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# GET READY

## Compelled to Love

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As a church, we want to make sure we start the year well. As we get ready for another year, ask yourself are you ready to be compelled to love.

1 John 4:7-21

### Selfless versus Selfish

This is one the most intelligent and educated generations to have ever lived, but it is also considered the most sensitive and selfish. The generation alive today value their feeling very highly, and most of those feelings are negative.

But as people that Love God, should we think a little differently?

Are we selfish or selfless?

### God is Selfless

John 3:16

1 John 4:9

God's great selfless love is demonstrated in the most powerful way right here – at great cost to himself, Jesus rescued us. He self-sacrificed and did something purely for the benefit of others. He sent His son Jesus to die on the cross for our sins.

We will never be able to give God back what he has done for us. We can't repay God for the grace he has shown us. And he does not ask me to. But he asks me to love others, and his image of love is selfless.

GOD LOVES WHEN IT'S NOT CONVENIENT.

GOD LOVES WHEN WE ARE DIFFERENT.

GOD LOVES WHEN WE OFFEND.

GOD LOVES AT EXTREME COST.

He loved those that hated Him. So we can't excuse ourselves from love because people are complicated and difficult, or it's not convenient for us. If our sinless God can love us, sinful people, then surely sinful people can love sinful people.

Matthew 22:37-40

Love your neighbour as yourself

## **Zacchaeus the tax collector.**

Luke 19:1-10

Undoubtedly, any encounter with Jesus in the flesh would lead to this kind of generosity. Jesus was passing through, but he stopped to love this man. Zacchaeus would have felt so seen. And his encounter with Jesus changed his life.

But why was Zacchaeus up a tree?

## **The crowd**

Are we sometimes a crowd? Gathered around Jesus, not noticing those around us that need Jesus. Do we sometimes want God so badly to do something in our lives that we forget to celebrate and facilitate him doing something in the lives of those around us?

1 John 4:19-20

We love because he loves us. Do you know who the Zacchaeus are in the room? People who do not know Jesus are looking for an encounter with Him. Jesus wanted to demonstrate God's love to as many people as possible; in this case, it meant stopping what he was doing for one undeserving man.

## Fear

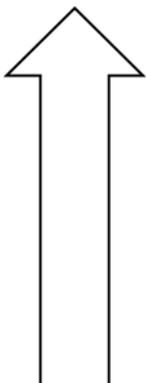
The greatest thing that stops us from loving

- + Fear of time
- + Fear of rejection
- + Fear of money
- + Fear of failure
- + Fear of missing out

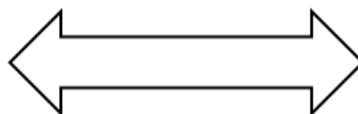
1 John 4:18

When we seek his face, we meet his love, which compels us to look outward.  
When we seek God, we reflect Jesus.

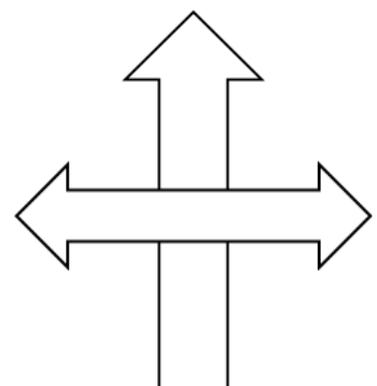
SEEK GOD



LOVER OTHERS



REFLECT JESUS



## Discussion Questions

1. What stands out to you in 1 John 4:7-21?
2. Would you consider yourself a selfish person?
3. How have you experienced the selflessness of God?
4. Do you find it easy to be loved by God?
5. Do you find it easy to love others?
6. How would you respond if you were in the crowd and saw Jesus choose Zacchaeus?
7. Are there any people you have counted out from God's love in your life? Stop and pray for them now.
8. Have you ever had an overwhelming encounter with God's love? What did it lead to in your life?
9. How will you love others this year?