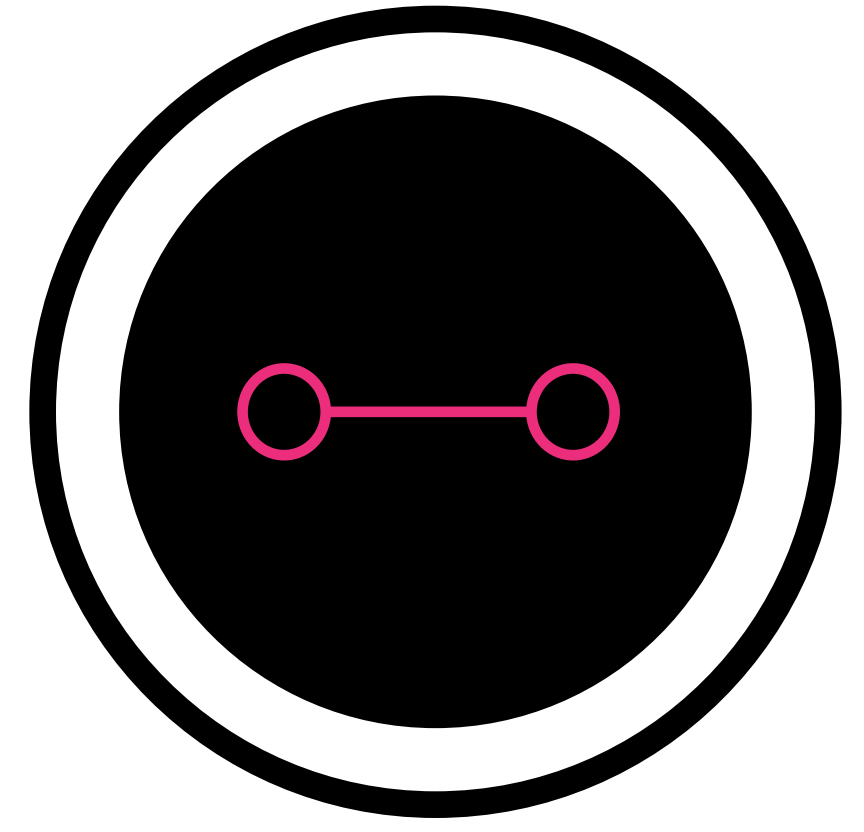
In this series, you and your students will unpack one of the most misunderstood topics in our culture: love. Scripture tells us that God is love, so we're looking to him to define love for us, not culture and not ourselves.

In today's lesson, you'll focus on God's very nature as the example of true love. In the Trinity, we see a picture of generous love that celebrates others and delights in their joy. Jesus perfectly demonstrated this love through his life of submission and sacrifice.

You'll also invite your students to reflect on the beautiful, counter-cultural truth God offers us: that in *giving* love freely to God and others, we get to experience the most love ourselves.

Scripture References

- John 5:20a
- 1 John 4:7-10
- John 14:31
- John 15:9-17
- John 17:4-5



Lesson Objectives

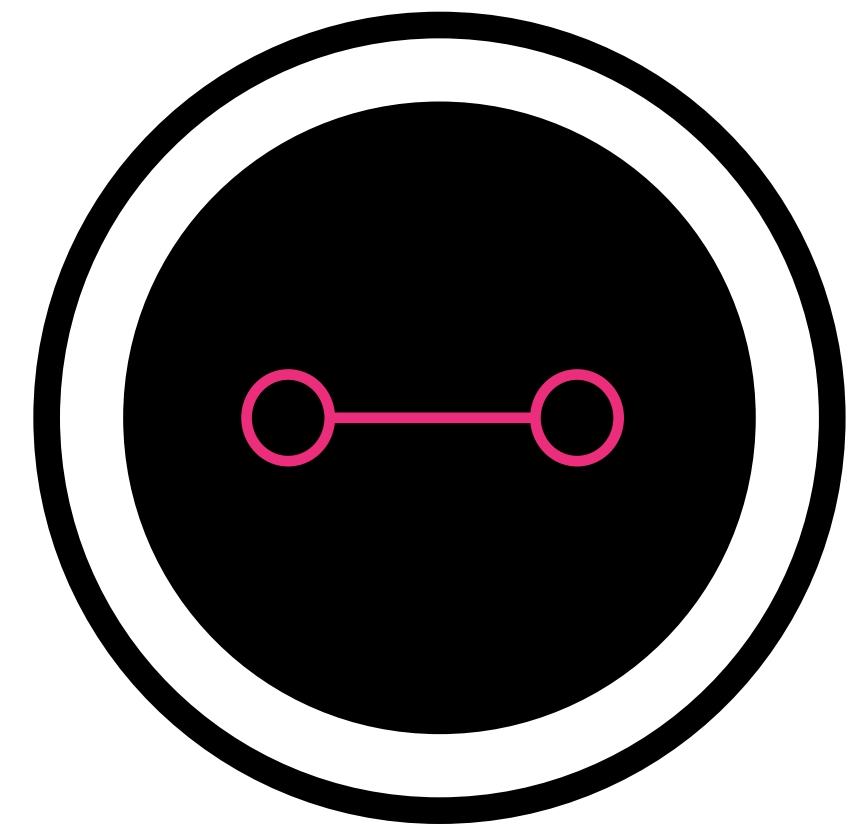
1. The students will define “glorify” and describe how the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit glorify each other.
2. The students will discuss love and how it relates to obedience and sacrifice.
3. The students will reflect on God’s amazing love for them and how they can share this love with others.

