

# Family Matters

*A Three-Week Guide on the Family of God*



# Table of Contents

**Welcome** ..... Page 2

**Week One** ..... Page 5

**Week Two**..... Page 9

**Week Three**..... Page 13

**Glossary** ..... Page 17

**How to use a QR code** ..... Page 18







# Welcome

W

e, the Church, are all one family. As brothers and sisters in Christ, we should be known by one thing: Love. In **John 13:35** Jesus says, "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

This study guide is a companion resource to our Family Matters sermon series at Transformation Church. You can find that series on our website [transformationchurch.tc](http://transformationchurch.tc).

We've created this study guide to aid in your personal study time, as well as a guide for your small group discussion time.

*Here is how to best use this study guide:*

**Read** At the beginning of each part, you will find a Daily Bible Reading Plan. Read through these verses each day and consider journaling your thoughts as you pray and commune with God.

**Prepare** Once you have completed the daily readings, you can go through that week's main teaching. Be sure to read this teaching before meeting with your group.

**Scan** We have also included **QR codes** with each teaching that link to a video further explaining what you have read. Need help scanning the QR code? We've got you covered! **Check out the end of this guide for a short and easy explanation.**





*N*ow that you have completed your reading, you are ready to meet with your group! When you gather together, you will have the discussion questions to guide your conversation.

**Upward** These questions direct your thoughts toward God – who He is and what His character is.

**Inward** These questions direct your thoughts to the inner transformation that comes from God's love.

**Outward** These questions direct your thoughts to how you can take what you have read and live on mission.

We hope you enjoy this study guide and it brings you to a deeper understanding of God's love for His multiethnic family.

*Upward. Inward. Outward.*

**Transformers,  
Roll Out!**





In the beginning  
was the Word,  
and the Word  
was with God,  
and the Word  
was God.

John 1:1 CSB



# Week One:

## *The Trinity*

### Daily Bible Reading Plan:

Read and understand who God is

Day 1: Genesis 1:26-27  
John 1:1-18

Day 2: Isaiah 45:18  
Psalm 8  
Colossians 1:15-20

Day 3: Deuteronomy 6:4-5  
Matthew 3:13-16

Day 4: Exodus 34:1-9  
Hebrews 1:1-4

Day 5: John 14:23  
John 15:9-10  
Galatians 4:4-6



*Scan to watch:*  
The Holy Trinity Explainer





# Week One:

## Reading

What comes to mind when you think about God? Theologian A.W. Tozer once said, "what comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us." The most foundational truth in Scripture about God is that He is triune. While foundational, it is certainly complex. However, Jesus is our blueprint to understanding the triune God. Our definition of God must be established on how He reveals Himself.

God (Yahweh) is one in essence and will, but reveals Himself tri-personally in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. When we look to Jesus, we see that He is the very expression of God's nature and the radiance of His glory. He lived His life on earth in total submission to the Father by the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Another way to see it is this: the Father acts through the Son by the power of the Spirit. Though God is One, the Father and the Son enjoy mutual love and fellowship in the Spirit. This is why the biblical author, John, is able to say, "God is love." He is love because He exists as the holy, uncreated, self-complete Creator who extends and receives love within Himself. God is One and He is also a community.

Creation itself was born out of this loving unity among the Trinity – the pinnacle of which is humanity. We were not created out of loneliness or need, but out of divine love. The Father, the Son, and the Spirit dance eternally to the rhythm of love and created us to join Him.

We were created by God who is a community unto Himself for relationship with Him and one another. From the very beginning, God has longed to father a multiethnic family that reflects His goodness, compassion, mercy, and justice into the world as His sons and daughters.





# Week One:

## *Discussion Questions*

### Upward

Jesus is our blueprint to understanding God. Take some time to read **John 1:1-18**. What does it say about God and His mission through Jesus?

### Inward

Focus on **John 1:14** and **John 1:16**. The Scripture promises we receive “grace upon grace from his fullness.” This is the abundant life found in Christ. What does abundant life actually look like? If you struggle with this concept, how can you move from scarcity mentality towards abundant life?

Read **Galatians 4:4-6** and notice the trinitarian language. We have been redeemed so that we could be adopted into the family of God. How does this challenge or reaffirm the way you see yourself? Do you live like this is true?

### Outward

God, who is a community unto Himself, created us for relationship with Him and others. How has belonging to a biblical community been an encouragement to you in this season?

