



THRIVE CHURCH

GROWTH GROUP STUDY GUIDE | SERIES: REDISCOVERING CHRISTMAS
TITLE: FINDING LOVE IN OUR DIFFERENCES
SCRIPTURE: 1 JOHN 4:7-11

One Thing Follow-up

These 3 truths were shared in the sermon this week.

- 1) **It's ok to have joy.**
- 2) **Make joy a choice.**
- 3) **Joy will give you strength for the journey**

Q. Which one of these do you struggle with and why?

Opening

As Christians, Scripture is our guide. This means all Scripture, not just the warm and fuzzy parts. Scripture can be hard, convicting. Everything we need to know about God and everything God has to say to Christians can be found on the pages of Scripture.

Series Review

We are finishing our Advent series this week. Advent serves as a time to prepare our hearts and help us place our focus on a far greater story than our own—the story of God's redeeming love for our world. We will be stepping in and out of various Christmas scenes from Scripture. We will attempt to rediscover Christmas and the Advent themes of hope, peace, joy, and love.

Review the Message

God writing himself into the narrative of history is more substantial than our sentimental Christmas traditions.

Read 1 John 4:7-9

The love of God is best understood through Christmas.

John uses the word "Agape" for love. Agape is a self-sacrificing commitment to someone else's at your personal cost.

Q. Do you feel like you can show agape love to everyone?

Q. How can we see the love of God in Christmas?

The perfect expression of God's love is the child in the manger.

Q. What does it mean that God sent his Son and not an angel, a prophet, or a politician?

Christmas brings God's purposes to life.

Q. Share some ways that your life is different with Jesus.

Q. Share some ways to show a self-sacrificing love to others.

While the gift of Christmas is sufficient for the whole world, it is a gift applied by faith.

Q. Explain what this statement means.

Read 1 John 4:10

Christmas is the birth of God's redemptive plan.

Q. How does your understanding of Christmas change when you realize Christmas leads to the cross.?

Q. How would you explain "probitiation" to someone?

God's love isn't dependent upon the circumstances of our lives. The cross is the historical anchor that proves God's love.

Q. How has Christmas changed your perspective on your circumstances?

Read 1 John 4:11-12

The Christmas effect is to love one another.


If God...We must

Q. How do you react to this directive from John?

We like the idea of Jesus as savior, but don't realize he is Lord as well.

Q. Share how this may be or have been true in your life.

The church is designed to be a "fellowship of differences."



Q. How can Christmas helps us find our love in our differences?

**Living It Out
Application**

Christmas is God's love extended to and through us.

Q. What is God saying to you through this lesson?

Q. What will you do about it this coming week?

Q. How can we help you?

Prayer:

Q. Are there any specific things we need to pray about or needs to focus on?