Key Definition

Love is to treat others the way God has treated you in Christ: better than you deserve and always for your good.

Main Point

God defines love because he is love; God, the Father, Jesus, his son, and the Holy Spirit exemplify a perfect, loving relationship.

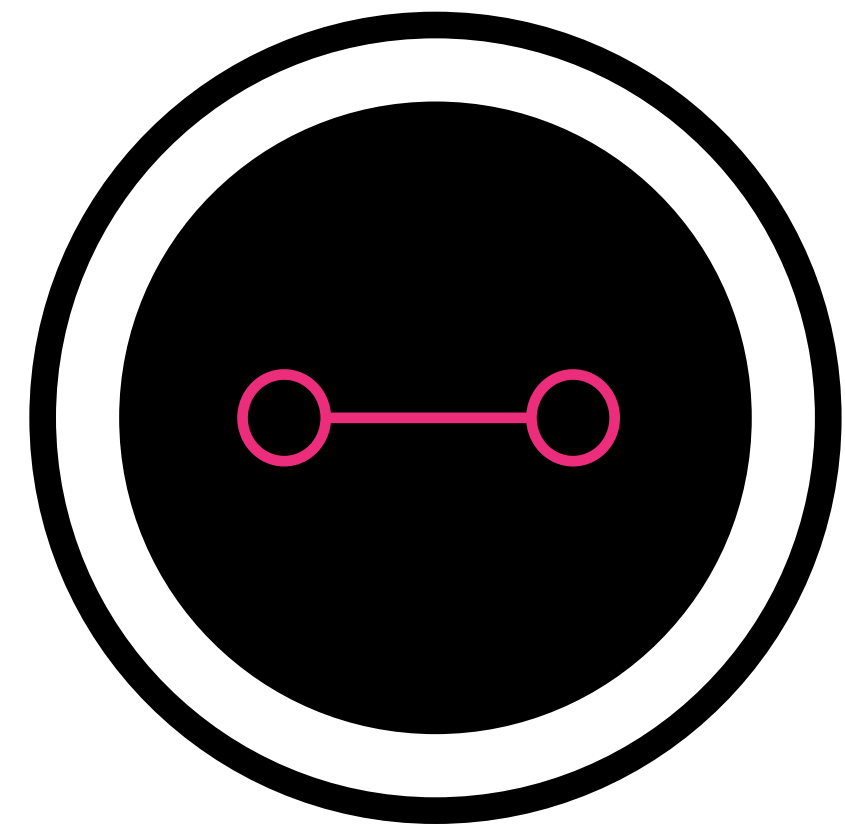


Helpful Hints

Today's lesson focuses on the Trinity, which can be a mind-bending, complex truth even for mature believers. In your discussion, instead of focusing on what we don't know about this mystery, focus on what we do know: The three persons of the Trinity demonstrate that love is sacrificial, obedient, focused on others, and ultimately, the source of joy.

