

Sermon Study Guide (October 23, 2022)

This Week: When Love Came to Town

Series: The Jesus-Shaped Gospel

Passage: 1 John 4:7-21

BIG IDEA: The good news is that we have been invited into a loving relationship that rescues the world.



APPETIZER: Let's chat!

Group Discussion: The Gospel simply means "Good News". What is the good news in your words (**Go around the room and ask people their thoughts, and don't forget to also ask, why is their definition of the gospel "good news" to us**). Often times the gospel has focused primarily on our salvation: make a decision to believe in Jesus so that you can go to heaven. **What is the problem with only focusing on the salvation part of the gospel?**



MAIN COURSE: Getting into the text.

1. Have someone read 1 John 4:7-21
2. Context: For the sermon series, the gospel is the good news that we have been invited into the Jesus way of love, of freedom, and of living that rescues

God's world. Starting with "a way of love", it's suggested that the good news is found in the activities that come with embracing the love of God.

3. **Question:** Bono from U2 wrote a song called, "When Love Came to Town". In the lyrics, he says, "When love comes to town, I'm gonna catch that train." What is the significance of "catching the train" of love?
4. **Group Discussion:** In the passage we see three things that we learn about God's love:
 - a. **We have been invited into a loving relationship**
 - 1 John 4:15: If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God.
 - Question: What does a loving relationship entail? What does it look like?
 - Question: What is the significance of 1 John's description of a loving relationship found in 4:15?
 - b. **We know that God loves us because of what he did for us.**
 - 1 John 4:10: This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.
 - Question:** How does experiencing sacrificial love affect us?
 - c. **We need to be loved!**

-1 John 4:16 says that “We know and rely on the love God has for us.”

-Question: How is our need for love fulfilled by our relationship with God? What does this look like? Why do we look for love in “all the wrong places?”

5. Group discussion: The good news is found in PARTICIPATING in a way of love that looks like Jesus.

-1 John 4:9: This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world... that we might LIVE through him.

-1 John 4:21: And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.

-1 John 4:17: In this world we are like Jesus

***Why does participating in the way of love not feel like good news sometimes? How do we remind ourselves that the actual work of love (being in relationships of love with others, demonstrating that love through self-sacrifice, and providing love to those who are seeking it) is not just our responsibility but our pleasure, our good news?**



DESSERT: How do we respond?

1 John 4:7: Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God.

Question for reflection and prayer: What is the Holy Spirit saying to you about how the good news is operating in your life? What does love require of you...

-This week?

-In particular relationships?

-In your personal spiritual walk?

Take some time as a group to quietly reflect on these questions, asking the Holy Spirit to speak to you. Have people write down what comes to mind for them.

CLOSING PRAYER:

Take time to pray for one another before closing.