

SCRIPTUREDEPTH STUDY PACKS

Love Never Fails: A 10-Session Study on the Greatest Commandment

A 10-week study on the love of God — and what loving God, neighbor, and even enemies actually looks like.

10-Week Study · Leader's Guide · Free Sample (Week 1)

This is a free sample containing the introduction and week 1 of 10. Get the full leader's guide and participant worksheets at scripturedepth.com/studies/love-never-fails.

WELCOME

A Word for the Leader

Welcome to 'Love Never Fails: A 10-Session Study on the Greatest Commandment.' As a leader, you have the privilege of guiding your group through a transformative journey into the heart of biblical love. This study is designed for believers who are eager to move beyond merely talking about love and to start embodying the profound love that Scripture calls us to live out.

The heart of this study is rooted in the truth that God is love, as revealed in 1 John 4:8. Each session seeks to explore different facets of God's love and how we, as His followers, are called to reflect that love in our daily lives. Whether your group is new to the faith or seasoned in their walk with Christ, this study aims to deepen your understanding and practice of love.

This study serves anyone who desires to grow in love, whether you're leading a small group in your church, hosting a Bible study in your home, or gathering with friends over coffee. Our prayer is that through these sessions, your group will be inspired and equipped to live out the greatest commandment: to love God and love others as ourselves.

As you prepare to lead, remember that you are not alone. The Holy Spirit is your guide and helper, and this study is designed to support you with thoughtful questions, practical applications, and biblical insights. May your leadership be marked by grace and love as you journey together with your group.

How to Use This Study

Each week, your group will engage with a specific aspect of biblical love, beginning with a teaching segment that introduces the topic and its scriptural foundation. Following this, you'll dive into key Bible passages that illuminate the theme, encouraging participants to reflect on God's Word and its implications for their lives.

After exploring the Scriptures, the study provides discussion questions designed to foster meaningful conversations. These questions aim to help participants process what they've learned and consider how they can apply these truths in practical ways. Encourage open dialogue and create a safe space for everyone to share their thoughts and experiences.

To reinforce each session's theme, a worksheet is included for personal reflection and application. Participants can use this tool to deepen their understanding throughout the week, allowing the study to extend beyond your group meeting and into their daily lives.

We recommend setting aside 60-90 minutes for each session to ensure ample time for teaching, discussion, and prayer. As a purchaser of this study, you have the freedom to print unlimited copies for your group, making it easy to share these resources with everyone involved. May this study be a blessing to your community as you grow together in love.

God Is Love

WEEK 1 OF 10

Focus: 1 John 4:7-21

“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves has been born of God, and knows God. He who doesn’t love doesn’t know God, for God is love. By this God’s love was revealed in us, that God has sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son as the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, if God loved us in this way, we also ought to love one another. No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God remains in us, and his love has been perfected in us.”

1 John 4:7-12

“We know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and he who remains in love remains in God, and God remains in him. In this love has been made perfect among us, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as he is, even so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear has punishment. He who fears is not made perfect in love.”

1 John 4:16-18

“We love him, because he first loved us. If a man says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who doesn’t love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? This commandment we have from him, that he who loves God should also love his brother.”

1 John 4:19-21

Teaching

As we begin our journey into understanding love, we start with the profound truth found in 1 John 4:7-21: God is love. This passage invites us to explore the very nature of God and how that nature should transform our lives. John, the beloved disciple, emphasizes that love originates from God. When we love one another, we reflect His character and show that we are born of God and know Him. This isn't just about knowing facts about God; it's about a relational knowing that transforms us. The love we share is evidence of God's presence in our lives, a testimony that we are His children.

John reminds us that God's love was made manifest in the sending of His Son into the world. This act of sacrificial love is the ultimate demonstration of what true love looks like. It's not that we loved God first, but that

He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. This divine initiative sets the standard for our love. We are called to love not because it is easy or convenient, but because it reflects the very heart of God. Our love for others is a response to the love we have received from God.

The passage challenges us to love one another as a reflection of God's love in us. John states that if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. This call to love is not a suggestion but a command that flows from the reality of God's love. When we love others, God lives in us, and His love is made complete in us. This completion is not about perfection but about maturity and fullness. As we grow in love, we grow into the likeness of Christ, who perfectly embodied love.

