



believe in Gordon.

Part 4 Discussion Guide

Face the Issue:

This week Jeremy's bottom line was that loving others is the life application of salvation. We are called to love others because we are told and believe that God Himself is love. Even though we know that God loves us, when we hear blanket statements about how God is love or how love wins out, we sometimes feel suspicious. Shouldn't those statements be balanced with His wrath and judgment? Shouldn't we say "God loves us but . . ." After all, if God is love, doesn't that mean He loves everything and everyone? And can that really be true in a world where not everyone meets our expectations?

When have you experienced God's love?

How do you react when you hear blanket statements about God's love? Do they bring joy or make you suspicious? Or are statements about God's love so familiar that you fail to even notice them?

What does "God is love" mean? How does that play out practically?

Are there times that we do need to qualify God's love and say something like, "God is love, but . . ."? When?

Into the Word:

The religious leaders of the Old Testament turned 10 commandments into 613 laws. We think "*How could they turn God's law into something it's not? How dare they add anything to his perfect law!*" But we are just as guilty when we add requirements to following Jesus when he summed up the law very simply: "*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.*" This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: "*Love your neighbor as yourself.*" All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments" (Matt. 22:37–40).

Imagine a new believer coming to you and asking what his life should look like now that he's a Christian. How would you respond? What kinds of requirements of his new Christian life would you explain? Do these requirements come from Scripture or somewhere else?

What does a life of freedom look like? Do you tend to see the Christian life as full of rules and requirements or full of freedom? Why?

Read Galatians 5:13–26.

In verse 14, Paul quotes Jesus from Matthew 22: love your neighbor as yourself. What is the result of not loving your neighbor as yourself?

Verses 19–21 list a number of sins. Do these acts come from a place of love? Why or why not?

The list in verses 22–23 stands in contrast to the list above. How does the fruit of the Spirit compare to the description of love in 1 Corinthians 13:4–8?

Use this table to make a comparison: The first couple are done for you

Galatians 5: 22-23	1 Corinthians 13: 4-8
Joy	Love rejoices with the truth (v. 6)
Peace	Love does not dishonor others, is not self seeking, is not easily angered, and keeps no record of wrongs (v. 5)
Forbearance	
Kindness	
Goodness	
Faithfulness	
Gentleness	
Self-Control	

How does living by the Spirit—the life we are called to live in Galatians 5—bring us true freedom and perpetuate freedom for others?

Apply The Word

Who is your neighbor? How can you better show love to those you regularly come in contact with outside of your family: coworkers, a restaurant or coffee shop employee, classmates, a mailman, parents at your child’s school, someone in your neighborhood? Choose one or two things you will do this week to show love to someone in your life.