

DAY 3 — SATURDAY, 4 APRIL 2026

SESSION 5: ROOTED AND GROUNDED IN LOVE

TIME: 9:00 AM TO 10:30 AM



Focus:

Identity, belonging, and healing.

Love as the Deepest root.

Every life grows from a root system.

Some are rooted in fear.

Some in rejection.

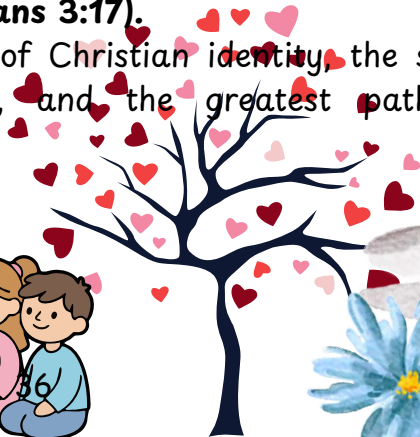
Some in performance.

Some in wounds.



But God's desire is that His children be **rooted and grounded in love (Ephesians 3:17)**.

Love is the deepest root of Christian identity, the strongest foundation of belonging, and the greatest pathway to healing.





1. Love defines our identity.

1 John 4:7-12

John does not begin with behaviour—he begins with **identity**.

A. “Beloved, let us love one another”

Loved people love people

John calls the church “Beloved” before he calls them to love.

• Identity precedes action.

1 **John 3:1**, “Behold what manner of love the Father bestowed upon us...”

B. “Love is of God... God is love”

Love is God’s nature

We are not commanded to manufacture love, but we are invited to reflect it.

C. “Everyone who loves is born of God”

Love is evidence of new birth

Love is not a personality trait, but it is a spiritual birthmark.

D. "God sent His Son"

The Cross is the proof of love

Our identity is rooted in the fact that God loved us first.

The Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32)



- **The Context:** The younger son thought his identity was defined by his **failures** and his status (wishing to be a hired servant).
- **The Shift:** Before the son could even apologize, the father ran to him. By giving him a robe and a ring, the father restored his identity as a **beloved son**.
- **The Connection:** Just as 1 John 4:10 says, "This is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us," the son's identity was not earned by his behaviour. It was defined by the Father's character.

Peter's Restoration (John 21:15-19)

- **The Context:** After denying Jesus three times, Peter likely identified as a **failure** or a **coward**. He went back to fishing, returning to his old identity.
- **The Shift:** Jesus meets him on the shore and asks three times, "Do you love me?" With each "Yes," Jesus gives him a purpose: "Feed my sheep."
- **The Connection:** Jesus used love to overwrite Peter's shame. Peter's new identity wasn't "The One Who Denied," but "The One Who Loves and Leads."

E. Identity Application

- You are not defined by your past.
- You are not defined by your wounds.
- You are not defined by your failures.
- You are defined by the love of God.



1. The "Father" to the Fatherless (George Müller)

- **The Event:** In 19th-century England, orphans were often treated as social outcasts or cheap labor. George Müller felt his identity was linked to God's identity as a "Father to the fatherless."
- **The Identity of Love:** He cared for over 10,000 orphans in his lifetime without ever asking for donation, relying solely on prayer.
- **The Connection:** Müller believed that if God is love, then His children should be the providers of that love. His life became a physical manifestation of 1 John 4:12: "No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us."

2. Love creates belonging.

John 15:9-13,

Jesus moves from identity to relationship.

A. "As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you"



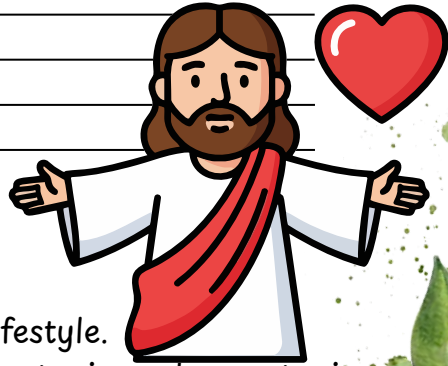
Divine belonging

The same love the Father has for the Son is the love Jesus has for us.

This is the highest form of belonging.

John 17:23,

“You have loved them even as You have loved Me.”



B. “Abide in My love”

Stay rooted

Belonging is not a moment; it is a lifestyle.