Read the Great Commission in **Matt. 28:18-20**. The Father exalts the Son who empowers us by the Holy Spirit. Who in your sphere of influence can you be praying for? How can you extend the love of God to others?





Dear friends,  
let us love one  
another, because  
love is from God,  
and everyone  
who loves has  
been born of God  
and knows God.

1 John 4:7 CSB



# Week Two:

## *God is Love*

### Daily Bible Reading Plan:

Read and understand God's love

Day 1: Genesis 1:26-27  
Genesis 12:1-3

Day 2: Psalm 136  
Isaiah 54:10

Day 3: John 3:16-17  
John 17:15-20

Day 4: 1 John 4:7-21

Day 5: Romans 5:6-8  
John 15:12-16



*Scan to watch:*

The Bible Project:  
Covenants





# Week Two:

## Reading

Throughout the pages of Scripture, we see a beautiful picture of a God who embodies love. His love plays out on every page: through His community in the relational Trinity, through His pursuit of His people despite their missing the mark, through His just actions, through His sacrifice of His only Son. The love of God propelled Him to create a family, even though He knew His kids would repeatedly reject and disobey Him.

The Gospel story is the ultimate revelation of God's love. God's perfect creation was broken when Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, which broke God's heart. Even so, He decided to create a family through Abraham. Abraham's family, known as the Israelites, disowned and disregarded God, but He did not give up on them.

God's love manifested in the form of a covenant: He promised to save the world through the Israelites. The Israelites worshiped idols and repeatedly refused to obey God, but God stuck by His promise out of His love for His family. God humbled Himself and took on flesh: Jesus, fully God and fully man. He entered the world to dwell amongst His people because He loved them and wanted to not only save them but relate to them. Jesus knew the ultimate sacrifice was necessary in order to rectify the brokenness of humanity and serve as a bridge for God to have a relationship with humankind.

Out of His overwhelming love and desire for His family, Jesus offered Himself as this sacrifice, fully submitting to the Father's will. He chose to go to the cross, driven only by unconditional love. In this sacrifice, God kept His promise to redeem the world through the Israelites (Jesus was a descendant of Israel) and freed His people to relationship with Him.

In addition to saving us to love Him, we are saved to love each other as an expression of the love He lavishes upon us. Out of the overflow we receive from God, we can sacrificially love those around us. We are invited into this family of community only because He first loved us.





# Week Two:

## *Discussion Questions*

### Upward

Throughout scripture, we see God choose His people despite their disobedience. What does this say about God's character?

Instead of simply loving us from His throne, God's love compelled Him to take on flesh and dwell among us. Why do you think He did this? How does this change your view of Him?

### Inward

Read **Romans 5:8**. Sometimes we believe that we must clean ourselves up before we can receive God's love. How does it make you feel to know God knows and loves you when you are at your lowest?

How does this truth invite you to view yourself?

### Outward

We are not only loved for our individual transformation, but for corporate transformation. Can we fully experience God's love living in isolation? Why or why not?

In **1 John 4**, we read that we love others as an overflow of Christ's love for us. What are some ways you can show Christ's love to those in your family and community? Love leads to action. What action can you commit to this week to love someone? (Ex. Participate in a community food collection, send flowers to a loved one, bring groceries to an elderly neighbor, babysit a friend's kids.)





**But now  
in Christ Jesus,  
you who were far  
away have been  
brought near by  
the blood of  
Christ.**

*Ephesians 2:13* CSB



# Week Three:

## *The Church - Unity in Diversity*

### Daily Bible Reading Plan:

Read and understand the Church

Day 1: Luke 10:25-37

Day 2: 1 John 3:1-3

Day 3: Ephesians 2:11-22

Day 4: Acts 11:1-18

Day 5: Acts 11:19-30  
Acts 13:1



*Scan to watch:*

Cracking the Diversity  
Code in Churches





# Week Three:

## Reading

So far, we have explored the Trinity and God's intention for us to live in community. We also talked about God's great love for us. This is why He created a family made up of people from every tribe, tongue, and nation.

Now, let's talk about the Church. When we use the word Church with a capital C, we're talking about the universal family of God. The Church is not a building or a place; it cannot be contained by walls. The Church is the family of God, and we are all over the world. When you choose to follow Jesus, you automatically become a part of His multiethnic family. Love happens so that ecclesiology can happen. We know that love is the main force for why the Church exists.

