

Growth Group Discussion Guide

Week of January 21

True Love Ways

Our Scripture: John 2: 1-11

Ice Breaker

What was the funniest, (or strangest or most creative) thing about your wedding?

Quick Review

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

Digging Deeper

1. Images of marriage, bride and bridegroom are commonly used in the Bible. Read these scriptures. How is our relationship with God imaged in these verses?

- Hosea 2:16-20
- Matthew 25:1-12
- Mark 2:19
- Revelation 19:7; 21:2; 22:17

2. Greg said, we can't fall in love with abstractions so God became a person. Read 1 John 1:1. How does John underscore the point of his Gospel in this letter he wrote that appears later in the New Testament?

3. John is a poetic storyteller. He begins today's story with the words, "On the third day?" Where have we heard that before? How does this phrase link John to the biggest themes of scripture?

- Hosea 6:2
- Jonah 1:17 and Matthew 12:40
- Luke 13:32
- Luke 24:21
- Matthew 16:21

Media Mix - Jesus the bridegroom—the Bible’s love story

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oDQF1iVV9xs>

Bonus 1 :) True Love Ways <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QjFRHhSvwc>

Bonus 2 :) The day the music died

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r9M6u7-9yNE>

February made me shiver
With every paper I'd deliver
Bad news on the doorstep
I couldn't take one more step
I can't remember if I cried
When I read about his widowed bride
Something touched me deep inside
The day the music died

Bringing It Home

1. Greg suggested that sometimes in faith we have lost the experience of loving God. Individually rank these factors in their order of influence to our not loving God. Then share your thoughts with the group.

- _____ We were taught that religion was about good behavior.
- _____ We were taught that religion is obedience to obligations like worship.
- _____ We think that faith is about believing the right doctrine.
- _____ We are not really following Jesus. We've compartmentalized faith to occasional Sunday mornings and do what we gotta do the rest of the time.
- _____ Some other factor _____

2. Brainstorm at least three actions that can help us love God more.

Prayer Time

Close our eyes for a moment and picture God as the most loving parent you can imagine. Open your eyes and share with the group who you pictured. Pray together: **Thank you God for these people who have loved us so much. May we grow to love you like this and to show this love to others in the way we live. Amen.**

Housekeeping

1. Welcome everyone to this first week of Fall Growth Groups. Do introductions if needed. Remind them that this is week 1 of a 3 week trial period at which point anyone can opt out guilt free OR covenant for the remainder of this 8 week series.
2. Did you hear the sermon this week? It is available online at our website only as a podcast (not a video). We think this will make it easier to access. People could listen on their commute, for example. Let us know what you think.
3. Who is bringing the refreshments next time?
4. If there are new people in your group, how did this experience go? What might we do to make our group more comfortable and welcoming?
5. Who do you know that you could invite to your group?. Please invite people if there are less than 14 members in your group. Especially remember to invite those who are not part of Atonement.