

# Love is a Choice

## Small Group Guide: Love is a Choice

### Opening Prayer & Icebreaker

**Icebreaker Question:** What's one thing your spouse (or someone close to you) does that makes you feel loved? For those not married, what's something you appreciate about a close friend or family member?

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### Key Sermon Summary

Pastor Jeremy continued the series on marriage and relationships, emphasizing that love is not just a feeling but a choice we make daily. He challenged the common misconception that marriage is "50-50," arguing instead that it requires 100-100 commitment from both partners. The sermon focused on three practical ways to choose love: giving up the rope (ending the tug-of-war), watering your spouse's heart, and praying together.

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### Discussion Questions

#### 1. Love as a Choice vs. Feelings

##### Read: 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

- How does our culture's view of love (as portrayed in movies, songs, social media) differ from what Scripture teaches?
- Share a time when you had to choose to love someone even when you didn't "feel" like it. What was the outcome?
- Why do you think the "butterfly feelings" fade in relationships? Is this a bad thing or just a natural progression?

#### 2. The Tug-of-War Illustration

##### Read: Ephesians 5:21

- What does it look like practically to "give up the rope" in your relationships?
- How does the idea of marriage being 100-100 instead of 50-50 change your perspective?
- What are some common "tug-of-war" battles that happen in marriages or close relationships? How can we avoid these?

#### 3. Watering Your Spouse's Heart

### Read: Romans 12:10

- What are some practical ways you can "water" the heart of your spouse or close friends this week?
- How do the Five Love Languages relate to using the "right fertilizer" in relationships?
- When was the last time you did something intentional (without being asked) to show love to someone? How did it impact your relationship?

## 4. The Power of Prayer Together

### Read: James 5:16

- Why do you think it's so difficult for couples (especially men) to pray together regularly?
- How does the statistic that less than 1% of couples who pray together regularly end up in divorce impact you?
- For those married: How often do you pray with your spouse? What barriers prevent you from doing this more regularly?
- For those not married: How can you apply the principle of prayer to your other close relationships?

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### Key Takeaways

1. **Love is a choice, not just a feeling.** We must choose daily to love our spouse and others, even when emotions aren't there.
2. **Stop the tug-of-war.** Marriage requires both partners giving 100%, not competing for who's right or who's doing more.
3. **Intentionally invest in your relationships.** Like plants need water, relationships need consistent care and attention.
4. **Prayer changes everything.** Praying together creates intimacy and dramatically reduces the chance of divorce.
5. **Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.** When we both submit to Christ, we naturally serve each other better.

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### Practical Applications

### This Week's Challenge (Choose 1-2):

#### For Married Individuals:

- Pray with your spouse at least 3 times this week (even if just for 30 seconds)
- Send your spouse 3 unexpected text messages expressing love or appreciation
- Do one act of service for your spouse without being asked
- Ask your spouse: "How can I love you better this week?"

### **For Everyone:**

- [ ] Identify one relationship where you're playing "tug-of-war" and intentionally "drop the rope"
- [ ] Pray daily for someone you're in conflict with, asking God to search YOUR heart
- [ ] Send an encouraging message to 3 people this week
- [ ] Memorize 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 and evaluate yourself against it daily

### **Accountability Questions:**

1. What specific action will you take this week based on this sermon?
  2. Who will you share this commitment with for accountability?
  3. How will you measure whether you've followed through?
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### Closing Reflection

**Read: Romans 5:8** *"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."*

Spend 2-3 minutes in silent reflection:

- How has God chosen to love you when you were unlovable?
  - How can Christ's example of sacrificial love transform your relationships?
  - What is one area where you need to choose love over feelings this week?
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### Prayer Focus

#### **Pray together as a group:**

- For marriages represented in the group to grow stronger
  - For those struggling in relationships to find healing and hope
  - For the courage to "drop the rope" and give 100%
  - For the discipline to pray consistently with spouses
  - For single individuals to prepare their hearts for future relationships
  - For God to search each person's heart and reveal areas for growth
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### Before Next Week

- Share with the group how your "This Week's Challenge" went
- Bring one story of how you chose love over feelings this week
- Be prepared to discuss any insights God revealed when you asked Him to "search your heart"

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**Group Leader Note:** Be sensitive to those who may be in difficult marriages or struggling relationships. Create a safe space for honest conversation while pointing people back to biblical truth and the hope found in Christ.