

C3 LEADERS' QUESTIONS
F2022-WEEK 13
11/27/22

Getting Started with a Warm-Up:

- “Love is love: examining a popular belief” (Written by Subby Szterszky)

The expression “love is love” has gained a fair amount of currency on social media, and it’s not hard to see why. On the surface, it sounds like a positive, all-embracing truism. In reality, of course, it’s being used in a far more focused – and loaded – manner. The idea is that any sexual relationship marked by affection and respect – between consenting adults of whatever gender or number – is a legitimate form of love and hence beyond reproach...

(Love is love: Examining a popular belief. Focus on the Family. (n.d.). Retrieved November 24, 2022, from <https://www.focusonthefamily.ca/content/love-is-love-examining-a-popular-belief>)

- How is this love different from Biblical love ?

Getting Down to Business:

The following questions are following this format: Scripture/Observation, Application, and Prayer (SOAP).

1) Scripture/Observation:

- A. Read 1 John 2:15-16. In what way is the love described here contradictory to the love of God?

15 Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. 16 For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. (1 John 2:15-16 NIV)

C3 LEADERS' QUESTIONS

F2022-WEEK 13

11/27/22

Exhortation to Avoid Worldliness (2:15-17)

John now speaks of the relation of light-dwellers to the world of darkness and warns against being influenced by it. Perhaps he is recalling Jesus' prayer that his disciples be in the world but not of it (Jn 17:15).

World is a Johannine idiom referring to those who are part of the present age, the world system apart from Christ, humankind organized in rebellion against God. This world lies in darkness (see Jn 1:5; 12:46) and sin.

Do not love carries the idea of attraction to something in order to enjoy it. Why are love of the world and love of God contradictory? The answer is in 2:16 where John refers to the three avenues by which the **world** satisfies its desires: the unlawful pleasures of sense; the unlawful sights to be seen; the pride (vainglory) that comes from the possession of goods.

(Asbury Bible Commentary, Retrieved November 24, 2022, from <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+john+2&version=NIV>)

- B. Read Romans 8:28-30. Where in this passage do we see God's love and desire for our best?

28 And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. 29 For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. 30 And having chosen them, he called them to come to him. And having called them, he gave them right standing with himself. And having given them right standing, he gave them his glory. (Romans 8:18-30 NLT)

C3 LEADERS' QUESTIONS

F2022-WEEK 13

11/27/22

Assurance (8:28-39)

This brings the presentation of God's provision of salvation to the climax. This salvation was planned by God before the foundation of the world (cf. Eph 1:4). He has a specific purpose and design that he will follow through. Therefore, we know and are confident that the ultimate goal of salvation, our final glorification, will be achieved (vv.28-30).

The word **predestined** (prohorizō) occurs in vv.29-30. This has been misinterpreted to mean that God arbitrarily determined in advance certain individuals to be saved. This, however, is not the meaning of the word. This word occurs six times in the NT: Ac 4:28; Ro 8:29, 30; 1Co 2:7; and Eph 1:5, 11. In all other occurrences, the context indicates clearly that it has to do with the plan, the design, the condition of some event, or salvation. It is also so used here (Murray, 1:318). Those who participate in salvation are **those who love** God. They are called according to God's **purpose** (prothesis, v.28). In the entire NT when purpose (prothesis) is used of God, it has to do with the plan, the design, or the condition of some event, never with certain persons. God's purpose regarding salvation is that all be saved and none be lost (1Ti 2:4; Tit 2:11; 2Pe 3:9). The call is the invitation addressed by God to all human beings. It is inclusive, not exclusive.

In v.29 the object of **predestine** is **to be conformed to the likeness of his Son**. In v.30 the object seems to be certain persons. These persons, however, are **those whom God foreknew**, not those arbitrarily chosen by God. Foreknowledge does not cause them to have faith, but rather their faith causes God to foreknow. My knowing does not cause you to do something. But your doing causes me to know. In the same way, God's knowledge does not cause us to do something, but our doing causes God to know. Since, however, God is not bound by time, he can know before we do it.

(Asbury Bible Commentary, Retrieved November 24, 2022, from <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=romans%208%3A28-30&version=NLT>)

C3 LEADERS' QUESTIONS

F2022-WEEK 13

11/27/22

- C. Read Matthew 5:44-45. Why is loving our enemies reflective of God's perfect love?

44 But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! 45 In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike. (Matthew 5:44-45 NLT)

Requirements of the kingdom: Righteousness (5:17-48)

The principle of love stands behind all of Jesus' statements in 5:21-48. Hence the love command forms the climax to this segment (vv.43-48). The entire law is summed up in the command to love (cf. 22:37-40).

It is within this context that Jesus speaks of perfection (5:48). Disciples must be perfect (complete, entire) in their love. This means that they are to love not only those who love them, but also those who hate them and persecute them. When disciples do this, they share the perfection of God's love; for God is perfect in that he actively shows love toward all persons, doing good to both the righteous and the wicked (v.45).

This is the Christian perfection of which Wesley spoke, a perfection of love. Wesley was right when he declared that, humanly speaking, such perfection is impossible. But Wesley was also in line with the thinking of this gospel when he argued that nothing is impossible with God and that God graciously gives to his people the power to fulfill this command (cf. 1:21-23; 5:17-20).

(Asbury Bible Commentary, Retrieved November 24, 2022, from <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mt.+5%3A44-45&version=NLT>)

C3 LEADERS' QUESTIONS

F2022-WEEK 13

11/27/22

- D. Read Ephesians 4:15 and 1 Corinthians 13:1-2. It is important that we speak the truth but if the truth is not presented in love what may be the result?

Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. (Ephesians 4:15 NLT)

If I could speak all the languages of earth and of angels, but didn't love others, I would only be a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I had the gift of prophecy, and if I understood all of God's secret plans and possessed all knowledge, and if I had such faith that I could move mountains, but didn't love others, I would be nothing. (1 Corinthians 13:1-2 NLT)

(2.) That we should speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15), or follow the truth in love, or be sincere in love to our fellow-Christians. While we adhere to the doctrine of Christ, which is the truth, we should live in love one with another. Love is an excellent thing; but we must be careful to preserve truth together with it. Truth is an excellent thing; yet it is requisite that we speak it in love, and not in contention. These two should go together—truth and peace. (3.) That we should grow up into Christ in all things. Into Christ, so as to be more deeply rooted in him. In all things; in knowledge, love, faith, and all the parts of the new man. We should grow up towards maturity, which is opposed to being children. Those are improving Christians who grow up into Christ. The more we grow into an acquaintance with Christ, faith in him, love to him, dependence upon him, the more we shall flourish in every grace. He is the head; and we should thus grow, that we may thereby honour our head. The Christian's growth tends to the glory of Christ...

(Matthew Henry's Commentary, Retrieved November 17, 2022, from <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Eph+4%3A15&version=NLT>)

V 1–3: EMPTY WITHOUT LOVE No matter what gifts, abilities, generosity or level of commitment any Christians may possess, these things mean nothing

C3 LEADERS' QUESTIONS

F2022-WEEK 13

11/27/22

unless God's love fills and controls the person concerned. Attitudes as well as actions have to be right. (Bible Panorama commentary, Retrieved November 17, 2022, from

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+cor+13%3A1-2&version=NLT>

)

2) Application: How will a right understanding of love guide us in responding to the complicated and confusing moral issues we face in our culture today?

3) Prayer: As you pray, ask God to reveal opportunities and situations for you to demonstrate your love for others, as he loves you. Also reflect on your current heart for loving others especially those who are far from Christ and believers who have strayed away from him.

But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love. (1 John 4:8 NLT)