

Study Guide – “Love Songs 4”, from 2-25-2018

Key Scriptures:

- 1 John 4:20-21 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.
- Matthew 22:36-40 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."
- Luke 10:36-37 So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."
- 2 Corinthians 5:18-21 Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.
- Luke 15:29-30 'Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.'
- 2 Corinthians 10:12 For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.

Start Talking. (*Find a conversation starter for your group.*)

- Pastor Bobby frequently quotes John 3:16. Today, he added verses from 1 John, Chapters 3 and 4. Discuss how we can love others only when we understand God's love for us. How can we overcome our resistance to love others?
- This week, would you be willing to love your neighbor as yourself? (Matthew 22:39) Describe how this happens this week.

Start Thinking. (*Ask a thoughtful question.*)

- Why do you think God puts loving others second only to loving Him with all your heart, soul and mind?
- Read the Good Samaritan parable in Luke 10:25-37. Have you ever been the one who helped a person that no one else would help? If yes, share. If not, re-read verses 36 and 37. What fears or qualms would keep you from “doing the same”? (verse 37)

Start Sharing. (*Choose questions that create openness.*)

- Pastor Bobby explained that the Good Samaritan gave immediate help, long term help, and gave of his money. He said that we can do this same thing by finding someone who needs help, getting them to a church that cares, and tithing to support the needs that they have. Do you see yourself as a Good Samaritan when you tithe? You should.
- Read 2 Corinthians 5:18-20. Pastor Bobby said, “Religion will point out people’s sin. God’s grace will always point to Him.” If 60% of unchurched people list feeling condemned as the reason they don’t attend church, how is the church failing to point them to the One who desires and gives reconciliation to even the worst sinners? Do you know a hurting face when you see it? Are you willing to give someone hope and make them feel accepted? How will you do it?
- Pastor Bobby suggested that the Prodigal Son should be labeled the Prodigal sons. Have you ever been angry that someone was blessed after making so many mistakes, while you can’t seem to catch a break? What about Luke 15:11-30 can give you a reality check and change a jealous attitude? Does the practice of comparing generally produce positive or negative results in the Kingdom of God?

Start Praying. (*Be bold, and pray with power.*)

Lord, your Word is clear that we are to love others, avoid condemnation, and stop making comparisons. Thank you for showing us these truths. Give us the grace to not only overcome our own baggage, but to also be examples to others of what you’d like to see in Your children. We are here with you now. We commit our lives to you. We want to please you. Help us be more like you. We ask You in the Name of Jesus.

Start Doing. (*Commit to a step and live it out this week.*)

Ask the Lord every morning to do these three things:

1. open your eyes to see someone in need,
2. control your heart and your tongue to avoid condemning others, and
3. stop building up your own flesh by comparing your goodness to someone else's sins.

Keep a journal of the specific events that happened this week as God answers this prayer.