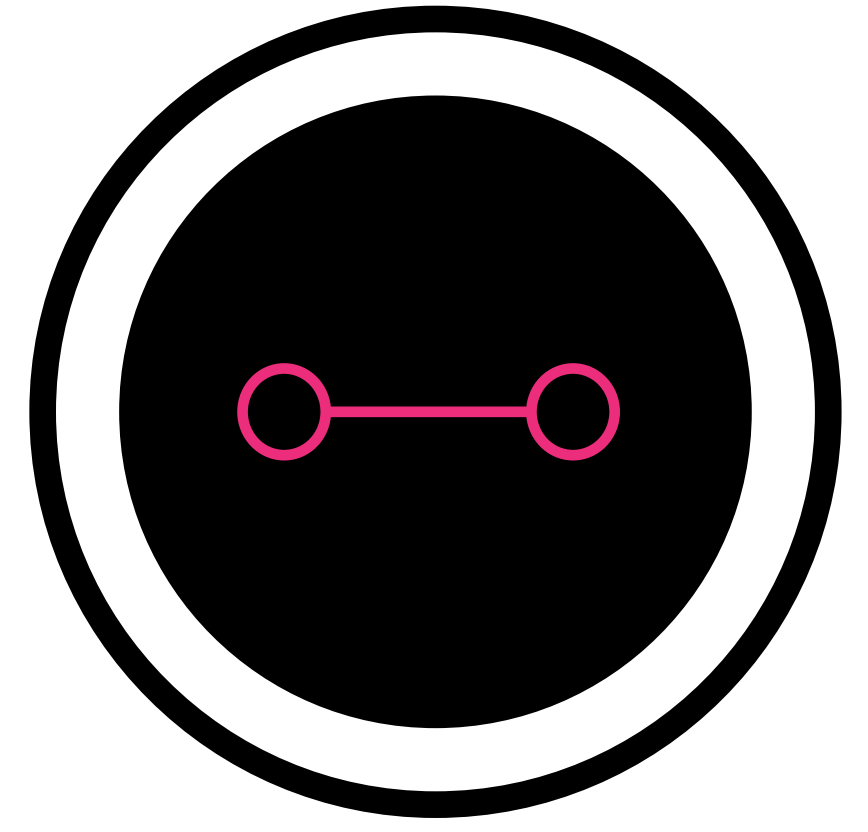
Materials Needed

- Bible
- Laptop or TV with an internet connection to show videos



NAME THAT LOVE SONG

Before the session, create a playlist of popular love songs from different eras. Divide the group into teams. Choose one team to go first. Play a clip from one song. The more recognizable the song is, the shorter the clip. Give the team a chance to guess. If they cannot guess, allow another team the opportunity to “steal” the answer. Award the team with the correct answer one point. Start the next round with a new song and a new team, continuing until you run out of songs. The team with the most points at the end of the game wins.



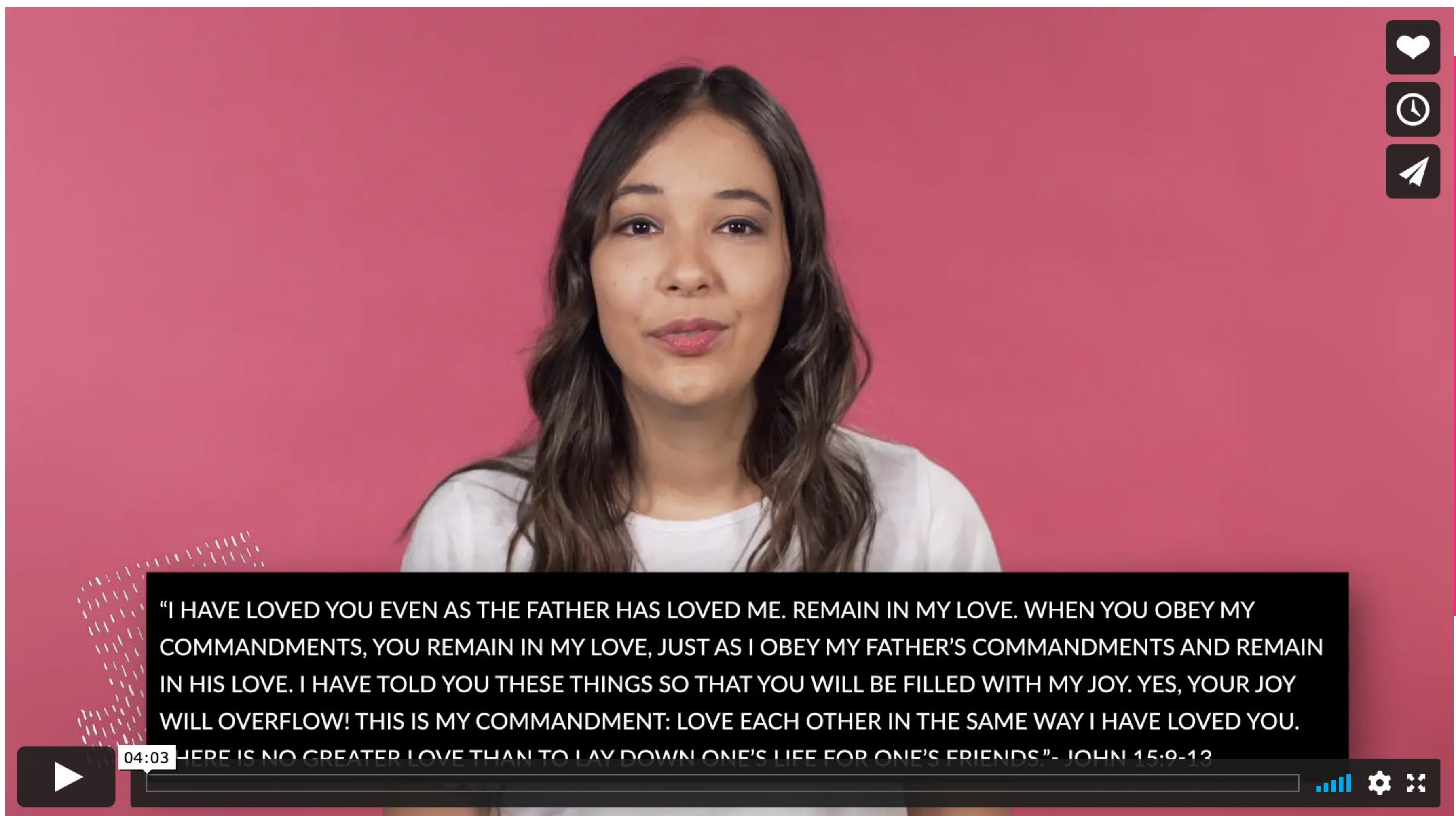
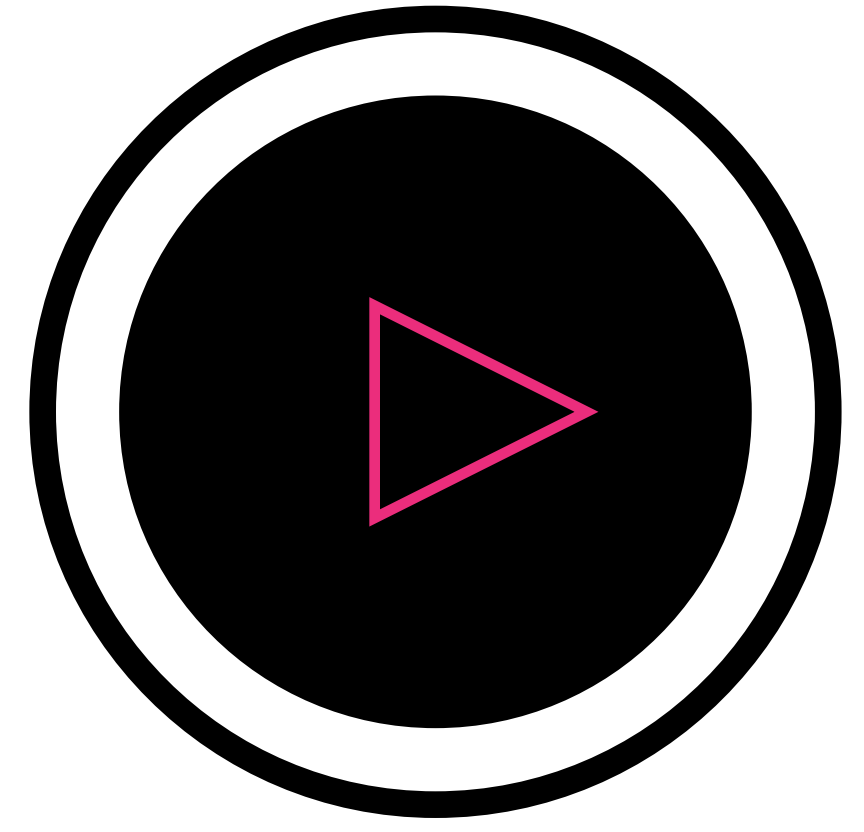
Say: Endless songs, poems, and stories have tried to capture what love means. Is it a feeling? Is it all we need? Is it found within? While the world gives conflicting answers, God provides the one true definition. Today we're looking to him to better understand "love." Scripture says, God is love, so he gets the final say on what love means. God doesn't just tell us what love is; he shows us in the person of Jesus.

