

Love or the Gong Show?

Mark 12:28-29

(This message is online at: nwbcspringfield.com) - Use this listening guide as you watch the video worship services online. This will also have questions you can use with your connect group.

LOVE is a _____—it's an _____ word

We all have a DLP-- or _____.

Love is _____! It is the #1 Priority of Life, according to God's Word.

Life is all about _____. And relationships are all about _____.

if you have the gift of Knowledge – he even says _____ knowledge – _____ mysteries... He exaggerates his point

Paul tells us – even if you give your life away in ultimate _____ --- and you don't have love --- you gain nothing...

1 Corinthians 13:1-3

1. 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

3 If I gave everything I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it; but if I didn't love others, I would have gained nothing.

CONNECT GROUPS

ICEBREAKER Every family expresses love differently - some give hugs and kisses; some eat together; some travel, while others work hard. Share a bit about your Family of Origin. What was it like in your home growing up? Was there lots of talking and sharing about life, politics and family or was yours more reserved and less expressive? How did your family express love to each other? Share an example with your group.

LEADERS' NOTE: This may be a little awkward at first. Everyone may be new in your group and still getting to know each other. Leaders often have to share first to break the ice for the rest of the group. Your vulnerability is important if you want your group to be able to share. Don't be afraid of silence. In fact, let there be silence for at least 1 entire minute before you start talking.

APPLY THE BIBLE Have someone in your group read John 13:34-35. Jesus says: "I'm giving you a NEW COMMANDMENT" — the way that I've loved you is what I want you to pass on to other people. I'm the model and the way that I love you is the way I want you to love other people. In John 13:15, Jesus says: "I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you." Throughout this study, we will be looking at the way Jesus loves as our example to learn how to love better.

Question #1. Have someone read Leviticus 19:18. What is NEW about the commandment Jesus gives in John? In Leviticus, the command is to love others as ourselves, the way we want to be treated. What makes Jesus' command new is the new standard and example "as I have loved you," in other words, the way Jesus loves us. Jesus has shown us that we are to love others by laying down our lives for them. Jesus calls us to a new and higher standard than we've known before. Throughout this study, we will be exploring what that looks like in practical and biblical ways.

Question #2. List the ways that Jesus loves us. Jesus healed the sick in love (Matthew 14:14). Jesus raised the dead in love (John 11:35,38). Jesus fed the hungry in love (Matthew 15:32). Jesus preached the Kingdom in Love (Mark 6:34). Jesus cast out demons in love (Matthew 8:

16). Jesus loves us sacrificially. (1 John 3:16) Nothing can separate us from Jesus' love. (Romans 8:39) Jesus loves us unconditionally (1 John 4:19)

Question #3. How is Jesus' love different than the way we normally love others? Have different people in your group read the passage as you ask questions. Jesus' love was always practical—not just ideological—and one of the ways Jesus loved others was by prioritizing relationships. If ever someone had a busy and important agenda — Jesus did! Yet, Jesus always prioritized people over tasks. Have people read these passages and then answer the questions. Mark 5:21-43

Question #4. Think about the way you spend your time and money. What does it say about the top priorities in your life? Here is another opportunity for you to step into vulnerability. Share where you struggle in this area... share where you have seen breakthrough. If you are struggling with what to share with your group, take time to think and pray so you can lead you group in this. Make sure you are thanking your group members for sharing these vulnerable places in their lives.

Question #5 How is the Holy Spirit speaking to you through this lesson? Where is your life more like a “clanging cymbal?” What is God calling you to change? As the group leader, simply wait for at least a few minutes. People may still be processing the discussion. Afer a few minutes, take the time share with your group what you are learning. Also ask the question, “I know that this may be a hard question, but why do you think this is so hard to answer?” Tis may be a great way to get group interaction.

How did you do on the Self Assessment Test? Share which relationship(s) you would like to focus on throughout this study. Loving like Jesus may seem overwhelming. Yet in His mercy and grace, He gives us His Spirit to lead and guide us. Pray for one another, asking the Lord to help you grow in love for Him and for others.

CHANCE TO SERVE Our groups are going to participate in an epic outreach the last week of this series, applying in practical ways all that

1____3____5____7____9

Relative _____

1____3____5____7____9

Coworkers _____

1____3____5____7____9

Neighbors _____

1____3____5____7____9

Difficult Person _____

1____3____5____7____9

Children _____

1____3____5____7____9

HAVE YOU SIGNED UP FOR CONNECT GROUPS?

Go to nwbcspringfield.com

Click the join a connect group box at the top of the home page and fill out the form. Be sure and let us know what time works best for you:

- Monday Morning—11:00AM
- Thursday Evening—7:00PM
- Sunday Evening—6:00PM

Pastor Paul will be leading for the next 2 or 3 weeks allowing us time to get leaders for each of the groups.

We will be using Facebook Messenger Rooms. There will be videos on the website to help everyone get up and running.