



WEEK ONE: WE LOVE GOD PASSIONATELY – Study Guide

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Knowing what you value is an important part of living an intentional life. That's true for any person or any group of people. The Cove Church has been on a journey to define our core values. We have been prayerfully considering what God has called us to be, how He wants us to live, where He has called us to serve and more. All of these questions and more will be addressed during this message series during different stages of the journey.

Where Am I Today?

- 1) We all have values, desires, and loves that wake us up in the morning. Most of these are good things, but it's easy to make too much of them. What values and desires do you have that you tend to put before God?

Into the Bible

- 2) A religious leader once asked Jesus what the most important commandment was. Instead of saying that all of God's commandments are equal, Jesus gave a straightforward answer, and He didn't always give straightforward answers. Read Jesus' answer in **Matthew 22:35-38**. What does it mean to follow what Jesus said here? How is it even possible?

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- 3) The apostle John was one of Jesus' three closest friends. He witnessed Jesus' transfiguration firsthand. He was the one Jesus asked to look after His own mother as He was dying. John knew Jesus as a friend, a teacher, a confidante, and as God. Think about this background as you read and discuss his description of Jesus in **1 John 1:1-4**.
- 4) Loving a God we cannot see is difficult. Loving a God we know nothing about is impossible. Most of the time we love God based on what He does, which is good and right, but He also wants us to love Him for *who* He is. Look at the following passages where God is described. How does seeing these attributes of God, or a description of the person of Jesus (who is God in the flesh), help us to see who He is and to love Him more?
- a. **Exodus 34:5-7**
 - b. **Exodus 34:14**
 - c. **Psalm 27:4**
 - d. **Isaiah 6:3**
 - e. **Romans 1:18**
 - f. **Hebrews 1:3**

How Does This Apply?

- 5) In **1 John 1:4** John says that he writes and talks about Jesus to make his "joy complete." He doesn't say it is because it is in the job description of an apostle, something Jesus told Him he had to do, a chore to check off the list or any kind of obligation. It is because he wants to. You could probably say that he couldn't help himself. How is sharing the gospel as a means of joy different from how we usually view it? How is it possible to do it joyfully?

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- 6) At The Cove, the first of our Core Values is that “We love God passionately.” How will you put God first in your everyday life? How can we do that as a Life Group together and church-wide?

Current Prayer Focus

What we’re praying for together as a church:

- Neighborhood Campuses
- Building for the Statesville Campus
- 100 New Leaders at The Cove

Digging Deeper: Going Further on Your Own

- 7) As mentioned in question two, Jesus quoted Deuteronomy to answer the question of what the greatest commandment was. The religious leader who asked Jesus would not have been referring to the ten commandments; he would have been referring to the entire Old Testament. Deuteronomy isn’t a book that many Christians spend a lot of time memorizing, but Jesus knew it well. In fact, this wasn’t the only time He quoted Deuteronomy. He also quoted it when Satan tempted Him in the wilderness after He fasted for 40 days.

The verse Jesus quoted is Deuteronomy 6:5. This is in a section of scripture called the *Shema*, which means, “hear”, the first word of the section. This was a passage that Jews were expected to memorize and recite twice a day, so it’s one the leader would have recognized well. Why do you think the leader was curious about the greatest commandment? Why was Jesus’ response so brilliant?