

**WITNESS – Reaching out to others**  
*(Aim for 20 – 30 minutes)*

**Giving Thanks to God**

Thank God for something that helps you to know that God is love.

**Praying for one another**

When do you find it difficult to know God's love? What is keeping you from knowing more of God's love? Pray in the silence and then going round the room pray for the person to your right,

**Praying for our community**

How would Hungerford be different if everyone knew God's love and shared His love with one another? Pray for our community to be more Christ-like.

# FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

1

## **1 John 4:7-16**

### **1 LOVE**

*Purpose:* To help those in the group to seek another's highest good whether they feel warm about the person or not, and so to obey God.

Love in the New Testament can refer to sensual, brotherly or divine love, depending on the word used. Here Paul speaks of divine love, which reaches out to others in sacrificial service.

### **WELCOME – Breaking the ice**

#### ***(Aim for 10 minutes)***

Perhaps you can remember the peanuts cartoon, "love is .....". How would you describe love? It might be, "Love is sharing you last piece of toblerone." What would you say? Love is .....

### **WORSHIP – Meeting the Lord**

#### ***(Aim for 10 – 15 minutes)***

##### **Pause:-**

- \* Make yourself comfortable,
- \* seek to relax any parts of your body that are carrying stress,
- \* breathe in and out slowly, breathing in God's love and breathing out anything that is not of God,
- \* repeat a prayer phrase like, "Thank you, Jesus" or "My God, my all" or "Jesus, Son of God have mercy on me a sinner".

**Rejoice:-** Listen to a song or read a psalm

**Ask:-** Ask God to speak to you as you study his word

**Yield:-** Surrender to God acknowledging that He is God and you are not and pray that you will put into practice what you believe He is saying to you as you study His word.

## **WORD – Applying the truth**

### ***(Aim for 40 – 45 minutes)***

The word *love* is often abused these days. It is used in the context of close, cozy feelings; of ecstatic, exuberant sexual passion; and of conditional commitments (“I’ll love you if you live up to my expectations”). From the Christian point of view, what is this thing called love? How do we get it and how can we give it away to others who need it? The word *love* (or some form of it) is mentioned sixteen times in 1 John 4:7–16.

1. Why does the search for love dominate so many songs, novels and the lives of so many people?

2. Read 1 John 4:7–16. John says that true love comes from God. How do Christ’s incarnation and death show us God’s love (vv. 9–10)?

3. How does God’s love motivate you to love others?

4. Since we cannot see God with our eyes, how can we perceive his presence among us (v. 12)?

5. How have you seen God’s love demonstrated through other Christians?

6. Verse 16 says we can “know and rely on the love God has for us.” How does such assurance come about (vv. 13–15)?

7. What do you think John means when he says, “God is love” (v. 16)?

8. Because God is love, what do we know about those whose lives are full of love (v. 16)? Explain.

9. Think of someone you find it especially hard to feel warm toward, someone you are thrown together with regularly. Why is it difficult for you to love that person?

10. Recognizing that love is not based on feelings, what are some practical ways you can show the fruit of love to that person?

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