



# What is Love?

God's Love

*Lesson 1 Sermon Outline*



# Overview

## Summary

In the small group lesson this week, you and your students unpacked one of the most misunderstood topics in our culture: love. Scripture tells us that God is love, so we looked at him to define love for us, not culture and not ourselves. We look at God's very nature to show us what love is like. Love is illustrated perfectly through the Trinity, where 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.

## Key Takeaways

1. Students will have a true understanding that God is love. We are to receive his love and share it with others like Jesus did.
2. Students will define "glorify" and describe how the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit glorify each other and how that relates to their understanding of love and loving others.
3. Students will reflect on God's amazing love for them and the beautiful, counter-cultural truth God offers us: that in *giving* love freely to God they can share this love with others.

## Scriptures

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



# Sermon Outline

## Introduction

Ask students how they would describe the word “love” and what things they love?

*(You can use your own examples and funny moments with love songs, food, sports, or movies.)*

With all the ways we would describe love, is it possible we have lost the definition of love all together?

If we do not understand the true definition of love then it is easy to confuse love and equate it to other things.

Transition: Who created the Star Wars universe? George Lucas! He is the one who created and named all of the characters. I use that example to show that if we want the true definition of love, we have to ask the one who created it and named it. To understand love in its truest form, we have to ask God.

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## Point #1: God Is Love

Scripture clearly states that God is Love. That means that to understand love, we have to understand God. So who is God?

### The Trinity

Context: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The Bible shares with us that there are three persons of God who are co-equal and co-eternal. The Trinity reveals the love in God in how they work together in perfect unity through glorifying one another.

**“For the Father loves the Son and shows him everything he is doing...”** John 5:20

**“I will do what the Father requires of me, so that the world will know that I love the Father...”** John 14:31

**“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



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

Illustration: Imagine a beautiful dance. Three figures circle one another, moving gracefully in perfect time and rhythm. There's no competition, no concern for who is the best or most beautiful. Their pure delight is found in each other's happiness and success

God's very nature is one of a loving relationship as He has eternally existed as three people: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

If this is the way that God loves, then we are called to do the same!

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## Point #2: We are called to love as God loves.

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

When God says he is love, he did not only say it but showed it through sending Jesus Christ.

We are free to receive God's love and pour it out on others. This kind of love is one that is radical, sacrificial, and real!

This definition of love can be hard to live out. When sin entered the world it broke everything beautiful, including our understanding of love.

When God created people, he invited us to join that beautiful dance of love...to discover the surprising truth that in *giving* love freely to God and others, we *get* to experience the most love ourselves.

**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

We see that Jesus says that the way we respond to God's radical love is through obedience and sacrifice.

When we truly live out a life of obedience and sacrifice to the Lord, the way we love others is going to look radically different from the world!

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### Point #3: The world's idea of love and God's idea of love differ.

Take a moment to think about how the world portrays love.

Share different examples of how the world portrays love through movies, music, social media, or within families in our culture. You can use light, funny examples from movies and also more relatable examples with parents or family dynamics.

If you haven't thought of God as loving before, ask him to show you the depths of his love.

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.

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### Discussion Questions

1. How would you describe God's love to a friend who imagines God to be angry, judgmental, or harsh?
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?
3. Where do you think we can do better as Christ followers to truly love those around us? What would that look like and how do you live that out?

