

Deep Practice Discipleship Guide

Sermon Title: The Loop of Abiding Love

Text: 1 John 2:7–11

1. Opening Reflection: How Did It Go This Week?

Take 10–15 minutes here. This is one of the most important parts of your group time.

- Each person shares briefly about how their week went in discipleship.
- Encourage honesty — this is not about perfection but **deep practice**. Growth happens when we try, even when we fail.
- Remind the group that they don't need to share a success story every time. Sometimes the most helpful moments come when we admit struggles and let others encourage us.
- If someone followed through on last week's practice, celebrate it together. If not, help them think through what made it difficult and how they might approach it differently.

Example prompts:

- What did you commit to last week?
 - How did it go? What did you notice about yourself as you tried to live it out?
 - Did you sense God at work in any way?
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2. Sermon Outline: The Loop of Abiding Love

Hook: Love by the Wrong Rules

- Culture uses the word *love* but often plays a different game:
 - Love as a feeling (attraction, affection, chemistry).
 - Love as mutual exchange (I give if you give).
 - Love as tolerance without holiness.
 - John calls us to a different love — the kind revealed in Jesus.
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1. The Command That Is Old and New (vv. 7–8)

- John begins warmly: *Beloved*. Not scolding, but inviting.
 - **Old command:** From the very beginning, love has been God’s design (Lev. 19:18; Deut. 6:5).
 - **New command:** In Christ, love takes on a new dimension. Jesus said, “Love one another as I have loved you” (John 13:34).
 - Old in principle but **new in practice** — love now defined by the cross.
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2. The Proof of Abiding: Love for Others (vv. 9–10)

- Claiming fellowship while hating a brother/sister = still in darkness.
 - Love doesn’t earn fellowship; it proves abiding in Christ.
 - **True love looks like:**
 - **Steadfast** — constant, faithful, initiating.
 - **Holy-desiring** — wants the good and holiness of others.
 - **Sacrificial** — costly, giving, Christlike.
 - Loving others is **fruit, not a ticket**. It shows the presence of Christ’s life in us.
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3. The Loop of Abiding Love (v. 11)

- Warning: Hate blinds, causes stumbling. Not just relational but deeply spiritual.
 - Hate = hostility, exclusion, rejection (cf. Luke 6:22).
 - The **Loop of Love:**
 - Abide in Christ → Receive His love → Love others → Deepen fellowship with Christ.
 - When struggling to love: don’t just “try harder” — **abide deeper**.
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Heart (Feeling the Weight of It)

- Everyone has someone hard to love — a family member, co-worker, or even someone in the church.
 - The answer is not willpower, but abiding in Jesus.
 - The love we lack, He has in abundance.
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Hands (Living It Out)

1. **Reflection Challenge:** Identify one person who is difficult to love. Instead of asking, “How can I try harder?” ask, “How can I abide deeper in Christ so His love flows through me?”
 2. **Action Challenge:** Take one small, concrete step of steadfast, holy, or sacrificial love toward them this week (kind word, service, inclusion).
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Conclusion

- Love is not optional — it is the natural result of abiding in Christ’s light.
 - The pressure is not to *manufacture* love but to stay in Christ, who fills us with His steadfast, holy, sacrificial love.
 - When we live in this loop, His love transforms us and flows outward to the world.
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3. Discussion Questions

Remembering (What does it say?)

- What kind of love is John talking about in this passage?
- How does John describe the difference between light and darkness?

Understanding (What does it mean?)

- Why is love both “old” and “new”?
- How does John show that love is the proof of abiding?

Applying (How does it connect to us?)

- Think about someone who is hard for you to love. Why is it difficult?

- What would it look like for you to abide more deeply in Christ to love that person?

Evaluating (What difference does it make?)

- What are some “counterfeit loves” our culture celebrates?
 - How does hate — even in subtle forms like exclusion — damage fellowship with God and others?
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4. Scripture Storying Exercise

Story Passage: John 13:1–17 (Jesus washes the disciples’ feet)

- Read aloud → retell from memory → fill in details together.
- Discuss: What does this show about Christlike love?

Discussion prompts:

- How does Jesus’ action demonstrate steadfast, holy, sacrificial love?
 - What parallels do you see between this passage and 1 John 2:7–11?
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5. Closing Exercise: Deep Practice Commitment

- Take 2–3 minutes of quiet reflection.
- Write down one concrete action for this week. It may connect with the sermon (loving someone difficult, abiding deeper), or it may be another area of discipleship (prayer, generosity, serving, forgiveness, witness, etc.).
- Share your commitment aloud with the group.

Encourage everyone to bring back what they wrote and share next week.

6. Prayer

Pray over each person’s commitments and that Christ’s love will fill and flow through them this week.