Ask students to consider the following questions while they watch the video:

Question 1: How do the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit reveal the true way of love?

Question 2: What two words does Jesus connect to love?

VIDEO (10 MINUTES)



PLAY VIDEO



Show the Lesson 1 video to the large group. After the video is complete, **ask** the following questions:

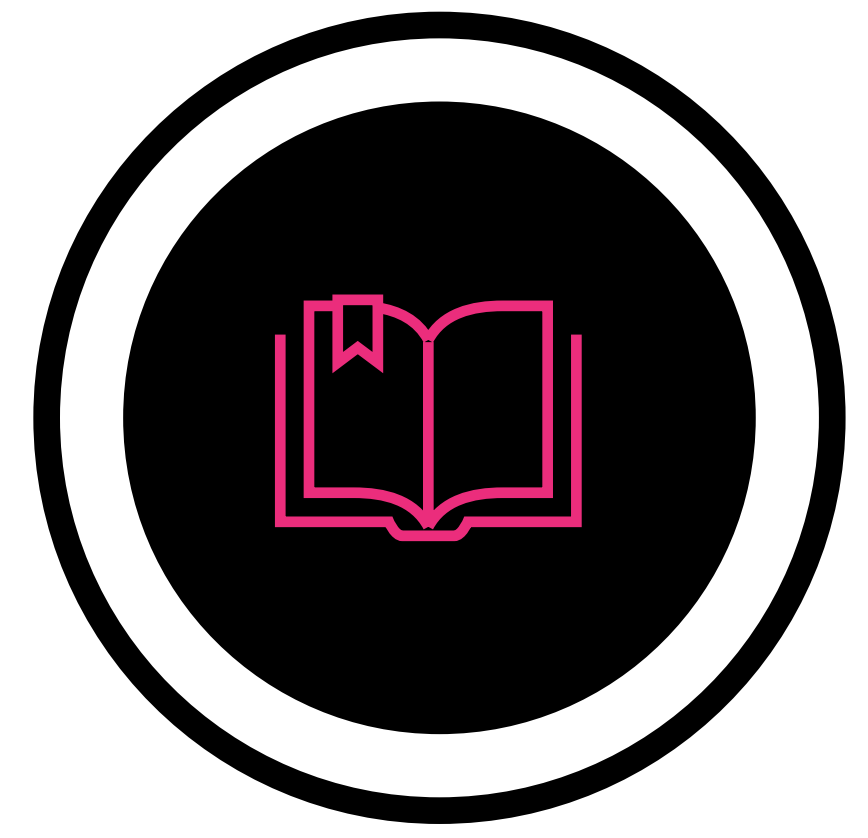
Question 1: As you were thinking about the questions asked before the video, what stood out to you?

Question 2: Where have you seen people turn to find an understanding of love?

Question 3: What does the word “glorify” mean?

Question 4: Jesus links love to obedience but not as a way to earn God’s love. How would you describe the connection between loving God and obeying him?

Question 5: How would your relationships with others change if you received God’s love and demonstrated it in the ways God exemplifies it?



Direct students into their small groups.

