

**Discussion Guide: Series *Love God. Love People. Make Disciples of Jesus Christ.*
Love Fellow Believers (April 30, 2023)**

PRIMARY PASSAGE:

1 John 4:7-21: *Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.*

By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

MESSAGE HIGHLIGHTS:

- Love Cares
- Love Bears
- Love Shares

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Love of each other is to be a defining characteristic of the Church, the Body of Christ. In general, how do you think the Church does with that? More specifically, how do you think Immanuel Church is doing? Even more specifically, how do you think you are doing?

GIVE AN EXAMPLE FOR ONE OR MORE OF THE ABOVE QUESTIONS

2. Joe claimed that the last three years have demonstrated a lot of divisiveness among believers. How have you experienced that being true?

3. What is one potentially divisive topic that you think is worth the risk of speaking out?

4. If you relocated and were looking for a new church home, what would be the most important deciding factor? As you prioritize your "must haves" in choosing a church, where does loving people fall on your list of most important?

Dear God, make us more loving toward the people who are Your children. Help us to know, in practical ways, how to Care, Bear and Share with those in the family of God. Convict us when we act in unloving ways. Give us Your heart for Your children, and free us from the burden of always needing to be right. Amen.