

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

If God is Love... Week 1



CONNECT

Spend some time checking in. What are highs and lows since you last met? How can your group members pray for and support each other this week?

GROW

- What's something you wore/ate/did/liked when you were younger but eventually outgrew? What changed? How did you respond to that change?
- What could it mean that we "outgrow" our faith, or as author John Pavlovitz says, we experience "spiritual claustrophobia"? Have you ever considered that before? Why or why not?
- What does it mean to you that love isn't something God *does*, but rather love is *who God is*? Read the Bible verses on the back. What do you notice?
- If God is bigger than we think, and if God is love—how could you show or demonstrate God's love to those around you? How does it change us when we acknowledge that God's love is bigger than we think? If God's love doesn't fit in the "box" we try to put it in, how does that

PRAY

Loving God, You sent your son to show us what love looks like. Help us to be people who reflect your love in the world. Amen.



BIBLE READINGS

John 13:34-35

34 “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. **35** By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

Psalm 139:7-10

7 Where can I go from your Spirit?

Where can I flee from your presence?

8 If I go up to the heavens, you are there;

if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

9 If I rise on the wings of the dawn,

if I settle on the far side of the sea,

10 even there your hand will guide me,

your right hand will hold me fast.

Mark 2:22

22 And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins.”

1 John 4:7-10 (MSG)

My beloved friends, let us continue to love each other since love comes from God. Everyone who loves is born of God and experiences a relationship with God. The person who refuses to love doesn't know the first thing about God, because God is love—so you can't know him if you don't love. This is how God showed his love for us: God sent his only Son into the world so we might live through him. This is the kind of love we are talking about—not that we once upon a time loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to clear away our sins and the damage they've done to our relationship with God.

