

180: TRANSFORMING

LIFE GROUP LEADER GUIDE

Sermon Date: Sunday, November 2, 2025

Sermon Passage: 1 John 4:7-12

Pastor Justin Lett

FACILITATING COMMUNITY

At New Hope Hermitage, we strive for people to come to Jesus, become more like Jesus, and be who Jesus intended them to be. While biblical worship and teaching are of the utmost importance, we know that biblical community is where life transformation occurs mostly. A true community isn't just a place to talk about faith—it's a place to live it out together as we seek for Hermitage to look more like Heaven.

As a leader, your role is to model care and consistency and facilitate discussion. You don't need to be perfect; you just need to be present and willing to go first to build something deeper.

What patterns should I incorporate into my life to help foster a sense of community?

- **Pray.** Pray for the Spirit to move during your group time and in the lives of the people in your group.
- **Prepare.** Listen to the sermon and allow the Spirit to work in and through you. Afterward, take the time to answer the five questions on your own.
- **Presence.** Reach out with a quick text or call to check on someone or their family. Acknowledge important events such as birthdays, anniversaries, new jobs, or answered prayers. Even a group text or card can make a significant impact.
- **Pursue.** Most importantly, walk with Jesus. Nothing can replace your personal relationship with Him.

One idea for this week...

- This week, find one tangible way to show God's love to someone.

Colossians 2:6-7 (NIV), "So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness."

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This Week's Main Takeaway

If you ask ten people on the street what love is, you'll likely get ten different answers. Some will say, "Love is acceptance." Others, "Love is a feeling." Still others, "Love is romance, tolerance, or kindness." But John takes us deeper—past the sentimental and into the supernatural. He says: "God is love."

Love is not something God does; it's something God is. And because God is love, everyone born of God must display that same kind of love. This isn't optional; it's essential. John doesn't just describe love; he defines it through God's actions in Christ. And, in this passage, we see what divine love really does—it sends, sacrifices, and stays.

This Week's Memory Verse

1 John 4:8 (ESV), "Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love."

Five Inductive Questions

1. GOD :: What does this passage imply about *God*?

Love is not something God does; it's something God is (Beloved | Be = "I am") (v.8).

One commentator says it in this way: "Love has its very origin and source in God, and it is evidence that we have been born of God and are a part of 'the family of lovers.'" In verse seven, we see a positive affirmation of this, and in verse eight, a negative warning. Verse nine tells us that God displayed his love for humanity by sending His only Son into this world, so that we may have life in Him. Furthermore, the truth that "God is love" complements other beautiful statements made about God's nature in the Bible. Love does not define God, but God does define love.

How do we see God's love in Him changing our hearts?

2. MAN :: What does this passage imply about *man*?

Love always gives (v.10).

The proof of this love is not in how we feel, but how we sacrifice. To know God is to have fellowship with God, and this shapes and changes every fiber of our being. One commentator puts it this way: "It means to walk in the light, enjoy fellowship with one another, confess and receive forgiveness of sins, walk as He walked, and abide in the Word." People see the invisible God when they see visible love among His people.

What does love cost you? What does sacrifice reveal? This week, how can the people in your life see the Jesus that changed you?

3. PROMISE :: Is there a *promise* to claim in this passage?

God's love is not only actionable, but it also sustains (v.12).

The NIV Zondervan Study Bible Notes says this: "The love of God we experience as a result of his living in us completes its work in us when we show love to one another." Verses 10 and 12 convey profound theological truths and also promise. Verse 10 says God sent His son to be the "propitiation for our sins." This means that "a sacrifice that bears God's wrath and turns it to favor." Verse 12 reminds us that God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us. In part, John is telling us His love will reach its intended goal.

4. COMMAND :: Is there a *command* to obey in this passage?

Twice in this passage, John says, "Love one another," a theme throughout his messages. Verse 11 reminds us that true love is never static; it loves towards need. If our love is never actionable, it is not love; it is only sentiment. This passage emphasizes that love is a duty, consistent with the character of God. Remember, God is not just a talking God. He is an acting God, a doing God, and a serving God. May the same be said of us—our love is not just talk but also walk.

How do actions show love?

5. REPENT :: Reflecting on this portion of God's Word, what can I *repent* of this week?

Do you know God? Do your actions say that you love God and pursue Him?

Love is sacrificial. This week, consider the times that love has been more selfish than sacrificial.

Sources:

Exalting Jesus in 1 John (Holman Publishers)

CSB Study Bible Notes (B&H Publishing)

NIV Zondervan Study Bible Notes (Harper Collins)

ESV Study Bible Notes (Crossway)

Believers Bible Commentary (Thomas Nelson)