



How does God love us?

God's patient, persistent, surprising love – Luke 15

We are (are we not?) creatures who respond to our provision. When we are healthy, well-provided for, relationally connected with friends, we *feel* like God has shown us the favor of His love. Conversely, when we don't feel well, are short financially, and are isolated, we *feel* that God's love has been directed elsewhere. With this 3rd question, helpful in launching a conversation about the Gospel, this week's teaching put the magnifying glass on the evidences of God's love for us. Most notably, Jesus' parable of the prodigal son and the patient, loving father brings into focus the true heart of God towards us. Let's explore how **God so loves the world.**

Let's get STARTED – kick these 3 questions around in your group:

- #1 When have you felt most loved by God?
- #2 When have you struggled to feel (or be assured of) God's love?
- #3 For others in-and-around your life, do you sense they feel loved by God or "not so much"?

Let's EXPLORE in the WORD

Scripture often records those who experience God's love in a variety of settings or circumstances. As you reflect on the following passages, jot down answers this question from each Scripture:

WHO has experienced God's love, and HOW have they experienced God's love?

<p>Deuteronomy 4:36-38 (cf. 10:14-16)</p>		
<p>Psalms 36:5-9</p>		
<p>Jeremiah 32:17-19</p>		
<p>Hosea 11:1-3</p>		
<p>John 3:14-17 (cf. Romans 5:6-8)</p>		
<p>1 John 4:7-12</p>		

As you summarize your discoveries here, HOW would you DESCRIBE God's love to someone?

...and how do you understand HOW God DELIVERS His love into people's lives?

Let's Prioritize APPLICATION For those of us who have been in God's family for some time, we may have a boatload of experiences in which God's love has been offered and received over and over and over again. Yet for those apart from the family of God, many may be seriously wondering if God loves them at all? As you finish this study, talk about those people around you – those outside the family of God – whom you know need to experience and realize the love God has for them.

QUESTION: What you can do to be a conduit of God's love in their lives? Identify some specific "love" steps.