

# EMPOWERING LOVE HE FIRST LOVED US

Memory Verse: "We love because He first loved us." - 1 John 4:19

## Overview

In this 4-part Bible Study we're going to explore God's Empowering Love. How does God model love to us? Where do we find the strength to love others? How can we overcome sin in our lives?

Today, we'll look at the source of love.

## Key Verse

"We love  
because He  
first loved  
us."

- 1 John 4:19



**CBN EUROPE**

"Making Jesus known to everyone in the UK, Europe, and Beyond."

**1**

If you haven't already, spend a few minutes praying, inviting the Holy Spirit into your conversations.

**2**

Read the Key Verse. Do you think the priority of love in this verse is important, and why? In what ways do you love God/others in your own strength and what impact does this have on ourselves and our relationships? How have you seen yourself rely on God's empowering love and what was the difference?

**3**

Read 1 John 4:7-11; John 13:4-5, 12-15, 34-35. In what ways does God love us? What's the difference between loving others based on His example vs loving others because it's simply the right thing to do? How does understanding the source of our love make Matt 22:37-40 more possible?

**4**

Read Gen 1:27-28; 3:21; Exo 16:11-12; Isa 54:10; Rom 5:6-8. What pattern do we see in these examples? What does it show us about God's character? Is there anything in your life where you need to mirror this? Remember, we love because He first loved us.

In our relationships with others, we don't rely on receiving their love to give it. We're called to give, regardless of the return. In our relationship with God, our love for Him comes from, and is empowered by, His love for us. It's in realising how loved we are by Him that we love Him, and others, more deeply.

## APPLICATION



**1**

### Thinking

What is the main thing you have learnt or been reminded of in today's study?

**2**

### Doing

How are you going to apply what you've learnt?

**3**

### Committing

Commit to keep each other accountable in your application. Be ready to share the next time you meet.

**4**

### Praying

Close this study in prayer, thanking God and asking Him for help, strength, and wisdom.

# EMPOWERING LOVE LESS ROOM FOR SIN

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## Overview

In the last study we looked at the source for our love and saw how God consistently acts first. What do you remember from that study? Has anything changed for you?

Today, we'll look at the issue of sin. Why do we still feel trapped by it and how does God's love help us overcome it?

## Key Verse

"...God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit..."

- Romans 5:5



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**2**

Read Rom 6:1-14. We know we've been set free from the power of sin; we're no longer slaves to sin. Why is it that we still choose to sin? Have you ever experienced the frustration of knowing you're free from sin, but you feel stuck in its grip? If you're willing, be honest with the group, do you find Christianity freeing or difficult? Why?

**3**

Read Gal 5:1. According to Paul, what is it that actually burdens us as Christians (what is this 'yoke of slavery')? Read 5:16-18, 25. Imagine this is a tug of war, and the winning side is the one you gave the most time to. How might you feel living in the middle? Would it feel more like abundant life if we lived by the Spirit? Why? How do we do this?

**4**

Read the Key Verse. If God's love empowers us to love Him and others, and His love is given through the Spirit, then how might this help us overcome sin? Read John 14:15. Do we obey God to prove we love Him, or do we obey God as a result of our love for Him? What's the difference? Has your belief around overcoming sin changed/been affirmed?

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# EMPOWERING LOVE JESUS OUR EXAMPLE

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## Overview

The last study showed how God's empowering love pushes away our desire to sin. Has anything changed for you? What stood out to you?

Today, we explore the example of Jesus and see what we can learn from His and His Father's relationship to each other.

## Key Verse

"And a voice from heaven said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased!"

- Matthew 3:17



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**2**

Read the Key Verse. Had Jesus begun His public ministry before this was said? Why was this important for Jesus AND those around Jesus? In Christ, the same is said of us; how might this impact our lives and those around us? Read Matt 4:1-11. Is there any significance in that this came immediately after God's affirmation? What did Satan try and undermine? Does this show us what's important and why?

By following the life of Jesus through the Gospels, we clearly see how the Father loves the Son. We witness their interactions and the things Jesus does to ensure He's remaining in the Father's will. The Father loves the Son, and the Son loves the Father. So much so that there's a clear display of their 'oneness'.

**3**

Read John 5:16-20, 30; 6:38 & 12:49-50; 17:24-26. How do these verses display their oneness and love? Do you think Jesus needed to stop and pray before every word was spoken and decisions made? Why/why not? In what ways did Jesus know/learn the Father's will?

**4**

Throughout Jesus' ministry, who do we see He got rejected by? What do you think kept Him following God's will despite all of this, even to His death on a cross? If you were rejected today like Jesus was back then, do you think you would question God's love for you? Why/why not? What one step could you take to remember that God loves you?

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# EMPOWERING LOVE

## A LOVE THAT GROWS

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### Overview

Our last study was all about Jesus our example. What stood out to you? Have you put into practice the things you learnt?

In our last study on Empowering Love, we're going to focus on the way God's love causes our growth. We see much of this in the letter to the Ephesian Church.

### Key Verse

"may have power,  
together with all the  
Lord's holy people,  
to grasp how wide  
and long and high  
and deep is the love  
of Christ,"

- Ephesians 3:18



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2

Read Ephesians 3:14-19 (try using different translations). Paul prays that we are rooted and established in love, but that we need power to grasp this love, but that our knowing of it would surpass knowledge. What do you think he means in all this? Why might we need power to grasp or comprehend God's love? What kind of knowing surpasses knowledge?

Imagine being filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. We wouldn't ever love running on empty. Our lives would be a channel of His love; the stronger we are, the more we can contain and the more we can give out. We would love because He first loved us. Let's pray for the strength to contain His love!

3

It's easy to read Paul's letters as though he's written to us individually when in fact, he's writing to the Church body. How much more empowering is Eph 3:19 if it's the entire Church body? Why? What encouragement do we receive from v20, and what might be the power at work within us?

4

Read Eph 4:15-16. How does Christ as the 'head' which means 'source' not 'authority' here, relate to the body? For a body to grow, it needs healthy nutrients. What healthy nutrient does the Church body need, and where does it come from? How might a healthy body like this stand out in the world? What impact could it have?

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