Read the following passages of Scripture with your students.

For **the Father loves the Son** and shows him everything he is doing...

John 5:20a

OPEN IN BIBLE APP

I will **do** what the Father requires of me, **so that** the world will know that **I love the Father...**

John 14:31

OPEN IN BIBLE APP

I brought glory to you here on earth by completing the work you gave me to do. Now, Father, **bring me into the glory we shared before the world began.**

John 17:4-5

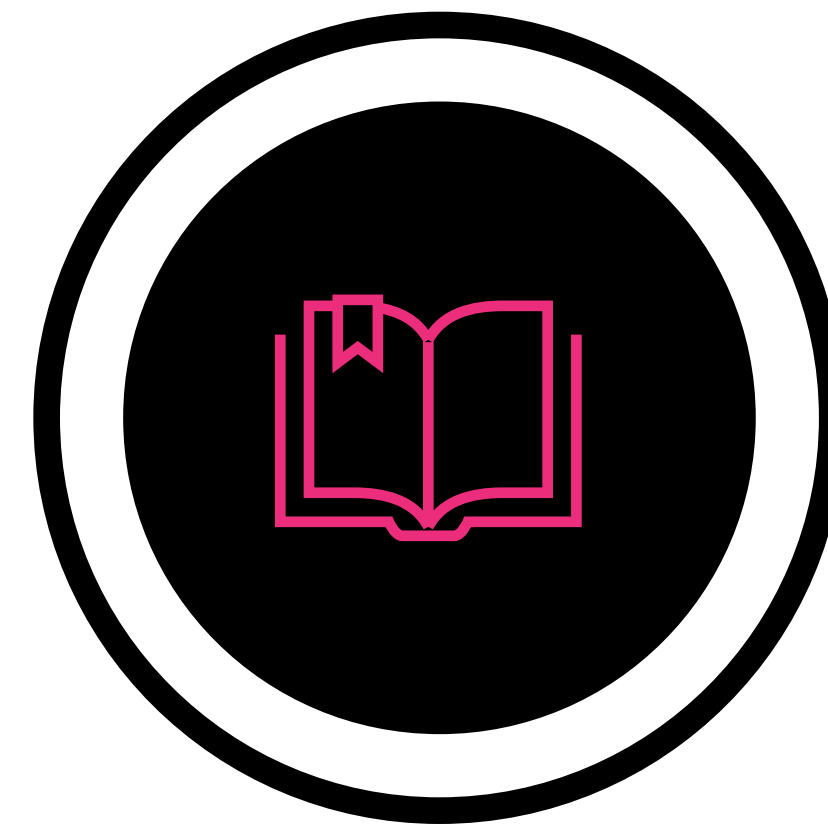
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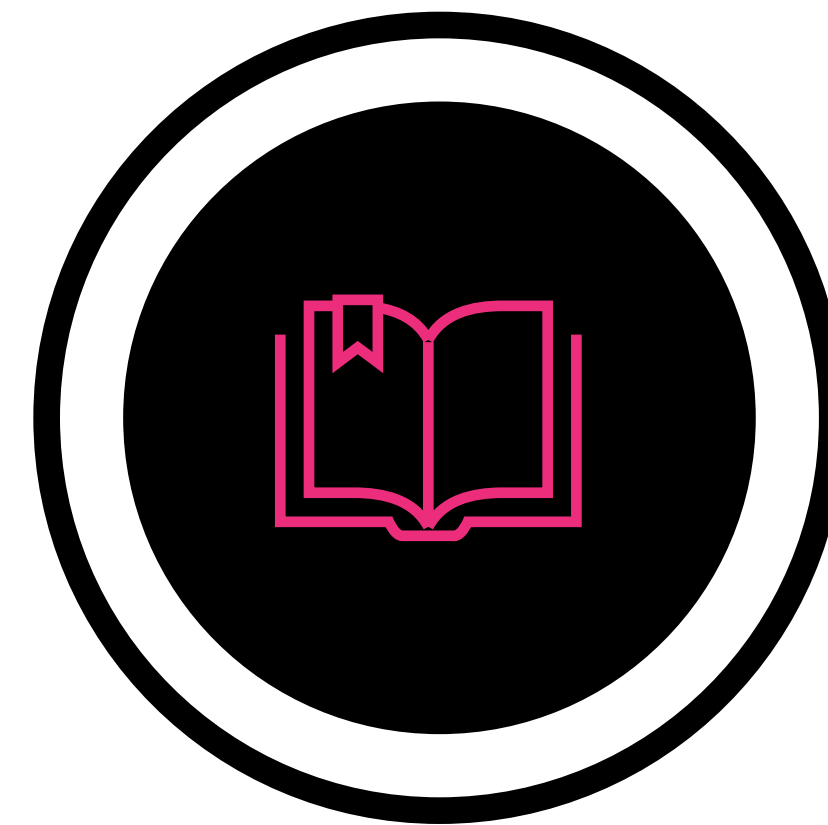
When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future. **He will bring me glory by telling you whatever he receives from me.** All that belongs to the Father is mine; this is why I said, 'The Spirit will tell you whatever he receives from me.'

