

Daring Faith: Week 7

Daring to be Loved

Getting to know one another...

As many as are able, share one favorite romantic movie or story (if you cannot identify one, you may share one movie or story that touched you to the point of tears).

Centering...

As an expression of worship (turning our focus of worth to God)... take a quiet moment to hear God's heart. Allow all participants to center down... close their eyes... take a deep breath...and prayerfully listen as the group facilitator reads John 15:9... slowly...three times.

Exploring...

This week we are engaging what could be the most foundation step of faith... daring to be loved.

- 1. Why is the longing to be loved considered such a fundamental longing?*
- 2. In what ways could we be afraid of love?*
- 3. It has been noted, that without faith in God's love, we will become...*

- Driven (tend to feel one "must" accomplish or succeed)*
- Defensive (tend to react to responsibility for problems with anger, blame, excuses, etc)*
- Demanding (tend to use others for personal attention and affirmation)*
- Dangerous (tend to view some as enemies worthy of degrading or destroying)*

Which of these do you identify with when you feel insecure...and less rooted in God's love?

- 4. What difficulties have you experienced in life that may cause you to doubt God's love and favor?*
- 5. Have one participant read aloud what the Bible says in Romans 8:28 and 25... three times slowly. Then allow any to share how this spoke to them about life's difficulties.*

Romans 8:28-29, 31-35 (NLT)

"...we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. ²⁹ For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. ...If God is for us, who can ever be against us? ³² Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't he also give us everything else? ³³ Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen for his own? No one—for God himself has given us right standing with himself. ³⁴ Who then will condemn us? No one—for Christ Jesus died for us and was raised to life for us, and he is sitting in the place of honor at God's right hand, pleading for us. ³⁵ Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death?

6. *Read Ephesians 3:14-19 (GNT)*

¹⁴For this reason I fall on my knees before the Father, ¹⁵from whom every family in heaven and on earth receives its true name. ¹⁶I ask God from the wealth of his glory to give you power through his Spirit to be strong in your inner selves, ¹⁷and I pray that Christ will make his home in your hearts through faith. I pray that you may have your roots and foundation in love, ¹⁸so that you, together with all God's people, may have the power to understand how broad and long, how high and deep, is Christ's love. ¹⁹Yes, may you come to know his love—although it can never be fully known—and so be completely filled with the very nature of God.

What is the ultimate thing that we should know? (Note: This is a “running description”... so there is more than one phrase used that capture this.)

7. *What does this tell you afresh about being loved by God?*

8. *How can you help cultivate such an experience in your life?*

9. *Conclude this time of exploring by reading together Psalm 23:6 three times aloud...which is this week's memory verse.*

*"Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever."*

Psalm 23:6