



## Sermon Discussion Guide for Cumberland Fellowship Church Sermon Series: I Choose: Week 1 (September 24, 2023)

*This guide is a supplement to the weekly sermon. We encourage families and groups to use it. When we hear God's Word, we need to do more than listen. The bible says, "Be doers of the word, not hearers only" (James 1:22). Step 1: GATHER with your family or group. Step 2: REVIEW and DISCUSS the key points and scriptures from the sermon. Step 3: PRAY for the prayer requests shared by your family or group.*

### DISCUSSION STARTER

In your own words define love. Is love a noun (a thing) or is it a verb (an action)? When was a time that you felt loved?

### DIGGING DEEPER 1

**Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-8.** Using a good Bible Study tool like *Bible Hub* ([biblehub.com](http://biblehub.com)) or *Blue Letter Bible* ([blueletterbible.org](http://blueletterbible.org)), study through this scripture before responding to the following questions. What does the word agape mean to you? Why do you think God defined this word for us in Scripture? What is your understanding of patience or suffers long, depending on the translation? Do you find it difficult to suffer long? Have you ever experienced someone loving you by suffering long with you? If so, who? Can you share the story? Which of the 15 characteristics of love is most difficult for you and why? How can you work to change that? Share an example where you saw our church love someone well. How will your group love each other better going forward? What are practical steps you can take?

### DIGGING DEEPER 2

**Read John 4:1-43.** Using a good Bible Study tool like *Bible Hub* ([biblehub.com](http://biblehub.com)) or *Blue Letter Bible* ([blueletterbible.org](http://blueletterbible.org)), study through this scripture. What groups of people do you feel uncomfortable being around? Why? How might a person feel put off by another's background, nationality, or race? How can prejudice affect a Christian's witness? How have you responded to Jesus' invitation to receive His living water? How is Jesus' gift of salvation different from what the world offers? How is the world's need for salvation and eternal life like thirst? In what other ways besides thirst might you describe eternal life? How can we worship God in spirit and in truth? How can you encourage others to quench their spiritual thirst this week? What are some prejudices you will ask God to help you overcome? Never underestimate the power of loving and accepting someone who feels unaccepted, and unlovable. This woman was so used to being rejected because of her past and present reputation, but Jesus chose love. What must we do to daily choose love? Jesus had to go to Samaria. Is there any one or any place that God might be calling you to go because there are people there who are hurting, lost, and need to know that God loves them and there is hope in Jesus Christ?

### DIGGING DEEPER 3

**Read 1 John 4:9-10, 18.** Using a good Bible Study tool like *Bible Hub* ([biblehub.com](http://biblehub.com)) or *Blue Letter Bible* ([blueletterbible.org](http://blueletterbible.org)), study through this scripture. How does God's love for us transform the way we see other people? When we fail to love others, what does it reveal about our own relationship with God? What is perfect love? How does perfect love cast out all fear? The Samaritan woman no longer feared the hate and rejection of others. What helped her conquer that? Imagine how loving one person could change an entire family, and entire workplace, and entire team, and entire school, an entire community. Will you CHOOSE LOVE? How will you demonstrate the love of Christ and be the catalyst that causes life change in someone?

### DOING THE WORD

Every day we must make the choice to lay aside the acts of the flesh and step into the character of Christ. Even though Jesus conquered our sin eternally we still battle our sinful flesh daily. We believe since we have given our lives to Christ, choosing the character of Christ over the acts of the flesh would come natural to us, but it doesn't. This is why we require a power greater than ourselves to equip us to choose Jesus daily. Left to our own power we will fall back to choosing acts of the flesh. What are you going to do this week and going forward to choose love daily in your life to represent Jesus well? What specific steps will you take this week to demonstrate your love for another? Close, by praying for the Holy Spirit to empower you to choose "love" every day.