

Message Study Guide

(Scriptures & quotes from this week's message are available on thorncreek.church/live)

Warming up

1. What's your New Year's Resolution, or what one thing would you like to change in 2019?

Digging Deeper & Application

Take your time reading the scripture given. If possible look up the verses in different versions and pause at each verse and discuss it.

2. To BE the person God wants you to be, or could be, it starts with you understanding who God is. Please read 1 John 4:7-8. According to this verse, what is the character of God?
 - a. What did Pastor Ruben mean by, "Your proximity determines your capacity.?"
3. Read 1 John 4:9-10, what does God's love look like?
 - a. What does the word "propitiation" mean? Look it up! How does this compare to Isaiah 53:6?
4. Read Romans 8:38-39, how does this scripture make you feel about God's love?
5. Please read John 13:34. In light of God's love for you, what do you think about Andy Stanley's quote, "Your devotion to God is authenticated by your love for others?"
6. According to John 13:35, what is the single characteristic that shows people that we are disciple of Jesus Christ? Compare this with Jerry Sittser's quote, "In giving this command, Jesus did something the world had never seen before—He created a group identified by one thing: love. Skin color doesn't matter. Native language doesn't matter. There are no rules about diet or uniforms or wearing funny hats. Followers of Christ are identified by their love for each other."

7. Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-7 and ask yourself if your love stands out to the world around you. Think about the scripture you just read and rate yourself on the love you show from 1-5 in all areas of your life..

8. Athens Philosopher, Aristides, wrote this in 125 AD: "They walk in all humility and kindness, and falsehood is not found among them, and they love one another. They despise not the widow, and grieve not the orphan. If they see a stranger, they bring him under their roof, and rejoice over him as if he were their own brother: For they call themselves brethren, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit of God; but when one of their poor passes away from the world, and any of them see him, he provides for his burial according to his ability; and if they hear that any of their number is imprisoned or oppressed for the name of their Messiah, all of them provide for his needs. And if there is among them a man that is needy and poor, and they have not an abundance of necessaries, they fast two or three days that they may supply the needy with their necessary food."
 - a. Do you think Christians today love like the early Christians in 125 AD? Why or why not?

 - b. According to 1 John 4:11-12, what is the purpose of God's love? What does this mean?

Application

Below are some of the points shared in the message. Discuss how they apply to your life.

- This year... Focus on who God wants you to BE.
- "We are the objects of God's furious love." - Brennan Manning
- To understand who God wants you to BE, you have to understand the GOD WHO LOVES AND IS LOVE.
- You are a masterpiece of God's grace and love.
- "Your devotion to God is authenticated by your love for others." - Andy Stanley