

"Best of all, Christmas means a spirit of love, a time when the love of God and the love of our fellow men should prevail over all hatred and bitterness, a time when our thoughts and deeds and the spirit of our lives manifest the presence of God." – George MacDougall, 17<sup>th</sup> century Canadian missionary to indigenous people of Alberta

**Discussion Questions Set #1**

"This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins." (1 John 4:10)

1. What kinds of things help you to feel loved? By others? By God?
2. Describe an experience when you knew God's love in a significant way. What was this experience of God's love like?
3. How would you describe the differences between how the church defines "love" and how the culture around us defines "love"?
4. Why might it be significant to understand that our understanding of love begins with God's love for us in Jesus Christ?

**Discussion Questions Set #2**

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him." (John 3:16-17)

He "who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness." (Philippians 2:6-7)

"God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in [Christ]". (Colossians 1:19)

"God is love." (1 John 4:8)

1. Why is it important to understand that the pretext for the story of Christ's birth is that "God loves us"?
2. Describe how you have experienced God's love to be ocean-like.
3. The "tic-tac-toe" we discussed in service helps us to realize that, in Jesus, we see love embodied, love relational-ized, all the love of God "immersed" into a human frame. How does this impact your view of Christmas/the Incarnation?
4. Why is it helpful to us to know that in Jesus we "see" God's love for us?
5. How might such a message be presented effectively in our culture?

**Discussion Questions Set #3**

"By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." (John 13:35)

Might you, "being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge" (Ephesians 3:17-19).

1. What does it mean to you that God's love is not only extended to us, but in a significant way, it is to be extended through us to others?
2. How significant is it that the church be seen as a place where God's love is freely demonstrated? Why?
3. What are some practical ways that we can show God's love to one another as an H2H group?
4. What are some ways that we can show God's love to those outside of the church?