

BELIEVE SERIES Lesson Twenty

LOVE

VIDEO TEACHING NOTES

Key Question: What does it mean to sacrificially and unconditionally _____ others?

Key Verse: " This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made _____ in us." (1 John 4:10-12)

Key Idea: I am _____ to loving God and loving others.

(Key Application) I am their _____.

(Key Application) I sacrifice my _____ to see them succeed.

(Key Application) I help them see God's good _____ for them.

GROUP DISCUSSION

As a group, discuss your thoughts and feelings about the following declarations. Which statements are easy to declare with certainty? Which are more challenging and why?

- God's grace enables me to forgive people who have hurt me.
- I rejoice when good things happen to other people.
- I demonstrate love equally toward people of all races.
- I frequently give up what I want for the sake of others.

Choose 2-3 questions that will lead to best discussion about the Key Idea

1. Who are the toughest people for you to love? Family members? Coworkers? Strangers? Why?
2. It's easy to love someone who meets our needs. Is it possible to genuinely love someone who does nothing for you or even hurts you? If so, how?
3. Outside of Jesus' example, when have you witnessed expressions of Christ-like love?

Read John 13:31-35, 1 John 4:19-21 and Matthew 18:21-22 and choose 1-2 questions to discuss.

1. Throughout Scripture, love is described as an identifying quality that proves we belong to God. If this is true, why are Christians so frequently described by outsiders as hypocritical and judgmental?
2. Based on what you read, what is the best strategy for developing authentic and genuine love for God and others?
3. Discuss how withholding forgiveness can be an adversary of genuine love.

OTHER PASSAGES

1 Cor. 13:1-13

Deut. 6:4-9

Leviticus 19:17-18

Mark 12:28-34

Matt. 5:43-48

Romans 13:8-10

Galatians 5:13-25

1 John 4:7-21

Matt. 18:21-35

1 Samuel 18:1-4; 19:1-7; 20:1-42

CLOSING PRAYER

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PERSONAL QUESTIONS FOR NEXT WEEK

Read Believe, Chapter 22: Joy and/or read the following passages

Psalm 16:1-11; 19:8; 119:14, 162 John 13:1; 15:1-11; 16:16-24 James 1:2-17
Deut. 16:13-17 1 Chron. 16:7-36 Ezra 6:13-22 Habakkuk 3:1-19
Philippians 1:1-19, 27-30; 2:12-18; 3:1-21; 4:1-13 1 Peter 1:3-9; 4:12-16; 5:6-11

Then, answer the following questions:

1. How does keeping God's commands produce joy in our lives?
2. How does acknowledging God's involvement in our lives evoke joy? Israel held annual festivals and traditions to celebrate God's blessings. How do Christians accomplish this today?
3. How can difficult circumstances actually produce joy? What role do our attitudes play in being able to experience joy?
4. Paul said he had to learn how to be content even when he had plenty. Why is it sometimes difficult for people who have plenty to be content?
5. How often do you joyfully acknowledge God's goodness in your life? Identify one good thing God has given to you or done for you in the past week and take a moment to celebrate that with someone else.

Key Verse: "I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete." (John 15:11)

Key Idea: Despite my circumstances, I feel inner contentment and understand my purpose in life.

Personal Application

1. How would this virtue express itself in your life?
2. What visible attributes can be found in someone who manifests the virtue of joy?
3. What is impeding your ability to choose a lifestyle of joy? How can you overcome this obstacle?
4. What action step can you take this week to increase the presence of joy in your daily life?