John 16:13-15

OPEN IN BIBLE APP



Say: These four verses give us a peak into one of the most mysterious and beautiful aspects of God—the Trinity. God exists in three distinct persons: The Father, the Son, and the Spirit. We see the perfect love of God expressed in the Son's love for the Father, the Spirit's love for the Son, and the Father's love for both. This love is defined by the perfect alignment of their wills. They love by submitting to one another, by seeking each others' glory, and by sharing all that they have and are.



Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for **love comes from God**. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God, for **God is love. God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son** into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. **This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.**

1 John 4:7-10

OPEN IN BIBLE APP



Say: This passage reveals why we should look to God to understand love instead of looking to culture or our own experiences: God IS love! God doesn't just tell us what love is; he showed us by sending his Son to die for our sins. God pursued us before we even knew to look for him; he loved us before we loved him back; he died for us while we were dead in sin. And now we are free to receive his love and pour it out on others. This kind of love is radical, sacrificial, and real!



I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love. **When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father's commandments and remain in his love.** I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow! This is my commandment: **Love each other in the same way I have loved you. There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends.** You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you slaves because a master doesn't confide in his slaves. Now you are my friends, since I have told you everything the Father told me. You didn't choose me. I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce lasting fruit, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask for, using my name. **This is my command: Love each other.**

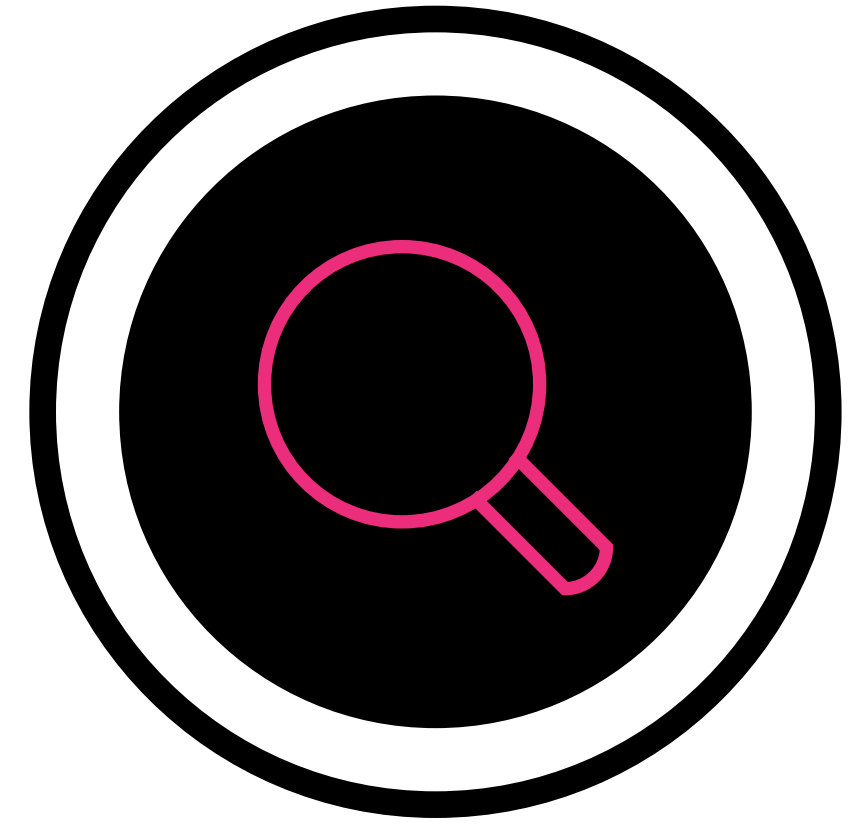
John 15:9-17

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Say: This teaching of Christ helps us move from theory to practice. Now that we've seen the radical love of God, how do we respond to it? Jesus says obedience and sacrifice are key. Jesus demonstrated his love for the Father by obeying him. Jesus didn't obey to earn God's love; as his Son, he already possessed it. As children of God, so do we! Our obedience should be a natural response of thankfulness for the love God has poured out on us.

Jesus demonstrated his love for us by laying down his life for us. He humbled himself to serve others and bear our burdens. He calls his disciples to love in the same way. That means laying down our lives for the needs of others.



