

Victoria Fellowship Church
International & Interdenominational
Bible Study Worksheet – November 28, 2021

Theme: Love: A More Excellent Way Topic: Love is the greatest gift

Main Texts: John 3:10-21; 1 John 3:16-18

Key verse: 1 John 3:16 – *‘By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren’* (NKJV)

INTRODUCTION: The central theme of the Bible and of the believer’s faith in God is love. God is love and everything about Him is love. God created the heavens and the earth in love. He created man in love and pursued them out of the garden in love after they disobeyed Him, so that they would not live in that state of sin forever. The redemption of the children of Israel from Egypt, the discipline of spending 40 years in the wilderness, the settling in the promised land, the captivity and all their experiences were wrapped up in love. His attributes of love towards man were constantly displayed in His loving kindness, great mercy, abundant compassion, and amazing grace. Finally, *‘God demonstrated His own love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.’* (Romans 5:8). *‘By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us ...’* (1 John 3:16a).

1. (a) Read John 3:16, Romans 5:8 and 1 John 3:16a. How did God show His love for man? (b) Why do you think it was important for God to demonstrate His love for man in this way? (See texts in question 1a) (c) How is this act of love the greatest gift to man?

Right from the redemption of the Israelites from Egypt, God left them in no doubt as to how He wanted them to respond to His love. *‘Hear, O Israel: The LORD your God is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your strength’* (Deuteronomy 6: 4-5). Jesus reiterated this Scripture in Matthew 22:37 and Mark 12:30 as the first and greatest commandment, leaving us in no doubt as to how to respond to God’s love. However, love is active and is known by its fruits. Just as God demonstrated His love for us, our love for Him is known by our action.

2. (a) Read John 14:21; John 15:9-10; 1 John 5:3. How do we demonstrate that we love God? (b) What are the possible implications (for the Church and for the world) of not demonstrating our love for God according to the Scriptures in question 2a? (c) Discuss how the demonstration of our love for God is the greatest gift we can offer God.

God’s demonstration of His love for us by giving us Himself is the greatest gift to us. In the same way, our love for God demonstrated through obedience to Him and abiding in His love is the greatest gift we can ever give Him; our very lives surrendered to Him for His pleasure. But we are not done. God commanded that we love one another just like He loves us (John 13: 34-35; 15:12). *And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren* (1 John 3:16b). We are admonished to love one another fervently/deeply/intensely (1 Peter 1: 22; 4:8). And finally, 1 John 3:14 says, *‘We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love His brother abides in death.’* But we were called to abide in God’s love.

3. (a) What are the steps we can take to love one another deeply just as Christ loves us? See 1 Corinthians 13:4-6 (b) Read 1 John 3:16 again and share how we can lay down our lives for one another (c) 1 Corinthians 13:4-6 show us what Love is, what it does not do and what it does. Let participants share which of these virtues/attributes would be their gifts to others in the next 6 days.

Prayer: *Our dear heavenly Father, we thank You for giving us the greatest gift of all — Love, Your very self. We ask that as we surrender our lives to You, that we also will love one another deeply and lay down our lives for the brethren. In Christ’s Name. Amen.*