



CITIZENS CHURCH

The Cross-Shaped Love of God | Sunday, January 18, 2026

(5-10 min) Optional Ice Breaker: Fill in the blanks: I love going to _____ to eat
_____ with _____.

LEADERS: Please share these announcements at the start of group time.

Announcements

WINTER SOCIAL:

Sunday, Jan 25 | 6-7:30pm | Citizens Foyer: Connect with other Citizens members with similar interests in your city! Our community social events are great ways to meet and enjoy Citizens folks outside our HG. Bring your favorite dessert, and Citizens will provide the hot chocolate and cider! Register now:

<https://citizenschurch.com/Registration/hg-winter-social-2026>

HOME GROUP ASSESSMENTS:

Ongoing in Jan/Feb: HG Assessments help us reflect on God's activity in our Home Group so we can celebrate what God's done, learn from our experience, and work to *build community, pursue sanctification, and live on mission* together.

These guided conversations are fruitful, insightful, and - believe it or not! - fun.

Leader: Find the Assessment PDFs for you and your group attached to this week's email newsletter.

DATE CHANGE: HG NEW LEADER INTEREST MEETING

Our New Leader Interest Meeting has moved to Sunday, Feb 1 | 11am-12:15pm | Conf. Room B: Citizens is growing, and new Home Groups will be a vital part of God's ongoing work at Citizens! So...we need new HG leaders! Come learn about HG leadership as you discern if God is calling you to lead a group, now or in the future. Sign up at <https://citizenschurch.com/Event/580> or email group@citizenschurch.com.



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Read God's Word Aloud

John 3:16-18 (CSB)

16 For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. **17** For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

Romans 5:8 (ESV)

8 God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Discuss God's Word and God's World

Important: *The goal is to use this Guide to spark sanctifying conversation and opportunities for intercessory prayer, not to “get through” every question like a checklist. Feel free to linger on the questions that best facilitate that for your group.*

- After hearing Sunday's sermon, what aspect of this well-known verse stands out to you anew?
- How does the CSB translation –“For God loved the world *in this way*...”– shape the way you think about and understand this verse?
- How, specifically, has God displayed his love for us? What other Scriptures show us how?
- In your day-to-day, where do you see proof that life and this current world are perishing?
- Eternal life, as defined by Jesus, is more than simply living forever: it's a fully satisfied life in deep relationship with God (see John 10:10 and 17:3). And it's available now. In what ways have you experienced that kind of eternal life as a disciple of Jesus?



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- When has someone you know exemplified God's cross shaped love? How did they do it?
- Have you ever sacrificially loved someone, even though it was brutally difficult? Have you ever taken the easy way out, and failed to love someone sacrificially? Describe your experience, and confess to one another as needed.
- What can happen when we love one another "in this way" – the way God loved us?

Sanctificational Prayer Guidance

Praise God for stopping at nothing to save people and salvage the world. Praise Jesus for his ultimate sacrifice. Praise the Holy Spirit for reminding us of God's love and leading us to love in the same way.

God, thank you now for defeating sin and death on the cross so we can know you and experience eternal life. Will you forgive us for our sinning against you and one another? Will you forgive us for taking easy ways out, instead of loving others the way you love us? Thank you, Father, for your mercy, grace, and perfect cross-shaped love.

Pray for the person next to you. Ask God to help them fully receive God's cross-shaped love and for an opportunity and courage this week to share it with another.

Family Memory Verse of the Month for January

You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.

Leviticus 19:2b (ESV)