

Spring Quarter 2017

The Love of God

The Nature of God's Love

March 5	The Source of All Love	<i>I John 4:7-19</i>
March 12	God's Overflowing Love	<i>Ephesians 2:1-10</i>
March 19	Manifesting God's Love	<i>John 15:1-17</i>
March 26	God's Merciful Love	<i>Joel 2:12-13, 18-19, 28-32</i>

The Work of God's Love

April 2	The Lord Is My Shepherd	<i>Psalms 23:1-6</i>
April 9	God's Saving Love in Christ	<i>John 3:1-16</i>
April 16	God's Love Triumphant (Easter)	<i>John 20:1-10; I Peter 1:3-5, 8-9</i>
April 23	God's Reconciling Love	<i>Romans 5:6-11; 8:31-39</i>
April 30	The Good Shepherd's Love	<i>John 10:1-15</i>

The Extent of God's Love

May 7	God's Disciplinary Love	<i>Jonah 1:7-17</i>
May 14	God's Protective Love	<i>Jonah 2:1-10</i>
May 21	God's Love for the Lost	<i>Jonah 3:1-10</i>
May 28	God's All-Embracing Love	<i>Jonah 4:1-11</i>

This quarter looks at some much-needed reminders of God's deep love for people. The first unit is about the nature of that love, the second unit is about the work of that love, and the third unit is about the extent of it. Lesson 1 is about the source of all love, as described in I John 4, where we learn that God is love and that we should love one another with the godly affection we see in Him. Lesson 2 describes God's overflowing love, a love so great that in His mercy all people can be saved through the simple act of faith.

Lesson 3 reminds us that we manifest God's love best by abiding in Him and bearing fruit. In lesson 4, we encounter the Old Testament prophet Joel describing how desperately Israel needed to repent of sinful living and experience God's merciful love and how God would provide it in a wonderful way for them in the future.

The beginning of the second unit takes us to Psalm 23 (lesson 5), where we see that God's work includes being our Shepherd. His constant presence and attentiveness in our lives means we are led and protected all the way through life. Lesson 6 then looks back to Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus and reminds us that God's love is so great that He sent His only begotten Son to die for us. That love culminated in His resurrection, the triumphant event we celebrate on Easter Sunday (lesson 7).

Lesson 8 then reminds us that we are reconciled to God through the work of Jesus and are guaranteed that nothing will ever separate us from Him. He remains with us as our Good Shepherd, knowing us intimately, guiding us safely, and protecting us from enemy dangers (lesson 9).

The third unit helps us see that God's love reaches far beyond what we might expect. His love refused to allow Jonah to run from His will and leave the Ninevites without warning of their danger (lesson 10). When Jonah fled, God protected him anyway, as we see in lesson 11, where we study his prayer from inside the fish. In lesson 12, Jonah is seen as receiving a second chance. God insisted that He loved even pagan unbelievers and wanted them to be warned of judgment.

In lesson 13, we see the puzzling reaction of Jonah to the repentance of the Ninevites. God reminded him that his attitude was wrong; He still loved those people.