



BIG IDEA

God's love changes how we love others.

BIBLE

1 John 4:7–12; John 3:16

ABOUT THIS WEEK

Love isn't just something God does—it's who He is. God showed His love by sending Jesus to rescue us. When we experience that love, it reshapes how we treat others—especially when it's difficult.

WHAT? What are we talking about today?

- Let's start with an easy question: *What do you love?*

SPEAKER NOTE: Take a few answers—fun, fast-paced. Write them down if you have a whiteboard.

- Maybe you'll hear: "My family. My friends. My dog. Chick-fil-A. Sleep."
 - All fair answers. But think about it for a second—do you love your mom the same way you love Chick-fil-A? Probably not.
 - The truth is, *love* is one of the most used—and most misunderstood—words in our culture.
We use the same word to describe our favorite food and our deepest relationships.
 - And because of that, it's easy to lose sight of what love really means.
- Everyone in the world is chasing it. Whether through relationships, approval, success, or likes online—people are searching for love because we were made to experience it. But here's the catch:
 - If you want to understand love, you can't start with people—you have to start with God.
- **SLIDE – GOD IS LOVE.**
 - That's not just a nice slogan. It's a radical truth.
 - 1 John 4 doesn't say "God loves" or "God feels love." It says **God is love.**

- That means everything He does—every decision, every command, every act of discipline or mercy—flows from who He is.
- Let's read this together: **SLIDE – 1 John 4:7–12 (NIV)**

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

- John reminds us that love didn't start with us.
 - He says, "This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins."
- God's love isn't based on how good you are.
 - It's based on how *good He is*. That's what makes it completely different from the kind of love the world offers.

SPEAKER NOTE: You could say: "Some of you have experienced 'love' that had strings attached. Love that left you feeling used, forgotten, or not enough. But God's love doesn't work that way—it's not earned, it's received."

- That kind of love is powerful enough to reshape everything about us.
 - It changes how we see ourselves, how we treat others, and how we handle the people who test our patience.
- Let's be honest—there are people who are really hard to love.
 - The ones who talk behind your back.
 - The ones who drain your energy.
 - The ones who never seem to change.
- And yet—Jesus loved people who betrayed Him, denied Him, and nailed Him to a cross. That's what love looks like when it's not driven by emotion but by *character*.
- **SLIDE – GOD'S LOVE CHANGES HOW WE LOVE OTHERS.**
 - It's not just a feeling—it's a choice to act for someone's good, even when it costs you something.
 - And that kind of love is impossible apart from God.
- That's why the Gospel isn't just good news for eternity—it's good news for *right now*.
 - The same love that sent Jesus to the cross is the love that lives in you through the Holy Spirit.
 - That means you can love people even when they don't love you back.
- God's love frees you from fear—fear of rejection, fear of not being enough, fear of losing control—and gives you the security to love others without needing anything in return.

NOW WHAT? What does God want us to do about it?

- So how do we respond to a holy God who's shown us this kind of grace?
- **SLIDE – SHOW LOVE FIRST**

- Don't wait for kindness—*initiate* it.

SPEAKER NOTE: Say, "Most of us wait until people prove they deserve our kindness before we give it. But that's not how God loves. He loved you before you could ever earn it."

Show love first to your siblings, your classmates, and your coworkers.

- **SLIDE – LOVE WHEN IT'S HARD**
 - Sometimes loving people means forgiving them. Sometimes it means praying for someone you can't stand. Sometimes it means choosing to stay gentle when

you'd rather clap back. Love costs something. But when you love like God loves, you reflect His heart.

- **SLIDE – LOVE THROUGH ACTION**

- Love doesn't just feel something; it *does* something.
- That could mean serving someone, encouraging someone who's struggling, or sacrificing time to help a friend.
- Real love moves toward others with compassion, not away from them in comfort.

Closing

- Here's your challenge this week:
- Before every major decision, conflict, or conversation, ask yourself this question: "What does love require of me right now?" Then do that thing.
 - It might mean forgiving, apologizing, or reaching out to someone you've been avoiding.
- **SLIDE – GOD'S LOVE CHANGES HOW WE LOVE OTHERS.**
 - Because when God's love defines you, you stop asking, "*What do I get out of this?*" and start asking, "*How can I give like Jesus?*"