

SUMMER OF LOVE

Sermon-Based Study Guide
Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church

1 John 1.5 - 2.2
June 1-2, 2013

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I. Connecting With One Another

What has been one of your most enjoyed vacations? With whom did you share that experience? Why do you think people enjoy travelling?

II. Introduction to this Series and Study

This weekend we continue in our series on the Letter of First John, which we're calling "Summer of Love." Summer has always been a special time in my life; from the carefree warm days of childhood summers, to the delight of family vacations, and to the opportunities to bask in the special times around barbeques, pools, and patios.

As we look at 1st John 1.5 - 2.2 we find the author, John, developing the significance of "that which was from the beginning which we have heard... looked at... touched..." from the opening five verses. This "Word of life" embodied in Jesus is what and who John is compelled to proclaim. In our passage for this weekend John unpacks this message further - not just the theological understanding of the God who took on flesh and blood and moved into our neighborhood, but also how we are to have fellowship with God. It's an important passage in light of the call to Connect with God, Grow in Faith, and Serve in Love.

III. Study the Text

- Read through 1 John 1.5 - 2.2. Browse back through the passage and note the words that are repeated.
- How does John summarize the message received from him (Jesus) according to 1.5? Take a look at the following passages. How do they describe the meaning of the phrase "God is Light"?

Genesis 1.1-3 _____

Exodus 13.21 _____

Psalms 27.1 _____

Psalms 119.105 _____

John 1.1-4 _____

John 8.12 & 9.5 _____

2 Corinthians 4.6 _____

1 Timothy 6.16 _____

How do these verses help you understand the nature, character, and activity of God?

- c. Look at verses 6 & 7. John focuses on the nature of fellowship - with God and with other believers. The word "Fellowship" comes from the Greek "koinonia" meaning "to share in common."

IV. Reflect and Respond

- a. In your own spiritual journey and thinking, have you tended to view Jesus more as human or more as divine? How do these verses correct an overemphasis in one direction or another?
- b. How does the good news of God's incarnation in Jesus encourage you to live in relationship with others?
- c. Have you ever launched right into a conversation like John does here? What do you get that excited to talk about?

Jesus said that our mouths speak out of the overflow of our hearts. How could your discussions with others include an opportunity to "make (y)our joy complete"?

- d. In what ways are you connected to others in mutual sharing? How could you be even more of a blessing to others in our church family? In your neighborhood? In your family? In your workplace? How could your partnership "make your joy complete"?

V. Spend some time in prayer:

- a. Pray for Good Shepherd's continued work of discernment, especially lifting up our Discernment Working Party, the pastors, elders and leaders of our church to be led by God,
- b. Ask God's Holy Spirit to guide the children and families of our community into the realization of who Jesus is: fully God and fully man!
- c. Lift up this study of 1st John, that through it God would make Himself known as we connect with Him, grow in Him, and serve Him and the people He loves.

