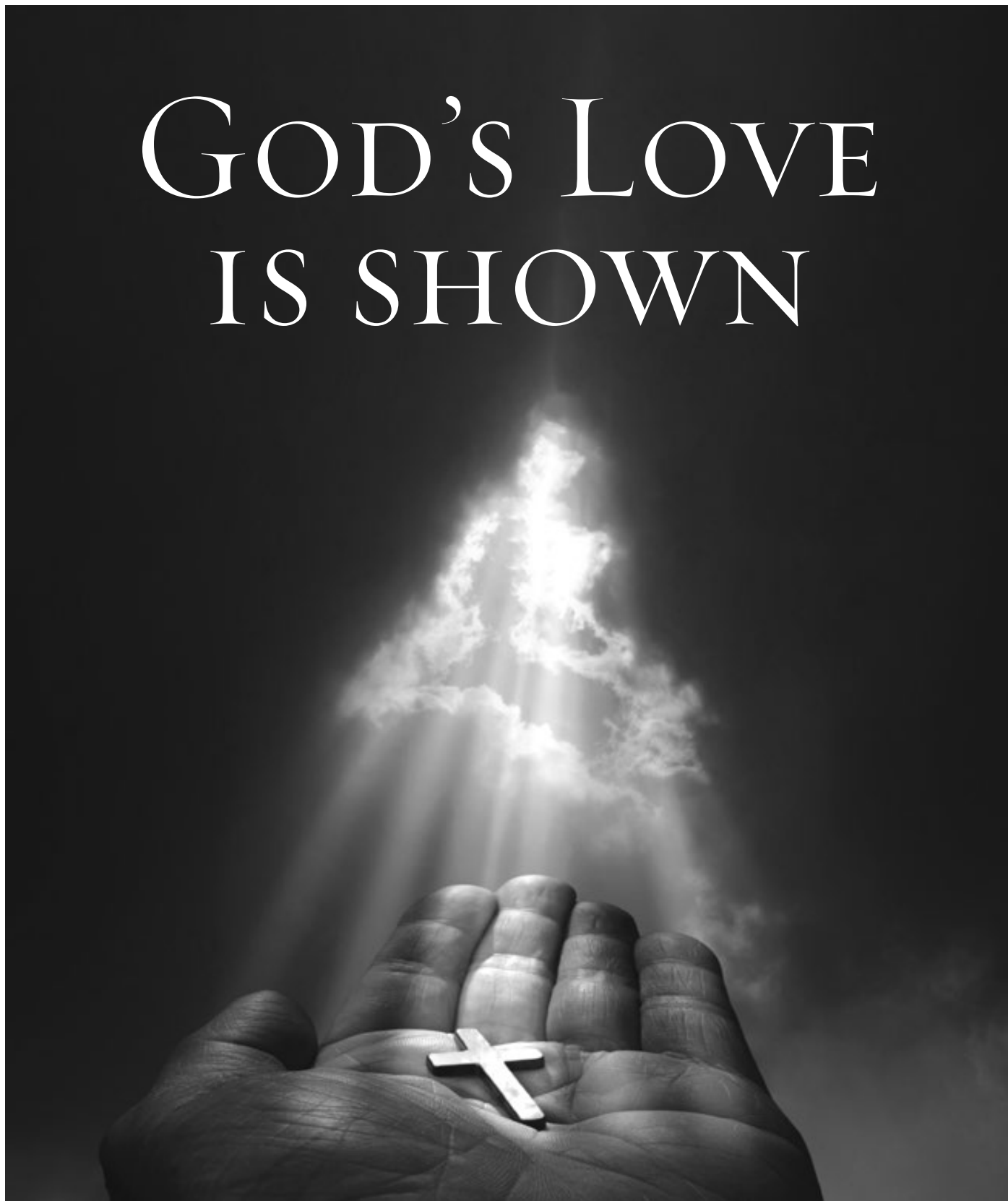


GOD'S LOVE IS SHOWN



A 6-SESSION **BIBLE STUDY**
FOR LENT

leader's guide

Leader's Guide for Session 1

BEFORE CLASS: Read through this session yourself. Examine the Bible readings listed and become acquainted with them.

READ: Have a member of the group read the Introduction on page 4 aloud.

READ: Have someone read the Opening Prayer or read the prayer in unison.

SESSION 1



Redemptive Love

*This is what the LORD says—he who created you,
O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name; you are mine.” ISAIAH 43:1*

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we gather as your beloved people, grateful that you have made us your own. Speak to us through Jesus, whose suffering and death we celebrate in this Lenten season. Forgive our sinfulness, affirm our faith, and enable us to live as your own people in the power of your Holy Spirit. Amen.

Redeemed

1. **READ ISAIAH 43:1.** We are God's own because he created us and redeemed us.
2. Redemption is necessary because we are slaves to sin and cannot free ourselves from that sin on our own.
3. What motivated God's Son to go to the cross to redeem us was his great love for us.

Law and Gospel

1. **READ ROMANS 3:19-25A.** Law phrases: "whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law"; "by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight"; "through the law comes knowledge of sin"; "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Gospel phrases: "the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law"; "the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe"; "justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."
 2. The source of our redemption is Jesus Christ.
 3. We receive it through the cross.

REDEEMED

1. **Read Isaiah 43:1.** What are the two reasons we are God's own?
2. Why is redemption so necessary?
3. What motivated God's Son to go to the cross to redeem us?

