



AWAKENING TO LOVE

“God loves me deeply after all.”

Connect:

- Open with Prayer and spend some time talking about the week.
- Share about the first time you had a crush on someone? Did you share your feelings with the other person, and if so, how? How did the other person react to you?
- Can you think of a time that you experienced an outpouring of God’s love in your life? How did you respond?

You will never experience all that God wants for you until you start to explore and experience how deep and how wide the Father’s love for you really is!

Grow:

- Read Luke 15:20-24. As a response to his son’s homecoming (repentance) we see the father lavish his son with unconditional love. Even though his son did nothing to deserve it, the father did way more than simply allow his son to return. Identify as many ways as you can that the father showered his son with unmerited favor and grace? What does the father’s reaction tell us about how God responds to our repentance (homecoming)?
- Do you think the son was able to quickly and easily accept his father’s love, or do you think he held on to beliefs about himself that made it difficult to receive? Share ways that shame or guilt have lingered in areas of your life and how they have affected your relationship with God? What doubts, fears, and lies do you struggle with in your relationship with Christ (worthiness, acceptance, value, purpose, etc.)
- If you have turned to God in repentance and received his love, forgiveness, and grace, what are some ways that you can learn to accept and live in your new identity?
- Read 1 John 3:1 Why do you think it is so difficult to accept that you are a beloved child of God? Read Romans 8:31-39 Identify words or phrases from this passage that describe God’s love for us. Write down two or three verses that jump out at you and review them daily to remind you of who you are and whose you are!

Go:

- As a group, listen to the song “More of You” by Colton Dixon. (Audio with words.) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o9jeLGP3nIc>. Google the lyrics to follow along.
- Pastor Brad challenged us to pray **“God, make yourself real to me. Awaken in me the awareness that I am your unconditionally loved child.”**
- For the next 30 days make that and if you’re ready to journey deeper, this, your prayer. **“God, I need more of you and less of me, make me who I’m meant to be. You’re all I want all I need. You’re everything. Take it all, I surrender. Be my King. God I choose more of you, less of me.”**

- How have these prayers over the past month had an impact on your thoughts, emotions, and beliefs?
- Share your ideas from last week on how your group can shift Gainesville by serving the *weary and burdened*. Actually plan and/or calendar a future time to go and serve. Be intentional!