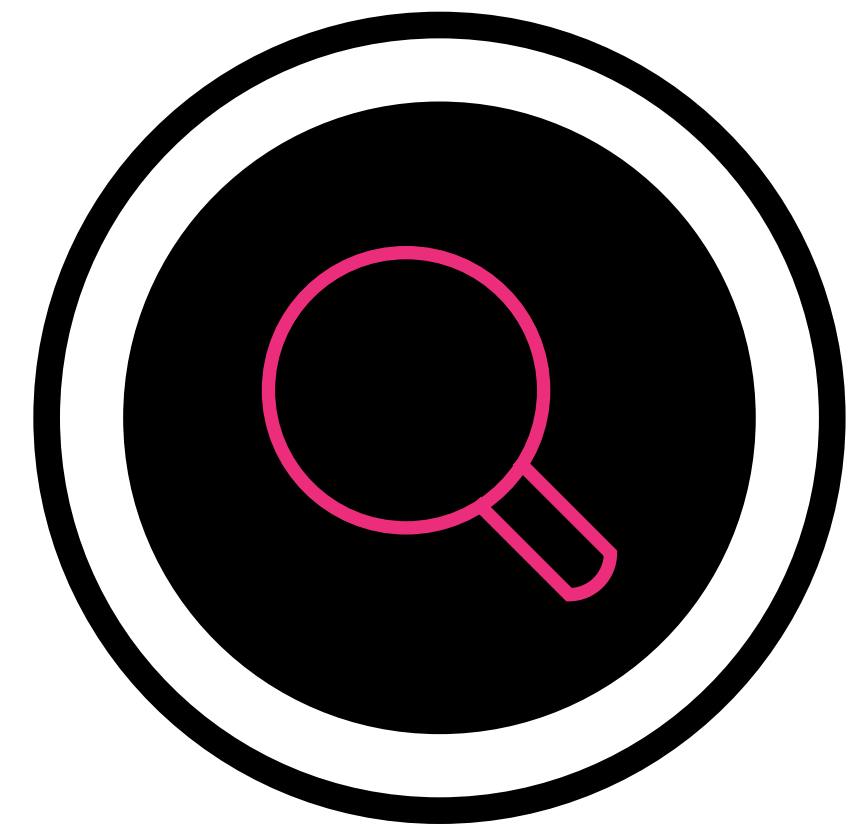
Ask students the following questions.

Question 1: What are some characteristics of God we find in the passages above?

Question 2: How do the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit glorify each other?

Question 3: Based on the Scripture we've read, what are some words you would use to describe real love?

Question 4: How is love related to obedience?
How is love related to sacrifice?



Ask students the following questions.

Question 1: How would you describe God's love to a friend who imagines God to be angry, judgmental, or harsh?

Question 2: The Father and the Son pursued one another's glory, and in turn, each was glorified. Can this work in earthly relationships? How can pursuing someone else's joy lead to your joy?

Question 3: God loved us before we loved him. Do you wait for others to show you love first, or are you willing to be the first one to move toward other people in love?

Question 4: Why do you obey God? Are you motivated by fear, or do you obey out of love and thankfulness? How would a shift in your perspective change your pursuit of doing the right thing?

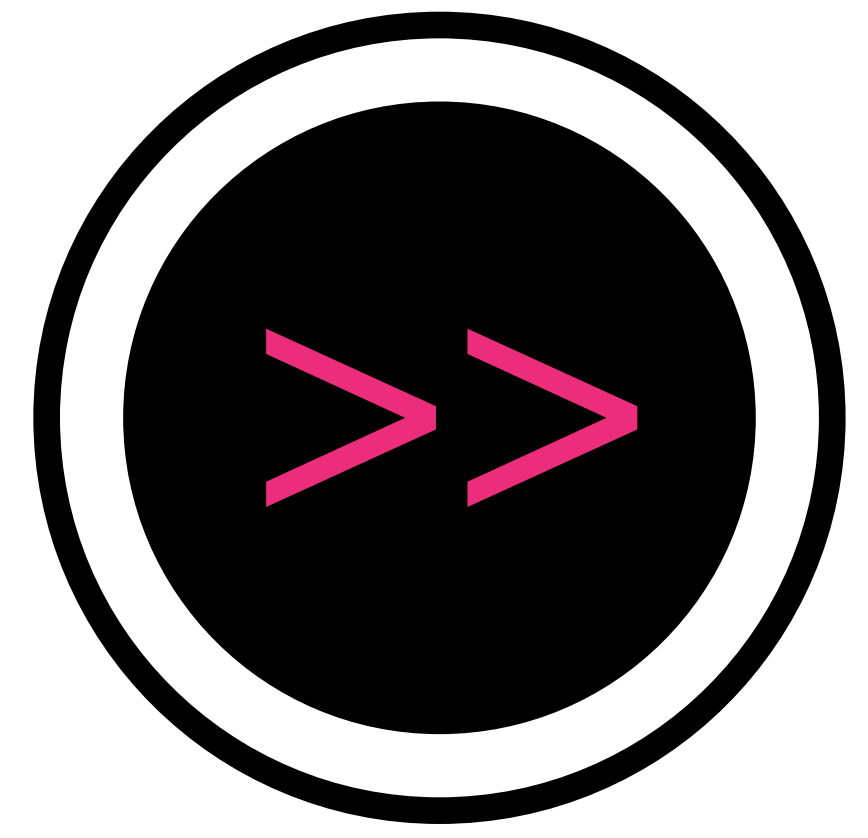
Question 5: Has anyone ever made a sacrifice for you? How did that make you feel? How did you treat that person in return?



Suggestion: If you're able to bring the small groups back together into a large group, do so at this time. Alternatively, this activity and the remaining activities can also take place in small groups. Share the following Catechism question and answer with the students.

Question: Who are the three persons of the one triune God?

