



Week Leading up to 5.9.21: You Were Made for Love

***(Start with reviewing the previous Meetings Challenge or discuss prior to sharing this week's challenge.)**

Let's Begin: Think about how the challenge went for the last session. What went well? What was difficult?

Opening Prayer:

Begin with a brief moment of silence shaking off any and all distractions or difficulties of the day and remembering that God is always with us.

Read: Jn 15:9-17 and 2nd reading: 1 Jn 4:7-10

After the Reading Conclude with this prayer:

Heavenly Father, right now You are loving us into existence. You have made us from love and for love. Help us to more profoundly realize the love you have for us but also that the very love you pour unto us is meant to be poured out through us to others. Amen.

Reflection or Discussion Question:

In the second reading we heard, "Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God; everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love."

1. This might be one of the most profound sentences in all of the Scriptures. Read this again, pause, and share what comes to your mind. What is God saying to you today in this profound scripture? How is God calling you to apply this scripture concretely in your life?

YouTube Video: Love is a Virtue with Bobby Angel (6:40) <https://youtu.be/MP9TFX6X05w>

Reflection or Discussion Questions: {Leaders: For groups that meet weekly, please focus on questions 2-7. no need to ask questions 7-9 since they were asked the previous week. Bi-Weekly groups: we have incorporated a couple of questions to allow participants to reflect on how ESG has impacted their lives. Please mention this prior to the discussion. It would be best to focus on questions 2-4 & 7-10 in your discussion time.}

2. When is a time you felt and knew deeply that you were loved?
3. When is a time that you struggled to love another, found it difficult, but did it anyway? What did you learn from that experience?
4. Bobby says, "For true love to be love it must cost and even hurt." Why do you think it works this way?
5. Bobby shares that love is a willingness to be interrupted, to stretch, and to sacrifice. Share a time when you were called to sacrifice or step outside of your comfort to love another.
6. Bobby indicates that love can have a ripple effect. Do you think/feel that love always has a ripple effect? Why or why not? Have you ever experienced a ripple effect of love? If so, please share...
7. Bobby expressed that God is waiting to stretch us so we can become radical examples of love that the world so desperately needs. In what ways can you be a radical example of love?
8. Was there something specific from a past ESG meeting that you discussed, learned, or were challenged by that has given you a greater insight to love God or others better?
9. Has your participation in ESG changed how you love or view others in any way?
10. How has your participation in ESG reshaped your understanding of God and Church?

Session Challenges: {Choose one, two or all}

- Pray for an increase in the virtue of love - an increase in the ability to sacrifice for another out of love for the other.
- Read or listen (audio book) to *The Four Loves* by C.S. Lewis - [https://archive.org/details/TheFourLovesCSLewisPart3ErosSexualLove/The+Four+Loves+-+CS+Lewis+-+Part+1+-+Storge+\(Affection\).mp3](https://archive.org/details/TheFourLovesCSLewisPart3ErosSexualLove/The+Four+Loves+-+CS+Lewis+-+Part+1+-+Storge+(Affection).mp3)
- Be creative, plan, and do a loving act before the next meeting (one that is going to cost you some time or energy or money).

Closing Prayer: (Leaders: We recommended offering time during the closing prayer for participants to offer personal intentions.) Heavenly Father, we thank you for this time together in fellowship. Please use our time and dedication to gatherings to bear great fruit in the lives of those around us and even our enemies. We ask all this in the great name of Jesus Christ. Amen

{Optional additional Readings} Sunday Reading 1: Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48; Sunday Reading 2: 1 Jn 4:7-10