



Summer of Love: Part 5

Small Group Questions: A Warning About Love

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Read

1 John 2:15–17; Matthew 6:24 and 33; Proverbs 14:12; and James 4:1–2

Reflect

In 1 John 2:15, we're told not to love the world or anything in the world. This may seem confusing at first, as John 3:16 states that God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son... Yet, the Bible defines the "world" in three ways: 1) the physical world, 2) the people of the world, and 3) the value system of the world. It is in this third way that we can understand the warning in 1 John 2:15 about what to love. For something of great value, there is often a counterfeit version that too easily fools us into believing it is the real thing. A lot of things can be good, but our first love must be God.

Pastor Josh Surratt highlights ways to help us know when love is real.

1. False love is fickle; God's love is faithful.
 - a. Have you ever seriously misjudged the value of something or someone? Explain.
 - b. Have you ever given your heart to something that squeezed out your love for God?
 - i. Was it something that could even be considered "good", but is simply valued out of proportion (above God)? Like family, a job, or an ideology?
2. False love is frustrating; God's love is fulfilling.
 - a. We all have weaknesses and wants. Which of the following areas are the most challenging for you?
 - i. Flesh: physical pleasures (ex. food, sleep, sex, material goods, fitness, etc.)
 - ii. Lust of the eyes: jealousy/coveting something—maybe, the life someone else is living?
 - iii. Pride of life: focused on accomplishments and achievements
 1. How have you seen pride come before a fall?
 - b. Have you ever felt disappointed and empty after getting something you've wanted? Explain.
3. False love is fading; God's love is forever.
 - a. Compare God's love to the love the world offers.
 - b. Think of what you want most right now. Why do you think it would be so satisfying? What do you think it would provide you that you don't have?
 - i. Are you willing to lay whatever you want most, down before God? Is it a struggle to do so?
 - ii. Have you ever given over what mattered most to you and received God's blessing for your faithfulness?
 - c. Consider taking an inventory of your life. How are you spending your time?
 - d. Consider the things you're investing in. Do those things reflect the legacy you want to leave?
 - e. Do you view yourself as a steward for God?
 - i. How are you using his gifts to fulfill his purposes?
 - ii. How can you be a conduit for others to experience God's real and lasting love?
 - iii. Why does God need to be first? Use examples from your own life to support why.

Respond

What is your next step? Where is God leading you? How can your small group support you?