

REFLECTING GOD'S CHARACTER



**Term 3 Community Group
Studies**



Week 1: Loving

Start Here: As a group, come up with a definition of love. See if it changes (or not!) as you work through this session.

Quote: "New Testament Christianity is essentially a response to the revelation of the Creator as a God of love. God is a tripersonal Being who so loves ungodly humans that the Father has given the Son, the Son has given his life, and Father and Son together now give the Spirit to save sinners from unimaginable misery and lead them into unimaginable glory. Believing in and being overwhelmed by this amazing reality of divine love generates and sustains the love to God and neighbour that Christ's two great commandments require." *J.I. Packer, Concise Theology.*

Watch and Discuss: www.vimeo.com/266360866

1 John 4:7-8 "Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love."

Getting Personal: Think about someone in your life who is hard to love. Consider and pray about a small step you might take toward loving that person, whether it's in your attitude, speech, or actions. How can you begin to live out a picture of God's love this week?



Week 2: Just

Start Here: Read the quotes below and discuss as a group.

Quotes: "Our cultural work and devotion to justice depend on our immersion in the body of Christ. It's not worship or justice; it's worship for justice. ... In strange, often unintended ways, the pursuit of justice can have its own secularising effect. What begins as a gospel-motivated concern for justice can turn into a naturalised fixation on justice in which God never appears."

James K. A. Smith

"The most violent expression of God's wrath and justice is seen in the Cross. If ever a person had room to complain for injustice, it was Jesus." *RC Sproul, The Holiness of God*

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Deuteronomy 10:17–19, "For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes. ¹⁸ He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing. ¹⁹ And you are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt."

Getting Personal: Is there someone that you might be able to advocate for this week? How can you stand up for them in a practical way that demonstrates how Christ has advocated for you before God?



Week 3: Merciful

Start here: Why do we often want justice when others fail, but mercy when we fail? What does this reveal about our understanding of God's mercy?

Quote: "To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable, because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you." *C. S. Lewis, Mere Christianity*

Watch and Discuss: www.vimeo.com/266372228

Lamentations 3:22-23 "Because of the Lord's great love, we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. ²³ They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness."

Getting Personal: Rise early to see a sunrise this week or stop what you're doing to see the sun set. As you watch the day begin or end, remember God's renewed faithfulness to you and pray for someone toward whom you find it difficult to extend mercy.



Week 4: Truthful

Start here: What makes it difficult for us to trust God's truth when it conflicts with our own desires or the values of the world around us?

Quotes: "God cannot give us a happiness and peace apart from Himself, because it is not there. There is no such thing." C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

"He is the true God because in his being and character, he perfectly conforms to his own idea of what the true God should be." Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*

Watch and Discuss: www.vimeo.com/266400366

John 8:31-32 "To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. ³² Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

Getting Personal: Where are you tempted to choose your own personal truth? Consider how the Bible rubs up against what you want to believe is true. Ask the Lord to help you submit yourself to his truth—for our good and his glory.



Week 5: Good

Start here: Do you naturally think of obedience to God as restricting your joy or increasing your joy? Why?

Quotes: "God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him." *John Piper*

"The goodness of God is infinitely more wonderful than we will ever be able to comprehend." *A. W. Tozer*

Watch and Discuss: www.vimeo.com/266364674

Exodus 33:18-19, "Then Moses said, "Now show me your glory." ¹⁹ And the Lord said, "I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the Lord, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."

Getting Personal: Is there a place where you have grown weary in doing good? Ask the Lord for opportunities to exhibit God's goodness in tangible ways toward those around you this week.



Week 6: Gracious

Start here: Why is it sometimes easier to believe we need to earn God's approval than to receive His grace?

Quotes: "The gospel is not that we do good things and God rewards us. The gospel is that God has done the good thing in Jesus and invites us into it." *John Mark Comer*

The greatest sorrow and burden you can lay on the Father, the greatest unkindness you can do to Him, is not to believe that He loves you." *John Owen, Communion with God*

Watch and Discuss: www.vimeo.com/266375546

Titus 2:11–14, "For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. ¹² It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this present age, ¹³ while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good."

Getting Personal: Is there a sin pattern that you've resigned yourself to? Remember the hope you have in Christ. The same grace that God extended to you at salvation is available to you in your ongoing battles with sin. Ask God for strength to fight against sin and for zeal to do good works.



Reflecting God's Character

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Trinity Church Golden Grove