

Getting to Know God Again

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Week 3 – Our God is Love

Getting to Know God Again

Message Notes and Key Scriptures:

1 John 4:8

Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

Acts 1:6-7

"...Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" 7 He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or the dates the Father has set by His own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

So You Think God Sent this? (A Facebook Post)

Jesus bluntly said that He, "did not come to condemn the world, but to save it."
(John 3:17)

Jesus was struck to the core with compassion over people far from God, seeing them as sheep without a shepherd. (Matt 9:36-37)

Jesus said that He came to "seek and save" that which is lost. (Luke 19:10)

Jesus cried from the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing..." (Luke 23:34)

Jesus said, "If you have seen me, you have seen God the Father." (John 14:9)

Do the math: If you want to know God's true disposition toward a broken humanity, look at Jesus.

God did not send this coronavirus pandemic. But He WILL enter into the pain of it with us as our Comforter, Healer, Deliverer, Father and Friend. And He empowers us also, filled with His Spirit, to enter into the pain of others as wounded healers ourselves...

To whoever reads this, I hope you know how much God loves you. I pray that you know God in the way Jesus revealed Him, and not according to man-made traditions and misinterpretations...

The Gospel is, after all, GOOD NEWS! Such is His way of grace...

Isaiah 61:2

"...to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God."

Jesus left that last part out in Luke 4:18-19. Why?

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

⁴ Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. ⁸ Love never fails...

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS AND PERSONAL REFLECTION:

Personal Life:

1. Thinking back to how you were raised, whether Christian or not, how much thought did you give to things like “the end of the world?” In general, were you raised to think of God as a God of judgment or a God of grace and mercy, or both? Explain...

Ponderings:

2. Thus far in our series, we have seen that God is **unchangeable, sovereign** and **love**.

What is God teaching you about Himself through this series so far? What is He teaching you through the COVID-19 crisis?

Why is it so comforting, practical and rewarding to press into God's character in times of crisis or uncertainty? Discuss...

3. Why do you think so many people are prone to label an event like this as a “sign of the end times?” How can a healthy, confident expectation of Christ's soon return empower and motivate us to allow our lives to give greater testimony of His love?
4. Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 together as a group. Discuss each quality of love and try to offer one specific example from Scripture or your daily life in which God displays this specific expression of love...

Promptings:

5. Is there someone in your life right now – a family member, neighbor, friend, classmate, colleague, etc. – who you perceive is deeply struggling to deal in a healthy way with the fears of this pandemic? In what specific way(s) will you step out in faith this week to manifest the love of God to that person?