

Victoria Fellowship Church
International & Interdenominational
Bible Study Worksheet – October 9, 2022

Theme: The World Eagerly Awaits Your Manifestation Topic: Exhibiting Love

Main Texts: 1 John 4: 7- 20

Key verse: 1 John 4:20 – *“If someone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?”* (NKJV)

INTRODUCTION: Love is said to be the single, most overused yet most powerful emotion that a person can have for another person. The dictionary defines love as, “an intense feeling of deep affection” or “a great interest and pleasure in something”. Author and theologian C.S Lewis writes about the following four types of love: Storge – affection, e.g., love of parents for children; Philia – friendship, i.e., love of friends and equals; Eros – romantic love, erotic, passionate love; Agape – unconditional “God” love, love of mankind. The Bible in 1 Corinthians 13, dubbed *‘the love chapter’*, gives a comprehensive dossier on the characteristics and qualities of love. However, this week’s study considers love not just in its meaning, but in its expression.

1. (a) 1 John 4:19 says **“We love because He first loved us.”** What principle do we learn from God here about showing love? (b) How did Jesus Christ demonstrate this principle in John 13:4-5, Romans 5:8 and 1 John 4:10? (c) Let participants share examples of how this principle can be exhibited by us and among us.

Jesus went about teaching, preaching, and healing the sick and diseased. He defended the cause of the defenseless and associated with those of low estate. He had compassion for the downtrodden. He encouraged those that were poor in spirit, who suffered from depression and mood swings. He was not too proud to serve those who were by all accounts lower than Himself (washing His disciples’ feet). He had meaningful engagements and interactions with people, celebrating with those who had cause to celebrate (e.g. the wedding in Cana), going to peoples’ homes to share a meal with them (e.g. Zacchaeus), talking to people by the wayside even when he was hot and tired after a very busy day (like with the woman at the well). He broke cultural barriers (coming to the rescue of the woman caught in adultery), and defied baseless social norms (talking to a Samaritan woman). These are all expressions of love.

2. (a) 1 John 4:12 (NLT) says, **“No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love is brought to full expression in us.”** What is the relevance of this statement, in view of our need to exhibit love? (b) Read Isaiah 58:7; Matthew 25:36; Hebrews 13:3; James 1:27; and 1 John 4:20b, and identify some ways love for God can be made visible? (c) What obstacles do you anticipate in exhibiting love in the ways listed in (2b) and how does 1 John 4:18 help?

We love because God first loved us. He showed us the pattern for love and then commanded us to do the same thing to one another. When we show love to others, we bear witness to the world that we are disciples of Jesus Christ. We also enjoy personal benefits such as our joy being full (John 15:11) and that we will not stumble (1 John 2:10). The truth is that those who resist the call to love are simply not of God, for love is an innate attribute of those who are His. In and of ourselves, we are unable to love the way that God has asked us to. The only way we can is by daily asking Him for the grace to love one another. And when we ask, we can be assured that He will answer (Matthew 21:22).

3. (a) 1 John 3:10, 14 (ICB), says **“... And anyone who does not love his brother is not a child of God... Whoever does not love is still in death.”** Why do you think God uses such strong language concerning this matter of exhibiting love? (b) 1 John 4:8 says that to love is to know God, because God is love. According to 1 John 4:13-16, how does one come to know God and have the power to love? (c) What is the implication of this for those of us who may struggle with showing love to others? From this study, what practical steps can we take to exhibit more love to others?

Prayer: *Dear Father, please give me the grace to exhibit love more in my day-to-day interactions with others. Help me to follow the pattern that You have set, to be ready to humbly take the initiative to be, kind, patient, considerate, empathetic, forgiving, faithful, selfless, generous, and sacrificial. For in doing this, the world will know that I am Yours, and You will be glorified. In Jesus Name I pray, Amen.*