

Love, Part 1

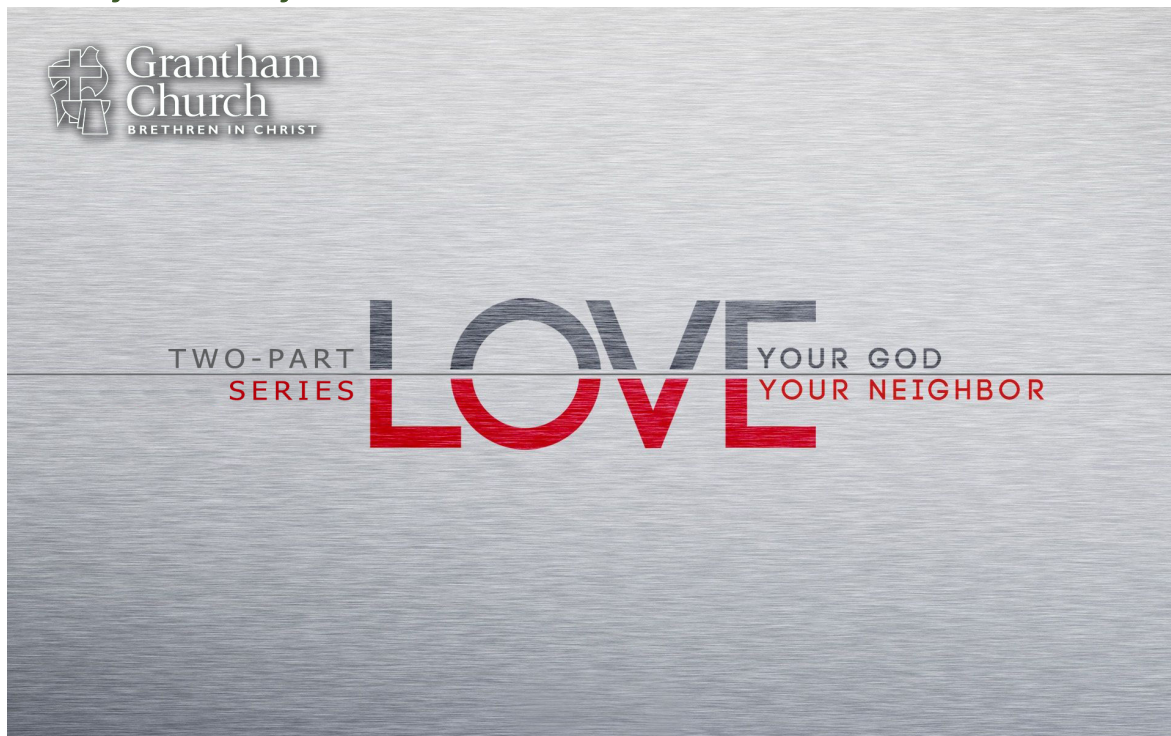
Small Group Discussion Questions

SUNDAY WORSHIP DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The global pandemic COVID-19 has forced us to adjust and adapt how we do church and stay connected to one another as a congregation. We're not closed as a church, we're just doing church differently! So, please stay connected to the body at Grantham Church. Join our congregation for worship online at 10:30 am each Sunday morning. Follow the worship liturgy and watch our [Vimeo](#) videos at granthamchurch.org/liturgy.

As usual, the sermons will be posted to the [recent sermons page](#) on our website and at the [Grantham Church Podcast](#) the following day, along with the small group discussion questions under Worship Resources. Thank you for engaging with us online!

Sunday, February 7th 2020



Sermon Title: Love Your God

Scripture Reading: Psalm 42:1-2; Matthew 22:36-40; John 1:38; 1 John 4:9-19

Sermon Focus: Jesus once told us that the greatest commandment of all is to love God and our neighbor. A *command* to love may seem ridiculous at first. But it's really all about who or what gets your heart, and where you've aimed your loves. We can't *not* love. So, the question is: What will you love as ultimate? Listen as Pastor David shares how we must be intentional in how we love God and orient our hearts toward him.

Thank you for going deeper in conversation with your small group in person, by phone, or video call! Use the following questions to guide your small group discussion:

1. Read Matthew 22:36-40 together. The expert in the Law is attempting to get Jesus to slip up by asking him a series of questions. But this Pharisee never gets the chance to ask Jesus a follow-up question to his first because Jesus stuns him and his audience by pairing the greatest commandment (Deut. 6:4-5) with the command to love one's neighbor (Lev. 19:18). This had never been done before! Why do you think this would have presented a unique challenge to a Pharisee? Also, what is it about the Pharisee's way of loving God that Jesus didn't like?
2. Pastor David began his message with how the *Star Trek* character Spock operates purely out of logic and reason. As amusing and loveable as Spock can be as a human computer, Pastor David used Spock to say that human beings are not brains on a stick, and that God created us to operate out of the heart as lovers. Therefore, if we want to grow as disciples, we must do more than fill our heads with information, we must cultivate a deep love of God and of our faith through holy habits, following Christ with the church, and loving others. How is that different than simply reading books and listening to sermons? And why do you think many of us prefer to invest most of our time acquiring information?
3. Pastor David said that it's *our loves* and desires that "pull action out" of us. How have you seen this at work in your life? Also, do you think it's accurate to say that our struggle with holiness and being more like Christ in any given area is more about our loves and desires than it is about needing more education and information? If so, how should we be seeking to overcome sin and resist evil?
4. Pastor David said, "We live in a culture that *contests* our most sacred beliefs and practices through its own loves and liturgies. Even good things can become idols. And if you let it (if you've got no Christian liturgies and formative practices of the church in place – if the love of God is not your ultimate) these pagan forces will rush in to fill the void of organized religion. How have you seen this? What ways have you seen or experienced the gravitational pull of loves/idols?"
5. Is it helpful for you to see spiritual disciplines, holy habits and routines as a way of aiming your loves and resisting the loves and idols of the world? What ways are you aiming your loves toward Christ and resisting the competing loves and liturgies? What does your religious routine look like? What is working? Also, what are other ways God might be calling you to aim your loves toward him?