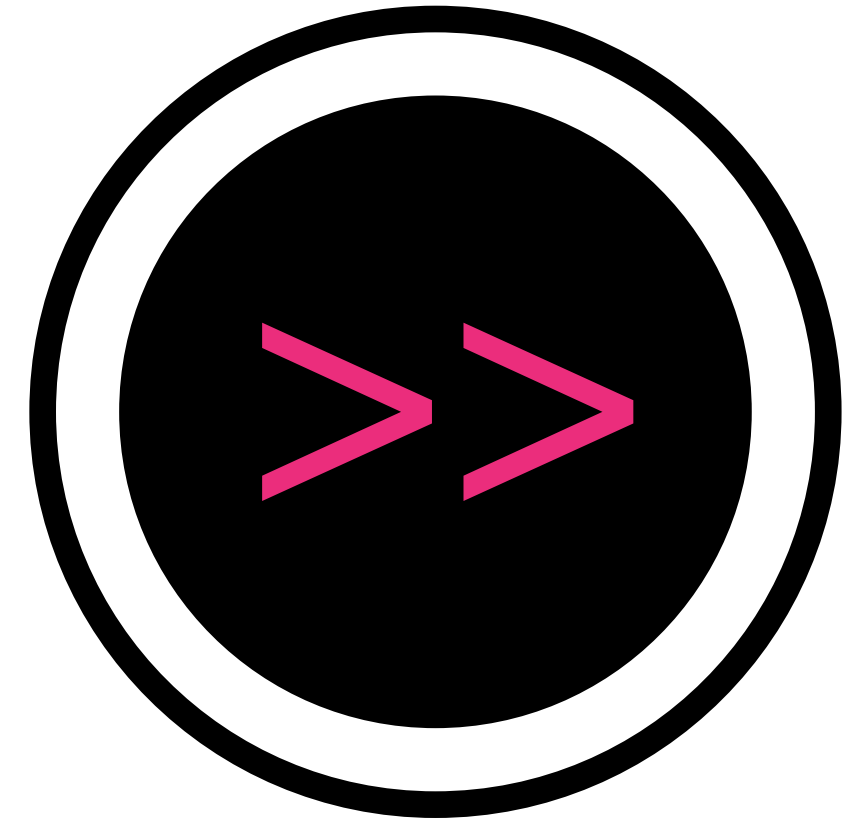
Answer: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Each Person is fully God, and they are equal in goodness, wisdom, and power.



Say: God invites us to personally experience his perfect love and to share it with others. If you haven't yet experienced the amazing love of Christ, ask him to reveal it to you through his Word, prayer, and in community with other believers. God has shown us what true love is, and when we experience it, it changes us.

Give students time to reflect and respond on their own, either on paper or in the Notes app on their phones.

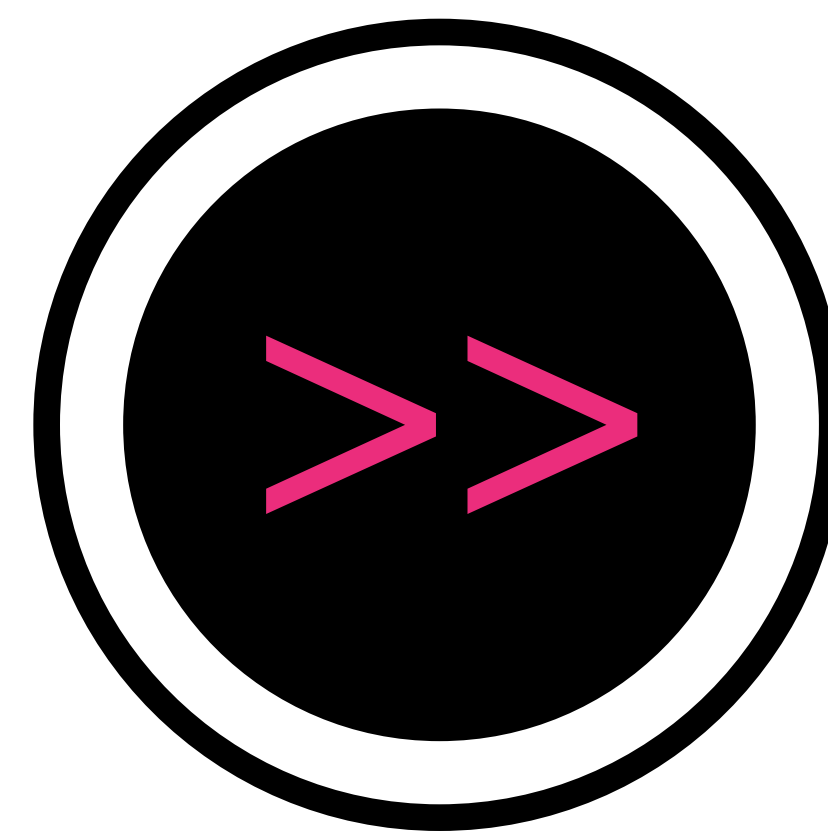
- If you haven't thought of God as loving before, ask him to show you the depths of his love. Read Ephesians 3:17-19. Today and throughout this week, spend time praying and journaling about these verses.



- Be honest. Would those closest to you, like your siblings and close friends, describe you as someone who obeys God and loves them sacrificially? Why or why not? Ask God to reveal areas of sin in your life, and trust him to lovingly lead you in obedience. Look for ways to pursue the good of others before your own and demonstrate the love of Jesus.

Close in Prayer

End this time together by praying over your students.



YouVersion Reading Plan

Before you go... We've included a three-day YouVersion Reading Plan to engage students further in the conversation and close the gap between next week's lesson. Invite your students to download the plan and complete it this week. It can be found by searching for "*Catechism: God's Love*" in the Bible App's collection of reading plans.





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