SUMMARY | Love. It's an essential attribute of God and the central theme of the gospel. From Genesis to Revelation, God's unconditional love is the impetus for creation, redemption, and restoration. God's love is a foundational principle and practice for those who would follow him. Unfortunately, we can allow other things to distract us from the main thing. In fact, many people don't think of love at all when they envision followers of Christ. What's love got to do with it? Love has everything to do with it because love is who God is.

This Week’s Discussion Questions

1. Read 1 John 4:7–21. According to verses 7–8 Where does love come from? How does God show us He loves us? What was the cost? (vv. 9–10) How does God's love for us show us the way we should love others?

2. Read Exodus 34:1–7. In verses 1–4, God commands Moses to replace the Ten Commandments that he had slammed down to the ground and broke in his anger over the Israelites' idolatry. What does God giving Moses and the Israelites another chance after they sinned against Him reveal about God's love? In verses 5–7, what description does God use to reveal Himself to Moses? What does God's self-revelation as “the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love” tell us about how God deals with us?

3. Read Matthew 22:34–40. What does Jesus say are the most important commandments? Why do you think Jesus adds the second commandment in his response (see 1 John 4:20)? In what ways is loving God and loving others easy for you? In what ways do you need to ask God's help? Take a moment now and pray for God to help you love Him and someone near you more deeply.

4. Read Deuteronomy 10:12-19. According to verse 15, the Lord God set his affection on Israel, why did he do that? In Deuteronomy 7:7–8, God makes it clear it was not based on any attribute within them, but on God's compassion on them though they were the least in number of all peoples. Why are the groups that are described in Deuteronomy 10:18 in need of God's love and support? How are we to show love to those who are poor, vulnerable, and in need? How can you choose to love your struggling neighbor today?
Thank you for loving me unconditionally, God. Thank you for showing your love for me through Jesus dying and being resurrected for me. Lord, help me to remember that love, and to love you more than anything else. Help me to love all those you put in my path like you love them: unconditionally and generously. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them.

1 John 4:16 (NIV)

Challenge
It all comes down to love. God shows us in His word that His core identity is love. Jesus taught us the greatest commandment is to love God with all we have and love our neighbors as ourselves. As simple as it sounds, it is difficult to live out, isn't it? We encourage you to continue this journey by reading the 10-day devotional plan, The Greatest Love. It's yours for free! You can get in online by going to: www.odb.org/deeper/the-greatest-love

Prayer
Thank you for loving me unconditionally, God. Thank you for showing your love for me through Jesus dying and being resurrected for me. Lord, help me to remember that love, and to love you more than anything else. Help me to love all those you put in my path like you love them: unconditionally and generously. In Jesus’ name, Amen.