**Leader Copy | So Great is His Love | January 25, 2016**

**Creational Text – Large Group**

**Intro question –** How do you let people know you love them? - How do people know you love them?

Today we are going to explore God’s love for us. Psalm 103 explains how much compassion God has for us and how God shows it in our lives.

**Creational Text – Small Group**

How can you tell when a guy/girl likes you?

How can when a couple is really in love? What kinds of things do they say and do?

**Scriptural Text – Small Group**

**Psalm 103: 1-13**

Of David.

1 Praise the Lord, my soul;ds

all my inmost being, praise his holy name.

2 Praise the Lord, my soul,

and forget not all his benefits—

3 who forgives all your sins

and heals all your diseases,

4 who redeems your life from the pit

and crowns you with love and compassion,

5 who satisfies your desires with good things

so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s.

6 The Lord works righteousness

and justice for all the oppressed.

7 He made known his ways to Moses,

his deeds to the people of Israel:

8 The Lord is compassionate and gracious,

slow to anger, abounding in love.

9 He will not always accuse,

nor will he harbor his anger forever;

10 he does not treat us as our sins deserve

or repay us according to our iniquities.

11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth,

so great is his love for those who fear him;

12 as far as the east is from the west,

so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

13 As a father has compassion on his children,

so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him;

In the passage above underline the places where it talks about God's *attitude* toward us.

Circle the places where it talks about God *actions* or *deeds* that show his love for us.

Having someone tell you they love you is one thing, but experiencing it is quite another. Do you see how God does both? To help us understand more we are going to go on a bit of a bible scavenger hunt. Gary Chapman in his book The Five Love Languages highlights five different ways people show love. For each of the "love languages" identify a couple of places in the bible where God shows his love in that way. Bonus points for finding the scripture! You might even find some in the scripture above.

*There could be dozens of responses for each.*

1. Words of Affirmation – Where in the bible does God speak praise and joy toward us?

*Zephaniah 3:17*

*The Lord your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing.”*

*Genesis 1 – God calls the whole creation good, and humans VERY good*

*Eph. 2 – We are God's "workmanship" or "masterpiece"*

2. Acts of Service – Where does God *do* something for our benefit?

*See above: Heals our diseases, satisfies our desires with good things*

*Jesus washing his diciples feet*

*Any of Jesus' healings*

3. Recieving gifts – When does God give us something?

*The gift of his son*

*Providence – sends rain and causes crops to grow*

*Gave his life on the cross*

*James 1:17*

*“Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.”*

4. Quality time – How is God with us?

*Deuteronomy 31:8*

*The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.”*

*Matthew 1:23*

*23 “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).*

*Psalm 73:23*

*Yet I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand.*

*Matthew 28:20b*

*And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*

5. Psysical touch – Where in the bible does it talk about God touching us?

*Luke 5:13*

*13 Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. “I am willing,” he said. “Be clean!” And immediately the leprosy left him.*

*Pentecost – the Holy Spirit came upon the people*

*When someone who is acting as Jesus hands and feet gives us a helping hand or a hug.*

**John 13: 34-35**

34 “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. 35 By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

As we live in God's love, what are we to do?

**Connections – Small Group**

* What aspect of God's love connects with you the most?
* When do you feel most loved by God?
* In what ways can Christians show love for others? Can you think of an example or two for each of the "Five Love Languages" listed above?

Prayer - Ask for any prayer requests and pray together.