

Week 2. Love Connected – Connected to the Family

Pastor Cory Reeves



Point 1: The Defining Mark – Reflecting Agape

Jesus gave His disciples one final, defining commandment the night before the cross:

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have _____ for one another.

John 13:34–35

Notice what Jesus did NOT say would identify His followers: building size, theology, music, or preaching skill. One metric: how we _____ the family of believers.

Then, from the cross — in His final agonizing moments — Jesus modeled it:

26 When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, “Woman, behold your son!”

27 Then He said to the disciple, “Behold your mother!” And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.

John 19:26–27

God’s love comes down to us vertically, and it is meant to flow out of us horizontally.

KEY POINT: You cannot be connected to the Father and disconnected from the Family.

Point 2: The Proximity Problem

The writer of Hebrews gives a strong warning about isolation:

24 And let us consider one another in order to stir up _____ and good works, 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching. **Hebrews 10:24–25**

Love here is the Greek word: _____

Spiritual truth from Valley Forge: In harsh conditions, isolation is fatal. Proximity is survival.

KEY POINT – our spiritual journey, while it is upward, it has peaks and valleys.

Point 3: Circles, Not Just Rows

Mark 2 — The Four Friends: A paralyzed man couldn't get to Jesus on his own.

When Jesus saw _____ faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven you." Mark 2:5

Jesus responded to the faith of the four friends. Church, there will be days you are spiritually paralyzed. That is when you need four people

holding the corners of your mat — willing to rip up a roof to get you into the presence of God.

The Scattered Coal: A coal burning bright inside the fire will grow cold and gray within minutes when pulled out and left alone. It didn't lose its nature — it lost its _____. (same thing in Valley Forge)

The early church didn't only meet in the temple in rows— they met house to house in circles. We need both.

Today, we are launching LIFE GROUPS — circles of 2–4 families or 5–10 individuals who share life, prayer, and God's agape love together.

This Week's Homework:

1. Check Your Temperature

Do an honest self-audit. Have you been surviving as a solo coal? Where has your faith, joy, or love grown cold because of isolation from the family?

One area where I've felt spiritually isolated:

If not, what is my circle, where I am connected outside my immediate family: _____

2. Step Into the Circle

Don't leave this week as an isolated coal. Commit to a Life Group. Move from the row into the circle.

I will commit to a Life Group: YES / I need to talk with the Pastor and I will.

Name of my group or person I'll connect with:

3. Prepare to Share

When you go to your first group, show up ready to share heat. Be ready to listen, pray for someone, and be vulnerable enough to let them pray for you.

One thing I'm willing to share with my group:
