

5. Assurance of the Father's Love

Opening question

Can you describe any moments or seasons in your life when you have particularly experienced the love of God?

(It might be a good idea to send this round your group ahead of time.)

Each one of us will experience the love of God to greater and lesser extents throughout our lives. This can be down to lots of factors that we don't have time to go into today. What is clear, however, is that we are meant to expect to experience the love of God in different ways and we are encouraged to ask God for this. As we do so, let's trust Him.

Discussion

Split into groups of 3 or 4. Share out the following scriptures between the groups.

In your groups discuss the following question:

- According to each of these passages, what are the various roles of the Holy Spirit in revealing to us the love of the Father?

Ask each group to feedback to the whole small group, making sure they read each of their passages out loud to the whole group.

- 2 Corinthians 1:21-22
 - Romans 5:5
 - Romans 8:14-16
 - Galatians 4:4-7
 - John 14:16-18
 - John 14:26
 - John 16:13-16
 - Ephesians 1:16-18
 - 1 Corinthians 2:9-13
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Fact-check: the Holy Spirit's role in revealing the Father's love

The Holy Spirit reveals the love of the Father to believers in a variety of ways:

- Bringing people to salvation in the first place (John 3:5, Romans 8:9, 1 Corinthians 12:3, Titus 3:5).
- Reminding us of all that Christ has achieved for us by His death and resurrection (Romans 5:6-8, John 16:14)
- Enabling us to powerfully *experience* the love the Father has for us (Rom 5:5).
- Giving us assurance that we are children of God (Rom 8:14-16, Galatians 4:4-7, John 14:16-18).
- Being the guarantee of our eternal inheritance from our Heavenly Father as co-heirs with Christ (2 Cor 1:21-22, Ephesians 1:18).
- Teaching us by His Word and leading us into all truth, keeping us from believing lies about God or his demeanour towards us (Ephesians 1, John 14:26, John 16:13, Ephesians 1:17, 1 Cor 2:9-13).
- Enabling us to receive gifts from our Heavenly Father that are freely given and not earned (Acts 2:33, Acts 2:38, Luke 11:13).

- Enabling us to use gifts of the Spirit that demonstrate the love of the Father to others (healing, deliverance, words of knowledge, etc.).
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Pray together

In groups of 4 or 5, lay hands on one another and pray for each person in turn to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Pray particularly that:

- God would pour His love into each person's heart;
- each person would experience the love of God powerfully;
- each person would be filled with the Spirit of adoption, knowing they are a child of God;
- the Holy Spirit would lead each person into all truth, giving them a deeper knowledge of God and His love.

As you pray for one another, ask the Spirit to bring to mind Biblical truths and encouragements from Scripture about God's love and what He has done for us. You can even use some of the verses we've looked at above. Share them and pray them over one another.

To reflect on during the week

Look out for ways in which God wants to reveal to you His love for you this week. Expect Him to do this in lots of different ways!

Set some time aside to look up 3 or 4 promises about God's love for you in His Word. Meditate on them and ask the Holy Spirit to make them more real to you. If your small group has a WhatsApp group, why not share one of these promises with the group?