

Romans 8:15 NLT - 15 So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, "Abba, Father."

Paul tells us in Romans 8:15 that we have the same relationship to our heavenly father that Jesus had. His is our Abba. How do we know that God loves us? Well according to the children's song it is because the Bible tells us so. But what the Bible actually reveals is the person of Jesus as someone who loves.

Are you aware of any barriers that make it difficult to accept Abba's unconditional love for you? Consider what might be getting in your way of experiencing God's love more fully, and what can be done to overcome that.

WRAP-UP

Jesus offers us a rich and abundant life. It begins by receiving the unconditional love God has for you. This love is seen in Jesus' life as He washed the disciples' feet, protected the woman being stoned, healed the sick, and hung on the cross. When we accept His sacrifice for us, and His love, we are compelled to follow as His disciple, sharing His love with the whole world. We are ready to experience the love of our Abba Father because we are His beloved child.

MEMORY VERSE.

May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God.

- Ephesians 3:19 NLT

PRAYER (20 MIN) Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life.

Challenge – Ask God to open your eyes this week to someone who needs to experience the love of God. Then ask Him to enable you to share His love with them.

“Jesus Loves Me”

More & Better- #1

INTRODUCTION

Living abundantly and fully alive in Jesus means a life that is much more and far better than anything the world can offer. At New Life we believe the fully alive experience includes being loved by Jesus, shaped by Jesus, and doing what Jesus did. This is a natural progression as we grow as Christ's disciples. But it begins with knowing the love of Jesus. Not merely as knowledge of a fact, but as experiencing the truth of that love, deeply and personally.

Ice Breaker

How many songs can you name that are about Jesus' love for you?

Key Passage

A thief is only there to steal and kill and destroy. I came so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of.
– John 10:10 Msg

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Jesus Sees You

Mark 1:16-20 NLT - 16 One day as Jesus was walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew throwing a net into the water, for they fished for a living. 17 Jesus called out to them, "Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!" 18 And they left their nets at once and followed him. 19 A little farther up the shore Jesus saw Zebedee's sons, James and John, in a boat repairing their nets. 20 He called them at once, and they also followed him, leaving their father, Zebedee, in the boat with the hired men

We have all been told that Jesus loves us. But why should we believe that? One of the ways Jesus demonstrates His love is found in how He calls his disciples.

What activities were Simon (Peter) Andrew, James and John doing when they were called to follow Jesus? Do you see any indication that Jesus called them because of their unique abilities?

If Jesus only called those who are exceptional or unique, we might wonder if He sees us. But Jesus saw these men in the mundane, everyday tasks of life and He called them into something more.

What was your life like when you heard Jesus calling you to follow Him? Were you struggling to survive, at the pinnacle of your career, just getting started, or maybe still in school?

Isaiah 43:4 NKJV - 4 Since you were precious in My sight, You have been honored, And I have loved you; Therefore I will give men for you, And people for your life.

As a spouse or a parent, you may have experienced this. You see the ones you love in their everyday lives, and they are precious to you. Not because of what they are doing, or what they have to offer, but simply because you love them. Jesus sees us in our everyday lives; fishing, doing dishes, writing reports, selling widgets, whatever we are doing. And we are precious to Him, simply because He loves us.

2. Disciple - Your Identity

Jesus extended an invitation to be a part of God's radical and beautiful restoration of this world. And He did that by saying "Follow me." Those who followed became His disciples.

If we use "disciple" as a verb, we may think we "practice discipleship" on Sundays but the rest of the week we lead our ordinary lives. However, if we are disciples (if the noun "disciple" is our identity) then every day of our life is lived as a pupil, adhering to the teachings of Jesus. And there will be evidence in our lives.

John 13:35 NLT - 35 Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples."

What did Jesus say the world would see as proof that we are his disciples? Why do you think it is not by our knowledge of the bible, our morally correct choices, or the money we give to good causes that the world recognizes us as Jesus' disciples?

Before we can be effective disciples, we need to know that Jesus sees us and loves us. On that basis, we are compelled to follow and join Him in spreading this love to the world.

John 8:31 NLT - 31 Jesus said to the people who believed in him, "You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful to my teachings.

John 15:8 NLT - 8 When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father.

Jesus taught us to love one another, and when we remain faithful to His teachings, we will share His love with others. What fruit do you think we produce that brings glory to the Father?

3. The Father Loves You

We all need to know that our Heavenly Father loves us. But how can we have confidence in that fact? God is recognized in the Old Testament as Elohim. It is an appropriate but formal Hebrew term. Not many of us referred to our father as "Father". Most of us called him dad or daddy. Jesus had the most intimate relationship there could be between a father and son. In His most stressful moments, in the garden of Gethsemane, He cried out "Abba". It is a term of such familiarity that we can't even translate it. This is an Aramaic term of endearment from son to father.

Mark 14:35-36 NLT - 35 He went on a little farther and fell to the ground. He prayed that, if it were possible, the awful hour awaiting him might pass him by. 36 "Abba, Father," he cried out, "everything is possible for you. Please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine."

Unfortunately, not all of us have a positive relationship with our earthly fathers. But Jesus never questioned the love of God the Father. In His darkest hour Jesus reached out for Abba. Has God comforted and loved you through a particularly difficult circumstance? If so, share that experience and how it impacted your relationship with God. Do you feel confident in turning to God in the stressful and challenging moments in life?