The Greek word in the Bible for church is *ekklesia* and is defined as "a called-out assembly or congregation." We see this word in **Acts 11:26** when it says that Saul and Barnabas went to Antioch and "met with the church..." Interestingly enough, Antioch is also where the disciples were first called Christians. The church at Antioch is a great example of how the church should look today.

In the first century world, it was no easy task to create multiethnic churches. Just like today, there existed prejudices, racism, unforgiveness, and misunderstandings. In order to overcome these obstacles, we need God's love to flood our hearts and bind us together.

At the start of **Acts 11**, we see Peter explaining why the Gentiles have a legitimate place in God's family with the Jews. It is faith and a transformed life, not ethnicity or law-keeping, that authenticates a person as one of God's own. This was a radical idea for Jews. Many resisted the idea of one multiethnic family belonging to God.

The city of Antioch itself was segregated and divided up by walls. In Paul's day it was the third largest city, with nearly half a million people and a mix of many cultures. Despite having around 18 different ethnic groups represented, division remained, and these groups kept mostly to themselves.





As Jewish followers of Jesus were increasingly facing persecution, they decided to spread the Good News only to other Jews. "But there were some of them, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, who came to Antioch and began speaking to the Greeks also, proclaiming the good news about the Lord Jesus." (**Acts 11:20**) By the time Barnabas arrived he was overjoyed and encouraged to see "all of them to remain true to the Lord with devoted hearts." (**Acts 11:23**)

This is why they were first called Christians at Antioch. These early Christians defied cultural norms. They were a diverse group who had come together to form one family. They could no longer be called Jews or Greeks, now they were Christians. Christianos, meaning belonging to Christ.

If you read further into **Acts 13:1**, you will see an important aspect of having a multiethnic church, and that is having multiethnic leadership. Paul and Barnabas are both Jews who were also fluent in Greek and Aramaic. Simeon (who was called Niger) was a black African. Lucius (of Cyrene) was North African. Manaen (close friend of Herod) most likely grew up with much privilege and opportunity. A diverse leadership for a diverse church.

Paul continued to fiercely and passionately build local multiethnic churches. Anything less would have been unimaginable. His commitment to the multiethnic church was built out of an understanding of God's heart and love for all people. Now, we get to continue that legacy as we pursue this multiethnic family in fulfillment of God's heart for His people. Truly, family matters, and we get to be a part of the best one.





# Week Three:

## *Discussion Questions*

### Upward

What does the parable of the Good Samaritan in **Luke 10:25-37** reveal about God's heart towards non-Jews? What does this reveal about God's heart for the people group you may not understand or get along with?

Read **1 John 3:1-3**. What makes us children of God?

### Inward

Read **Ephesians 2:14-15**. Jesus has united you to other believers, no matter their ethnicity or background. What thoughts and feelings do you have when you hear this?

Is there a group of people you have a hard time feeling united with? If so, explore those feelings with your small group. Remember that this is meant to be a safe place to ask questions and request prayer. Allow the Holy Spirit to grow your heart for those who are unlike you.

### Outward

In the book of Acts, we see an intentional multiethnic community formed under multiethnic leadership. Read **Acts 11:27-30**. How does the church at Antioch embrace other believers of different ethnic groups?

How can you live on mission, caring for people around you who are different from you?





# Glossary:

## **Covenant:**

A contract or agreement between two parties. In the Bible, we see several covenants take place. Ultimately, the covenant of grace refers to the eternal plan of redemption entered into by the three persons of the Godhead and carried out by them. Christ, the mediator of, fulfils all its conditions on behalf of His people, and dispenses to them all its blessings.



*Scan to watch*  
a study on Agape love

## **Christianos:**

Greek word for "belonging to Christ."

## **Ecclesiology:**

Comes from two Greek words meaning "assembly" and "word." Combining to mean "the study of the church." Ecclesiology helps us to understand the role of the church and our role in the church.



*Scan to watch*  
a study on Ahavah love

## **Ekklesia:**

Greek word for "a called-out assembly or congregation." Ekklesia is commonly translated as "church" in the New Testament.

## **Trinity:**

A word used to express the Doctrine of the Trinity, the unity of God as subsisting in three distinct Persons.

## **Triune:**

Consisting of three in one (used especially with reference to the Trinity).





# How to Scan a QR Code:

**1.**

Open the camera app on your phone or tablet.

**2.**

Hold your device over the QR Code so that it is clearly visible within your screen. Your phone will automatically scan the code and prompt you to open a webpage.

**3.**

Click through to the website where you will get to watch a video to further support the reading for that week.

