"The Evidence of Love" Children of God #2

INTRODUCTION

In our current series, we are learning what it means to be "Children of God." We can see that we are God's children through the evidence of His love for us. We see this in several ways. In this study we'll consider three things that show evidence of God's love; the commitment of God to us and our commitment in return, the change God's love creates in our attitudes and actions, and the power of God's love that compels us to choose Him over the world.

Ice Breaker (Optional):

Are there any special or unique ways you demonstrate love to your family?

STUDY QUESTIONS (45 MIN)

God's Commitment to us; Our Commitment to God Q1. Read 1 John 2: 1-6

John's tenderness in these verses is itself a reflection of God's love. What are the actions of Jesus in verses 1 and 2 that demonstrate the depth of His love for us? What range of emotions do you feel as you consider Jesus' expressions of love for you?

Q2. Read Psalm 103:17; Jeremiah 31:3; Romans 8:34-39

Psalm 103 and Jeremiah 31 tell us that there is no end to God's love for us. Paul continues the theme of God's love in Romans 8:34-39. What is included in his list of things that might threaten to separate us from the love of Christ? Verses 38 and 39 contain another list concluding that nothing in all creation can separate us from God's love. To what do we owe our ability to conquer all these things (verse 37)? What things do you feel might personally threaten to separate you from His love? What actions can you take to overcome those threats?

The Light of Love Changes our Walk and Talk Q3. Read 1 John 1:5; Leviticus 19:17; 1 John 2:7-14 & 4:20

What is the profound distinction John makes between light and darkness in 1 John 1:5? Now consider Leviticus 19:17, 1 John 2:9, 11 and 1 John 4:20. The word for brother¹ used by John can mean either kinsman or fellow believer. Why do you think John sees our attitude and behavior towards family and fellow believers as an indicator of

our love for God? John says in verse 11 that those who hate their brothers are blind and don't know where they are going. Where does such hatred lead us in terms of our relationship to God? ¹Greek -adelphos

We Choose God over the World Q4. Read 1 John 2:15-17; Colossians 3:1-2

When God's love is present in our lives our natural response is to love in return. But John identifies three categories of things that compete for our affection (1 John 2:16)? What would you include in these categories- the things we physically crave, things we see that we "must have" and things that make us feel prideful? Colossian 3 tells us we should seek "things that are above" rather than things on the earth. What are some of the "things that are above" that we should be pursuing?

WRAP-UP

Jesus has given us evidence of His everlasting love. Not only was He our atoning sacrifice on the cross, but He continues to advocate for us before the Father. Our response to this love is to obey His commands. Chief among those commands is to love one another. If we walk in the light of God's love, we will love our brothers but if we hate our brothers we are walking in darkness. The light of God's love at work in our lives will change our attitude and behavior towards others and towards worldly thing. There are many things in the world competing for our affection, but we must chooses God over those things and set our minds on things above with Christ if we are to walk in His light.

Memory Verse

My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. 1 John 2: 1-6 NIV

PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life: ______ Pray for your group members' needs:

Challenge: Perhaps God is calling you to step out of the darkness of hatred into the light of love. If there is a relationship between you and a brother that you feel God is calling you to restore, seek out someone in your group to pray with, to encourage you and to hold you accountable in doing so. **Q1** Read 1 John 2: 1-6 in your Bible

Q2.

Psalm 103:17 ESV - 17 But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children's children,

Jeremiah 31:3 ESV - 3 the LORD appeared to him from far away. I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you.

Romans 8:34-39 NIV - 34 Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died--more than that, who was raised to life--is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? 36 As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." 37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors *through him who loved us*. 38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Q3

1 John 1:5 ESV - 5 This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

Leviticus 19:17 ESV - 17 "You shall not hate your brother in your heart, but you shall reason frankly with your neighbor, lest you incur sin because of him.

1 John 2:7-11 ESV - 7 Beloved, I am writing you no new commandment, but an old commandment that you had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word that you have heard. 8 At the same time, it is a new commandment that I am writing to you, which is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining. 9 Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness. 10 Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling. 11 But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes. 1 John 4:20 ESV - 20 If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen.

Q4

1 John 2:15-17 ESV - 15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world--the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life--is not from the Father but is from the world. 17 And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

Colossians 3:1-2 ESV - 1 If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.

Prayers Con't: _____