LAW AND GOSPEL

The following passages speak of Law (our guilt and inability to free ourselves from sin) and of Gospel (God's gift of redemptive love through Jesus and his cross).

1. **Read Romans 3:19-25a.** Identify Law and Gospel phrases in these verses.
2. What is the source of redemption?
3. How do we receive it?
4. Why is it so necessary?

THE CRIMINAL AT THE CROSS

1. **Read Luke 23:39-43.** What is the criminal's confession?
2. What is the criminal's prayer?

6

4. It is necessary because we cannot free ourselves from the power of sin without the sacrifice of the sinless Son of God.

The Criminal on the Cross

1. **READ LUKE 23:39-43.** The criminal confesses that he is

receiving his just reward of crucifixion for the sin he has committed.

2. The criminal's prayer is that Jesus would remember him when Jesus comes into his kingdom. It is a plea for forgiveness.

3. The criminal offers Jesus a confession and an acknowledgment of his sin.
4. Jesus does not expect anything from him. Forgiveness is a free gift.
5. Answers will vary.
6. Answers will vary.
7. He responds with full and free forgiveness.

The Example of Zacchaeus

1. **READ LUKE 19:1-10.** Jesus went to the house of a “sinner,” to “seek and to save the lost.”
2. Zacchaeus’ life was changed because of Jesus’ redemptive love toward him, not because of anything Zacchaeus earned on his own. Zacchaeus’ changed heart is in response to Christ’s love.
3. Yes, we, like Zacchaeus, are sinners who do not deserve any grace from God, yet we receive it through the gift of forgiveness which comes from Christ.

3. What does he offer to Jesus?
4. What does Jesus expect from him?
5. Now put yourself in this story: What is your confession?
6. What is your prayer?
7. How does Jesus respond to your request?

THE EXAMPLE OF ZACCHAEUS

1. **Read Luke 19:1-10.** Why did Jesus go to the house of a “sinner”? (v. 10).
2. Zacchaeus’ life was changed. Is that *why* Jesus gave him redemptive love or *because* of it?
3. Does this have any relation to the gift you have received from Jesus?

TREASURES

1. **Read Matthew 13:44-46.** What is the hidden, priceless treasure Jesus is speaking about?

7

Treasures

1. The treasure Jesus is talking about is the kingdom of heaven.

2. The things of this earth, our own personal focus on ourselves, and the devil's deceptions hide the value of the kingdom of heaven from us.
3. Earthly concerns tend to cause more anxiety for us since they are tied to sin. Kingdom concerns are resolved in the fact that in heaven all trouble will be removed by our God.
4. Answers will vary.
5. **READ MATTHEW 13:22.** Answers will vary, but may include the realization that the redemptive love of Christ casts out attachments we have to wealth here on earth.

TAKEAWAY: Discuss what important points participants will remember from this session.

READ: Read the Bible verses responsively.

2. What hides the value of the kingdom from us?
3. What causes more anxiety, earthly or kingdom concerns?
4. Consider your "treasures": What is your most valuable treasure? How long will it be your house, car, whatever?
5. **Read Matthew 13:22.** Does the "deceitfulness of wealth" affect your life? Or have the roots of sin been thoroughly uprooted from your heart? Redemptive love does make a difference, doesn't it?

TAKEAWAY

What do you expect to take home from this session?

PSALM 25:6-7 (READ RESPONSIVELY)

L *Remember, O Lord, your great mercy and love,*

C **For they are from of old.**

L *Remember not the sins of my youth,*

C **And my rebellious ways;**

L *According to your love remember me,*

C **For you are good, O Lord.**

READ: Have someone read the Closing Prayer or read the prayer in unison.

SING: Sing (or speak) the hymn in unison.

CLOSING PRAYER

Precious Savior, we praise you for your loving grace shown to us by your cross. As your love has paid the price to make us yours, continue to change our sinful hearts and lives by the indwelling of your Holy Spirit. Enable us to rejoice in your redemptive love and to reflect it to all those around us. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

(Tune: Hyfrydol 87 87 D)

Love divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heav'n to earth come down!
Fix in us thy humble dwelling,
All thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, thou art all compassion,
Pure unbounded love thou art;
Visit us with thy salvation,
Enter ev'ry trembling heart.

Breathe, O breathe thy loving Spirit
Into every troubled breast;
Let us all in thee inherit;
Let us find thy promised rest.
Take away the love of sinning;
Alpha and Omega be;
End of faith, as its beginning,
Set our hearts at liberty.

Come, Almighty, to deliver;
Let us all thy life receive;
Suddenly return, and never,
Never more thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
Serve thee as thy hosts above,
Pray and praise thee without ceasing,
Glory in thy perfect love.

Finish then thy new creation,
Pure and sinless let us be;
Let us see thy great salvation
Perfectly restored in thee;
Changed from glory into glory,
Till in heav'n we take our place,
Till we cast our crowns before thee,
Lost in wonder, love, and praise!

Leader's Guide for Session 2

BEFORE CLASS: Read through this session yourself. Examine the Bible readings listed and become acquainted with them.

READ: Have someone read the Opening Prayer or read the prayer in unison.

SESSION 2



Compassionate Love

*When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd. He had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. **MARK 6:34***

OPENING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, we too are often like sheep who have gone astray, each to our own way. Renew us with your compassionate love; enable us to listen to your voice, to trust you and follow you in joyful faithfulness. Amen.