

THE **WAY** OF JESUS

Small Group Discussion Guide

September 18, 2016

Week 02 – Love is the Foundation of the Way of Jesus

Review the following statements, most of which were shared on Sunday morning. Which ones jumped out at you or were particularly meaningful or applicable? Pick one or two to share with the others in your group...

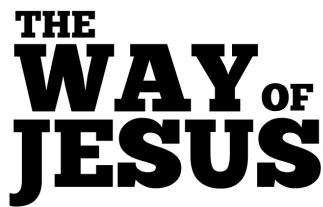
- Love is the primary descriptor of God's involvement with humanity. God's love defines and shapes his other attribute - his grace, mercy, and judgment, forgiveness, etc.
- We see love as the driving force in God's redemptive plan. It starts with God's commitment (love for) to Abraham in Genesis 12, and all the way to his motivation for offering himself on the cross in John 3.
- Love is so key, that Jesus wrapped up all the commandments in the Scriptures of his day into one command: Love!
- Love is not a feeling or an emotion. Emotions and feelings result from love, but love is a commitment and a decision. We can choose to love or not to love.
- Love is not focused on how others, possessions, or circumstances affect me, but love is focused on how I am affecting another.
- Love is always about the other, and what's best for them, putting others before ourselves. This is why love always involves one or more of the following: sacrifice (give over), service (give to), surrender (give up).
- The opposite of love is not hate. The opposite of love is "self". The absence of love produces a fixation on self – what's the best for me? How can I be happy? What will produce pleasure for me? When I am not loving I keep everything, serve myself, and give up nothing.
- Our lives will be motivated by either self or love. It's our choice. Motivated by self, our lives are ultimately empty and meaningless. Motivated by love, our lives have meaning and significance.

DISCUSSION:

In 1 Cor. 13:4-7 – talk about how each of these love actions play out in the

- Family
- Workplace
- Church
- Community

In **Philippians 2:1-4**, what would it look like for family members to be like-minded, very practically speaking? What would it look like, practically, for a church family to be like-minded? How do verses 3&4 inform your answers?



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Week 02 Con't.

Look at 2:5-11. In your own words, describe the mindset of Jesus. How would adopting this mindset affect relationships within the church? Try to be very practical and use examples if appropriate...

What would it look like to adopt this ***Jesus mindset*** in your neighborhood? At work? In your family? In the community?

Why is it so easy for us to default back to thinking and actions that are ***motivated by self***?

If you have time...

Now, compare the description of Jesus in Philippians 2 with the description of how love acts, in 1 Corinthians 13. How did Jesus live out the qualities in 13:4-7?

Finally, describe what would change at your job, or in your dorm or family, if everyone adopted the Way of Jesus. (specifically to love God and others) How would daily life for everyone change? Try to be as specific as possible.

Imagine if just us in these small groups adopted the Way of Jesus...