John speaks of the assurance we have in God's love. He writes that God has given us His Spirit as a witness to His abiding presence in us. This Spirit empowers us to love beyond our natural capacity. It's through the Spirit that we confess Jesus as the Son of God and experience the fullness of God's love. This assurance is crucial because it anchors our identity and security in the love of God, freeing us to love others without fear of rejection or failure.

Fear and love are contrasted in this passage. John states that perfect love drives out fear because fear has to do with punishment. In a world often driven by fear, God's perfect love offers a different way. When we are secure in God's love, fear loses its grip on our hearts. We can love boldly and generously because we are not afraid of losing or being hurt. This freedom to love without fear is a powerful testimony to the world of the transformative power of God's love.

John emphasizes that our love for God is inseparable from our love for others. He makes it clear that claiming to love God while hating a brother or sister is a contradiction. Love for God is demonstrated in our love for those around us. This is a challenging truth because it calls us to examine our hearts and relationships. It's easy to say we love God, but the true test is how we treat those we encounter daily. Our love for others is the visible expression of our invisible love for God.

The commandment to love is not new, but John presents it with a fresh urgency. He writes that anyone who loves God must also love their brother or sister. This commandment is rooted in the character of God and the example of Jesus. As followers of Christ, we are called to a radical love that transcends personal preferences and prejudices. This love is active, seeking the good of others and reflecting the sacrificial love of Jesus. It's a love that requires us to step out of our comfort zones and engage with those who are different from us.

John's message is clear: love is the defining mark of a Christian. It's not enough to profess faith; our lives must be marked by love. This love is not just an emotion but an action that reflects God's love in tangible ways. It's seen in how we serve, forgive, and care for others. Love is the evidence of our faith and the means by which we reveal God to the world. As we love, we participate in God's mission of reconciliation and healing in a broken world.

The passage concludes with a reminder of the confidence we have on the day of judgment because of God's love. This confidence is not based on our own merits but on the love of God that has been perfected in us. As we abide in God's love, we live in the assurance of His acceptance and favor. This assurance frees us to live boldly and love extravagantly, knowing that our future is secure in Him. Our love for others becomes a reflection of the hope we have in Christ.

As we reflect on this passage, we are invited to consider how God's love is being perfected in us. Are we growing in love? Are we allowing God's love to drive out fear and transform our relationships? This week, let us seek to embody the love of God in our interactions, trusting that as we do, His love will be made complete in us. Let us be a community marked by love, a living testimony of the God who is love.

Living It Out

This week, take time to reflect on the ways you have experienced God's love in your life. Consider how this love can be extended to those around you. Identify one person you can intentionally show love to, perhaps through a kind word, an act of service, or simply spending time with them. Let your actions be a reflection of the love you have received from God.

As a group, commit to praying for each other, asking God to fill you with His love and to help you love others as He loves you. Consider setting up a group challenge where each member shares one way they plan to demonstrate love this week. Encourage each other and hold one another accountable, celebrating the ways God works through your love.

Discussion Questions

1. How does understanding that God is love change the way you view Him and your relationship with Him?
2. In what ways have you experienced God's love in your life? How has it transformed you?
3. What are some practical ways you can show God's love to others in your daily life?
4. How does fear impact your ability to love others? How can God's perfect love help you overcome this fear?
5. Why is it important that our love for God is demonstrated in our love for others?
6. What challenges do you face in loving others as God commands? How can you overcome these challenges?
7. How can our group support each other in growing in love and reflecting God's love to the world?

LEADER NOTES

Begin the session by reading the focus passage together, allowing time for group members to reflect on the words. Encourage them to share initial thoughts or feelings about the passage.

Guide the discussion with sensitivity, especially when addressing the topic of fear and love. Some members may have personal experiences with fear that impact their ability to love. Create a safe space for sharing and encourage listening without judgment.

Be mindful of pacing to ensure there's enough time for both discussion and application. Encourage members to think practically about how they can apply the teaching in their lives this week.