

“Love for God that does not result in growing love for others is false religion.”

1. REVIEW

Read Matthew 22:37-40. How are the “love God” and “love your neighbor” commandments like each other? _____

You can only love God with YOUR heart, YOUR soul, YOUR mind, and YOUR strength, not someone else's. Why is that important to understand? How do we know what the “right” way to love God is? _____

What happens when comparison with other believers become the primary driver for our behaviors and attitudes? _____

2. ASSESS

Read Philippians 2:1-5. Love for God is a joke without love for others. They are not the same, but they are so married that one cannot flourish without the other. Your love for others should be growing along with your love for the Lord. How has your love for others grown in the last month? In the last year? Since you started following Christ? _____

It's easy to say we love others (or even believe that we do), but our actions will tell the real story. How do your actions demonstrate the love of God to others? _____

3. APPLY

What do you need to change about your attitude or lifestyle toward God that will allow you to love others more? Team up with someone else in your group to hold each other accountable to make that change happen this week. _____

Work together as a group to come up with a plan to show love to others this week. You could all serve together in your community or in a ministry at church, or you could each plan to show love and kindness to someone specific in your life, such as a co-worker, a server at your favorite restaurant, a grocery clerk, or even a random stranger. The point is to be specific about when, where, and to whom you will show the love of God and how you will hold each other accountable to this.

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| Human beings are: | Suppressing God lovers: |
| - Imago Dei | - Judge: You shouldn't. |
| - Fallen | - Shame: He/She did. |
| - Stuck | - Malign: You're not. |
| - Loved | - Condemn: You'll never be. |
| - Predestined | |

John Ortberg quote:
 "Remember that the soul is what integrates our parts. If our will is enslaved to our appetites, if our thoughts are obsessed with unfulfilled desires, if our emotions are slaves to our circumstances, if our bodily habits contradict our professed values, the soul is not free. The only way for the soul to be free is for all the parts of our personhood to be rightly ordered. The deeper freedom—the freedom that the soul needs—is the freedom for becoming the person I was designed to be."

Vertical Living begins with vertical loving.

5 DAY READING PLAN

DAY 1

READ John 13:34-35

What I learned (observation/interpretation):

How I will respond (application):

DAY 2

READ 1 John 4:19-21

What I learned:

How I will respond:

DAY 3

READ James 2:14-17

What I learned:

How I will respond:

DAY 4

READ 1 Corinthians 16:14

What I learned:

How I will respond:

DAY 5

READ 1 John 3:11-18

What I learned:

How I will respond:

To learn more about studying the Bible, look for the "Essentials of Growing in Christ" class starting soon at your campus.