Abiding means staying connected, staying close, staying surrendered.

C. “If you keep My commandments...”

Obedience strengthens belonging

Obedience is not a condition of love; it is the expression of love.

D. “Greater love has no one than this...”

Sacrificial belonging

Jesus defines love by sacrifice, not sentiment.

The Inclusion of Zacchaeus

Scripture Link: "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends." (John 15:13)



- **The Context:** Zacchaeus was a chief tax collector, making him a social and religious outcast. He was wealthy but had zero "belonging"; his own people viewed him as a traitor. He was "small of stature," both physically and socially.
- **The Act of Love:** Jesus didn't just preach to the crowd; He stopped at the tree, called Zacchaeus by name, and said, "I must stay at your house today" (Luke 19:5). In that culture, sharing a meal was the ultimate sign of belonging.
- **The Transformation:** By offering friendship before Zacchaeus even repented, Jesus fulfilled the spirit of John 15. Zacchaeus went from being a "lonely outsider" to a "son of Abraham." Love didn't wait for him to fix himself; love invited him in, and the invitation is what changed him.



The L'Arche Communities

John 15:9, "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love."

The Context: Jean Vanier (and later the L'Arche movement) started by inviting two men with intellectual disabilities to leave a harsh institutional asylum and live with him in a small house.

The atonement of Jesus Christ is the supreme act of love, the supreme example of selfless concern for others.

- **The Act of Love:** At the time, society's "solution" for people with disabilities was segregation. Vanier's approach was simple: **Friendship**. He didn't want to "fix" them or "treat" them; he wanted to live with them. He sat at the same table, shared the same chores, and washed their feet.
- **The Transformation:** This created a global network of communities where people with and without disabilities live together as equals. The "belonging" is so strong that the distinction between "helper" and "helped" disappears.
- **The Connection:** It mirrors Jesus' command to "remain in my love." In these homes, belonging isn't based on your IQ or your productivity, but on the fact that you are a friend. As Jesus said, "I have called you friends" (**John 15:15**).

E. Belonging Application

- You belong in God’s family.
- You belong in the Body of Christ.
- You belong in the Father’s love.



3. Love brings Healing.

1 Corinthians 13:1-8

Paul shows that love is not emotional fluff—it is spiritual medicine.

A. Without love, gifts are empty

- Tongues without love = noise
- Prophecy without love = nothing
- Sacrifice without love = useless

Love is the healing force behind every ministry.



B. Love heals through patience

- “Love suffers long...”

Patience gives space for people to grow.

C. Love heals through kindness

Kindness is the language of healing.



D. Love uproots toxic roots

- Envy
- Pride
- Rudeness
- Selfishness
- Anger
- Record-keeping of wrongs

These are the weeds that choke relationships

E. Love plants healthy roots

- Truth
- Protection
- Trust
- Hope
- Perseverance

These are the roots that restore broken hearts.



Joseph and His Brothers:

- **The Wound:** Joseph was betrayed by his own flesh and blood. His brothers hated him, threw him in a pit, and sold him into slavery. This is a recipe for lifelong bitterness and a "record of wrongs" that could span decades.
- **The Healing:** Years later, when Joseph had the power of Egypt behind him, he could have sought revenge. Instead, he chose a love that "is not easily angered." When he revealed himself to them, he wept with them and provided for them.

The Connection: Joseph's love healed a family line that had been fractured by jealousy and deceit. By choosing to "protect, trust, hope, and persevere" (v. 7), Joseph allowed God to turn a tragedy into a reunion. The healing wasn't just physical (saving them from famine); it was a deep emotional restoration of their brotherhood.



Desmond Doss at Hacksaw Ridge

The Wound: Rejection and Abuse

Desmond Doss was a Seventh-day Adventist who joined the Army during WWII as a medic, but he refused to carry a weapon because of his religious beliefs.

- **The Treatment:** His fellow soldiers saw his "love for enemies" and his refusal to fight as cowardice. They mocked him, threw boots at him while he prayed, and his commanding officers tried to have him court-martialed.
- **The Heart of 1 Cor 13:** Despite being "dishonoured" by his peers (v. 5), Doss remained **patient and kind** (v. 4). He didn't retaliate or hold a "record of wrongs."

The Healing: The Night on the Ridge

In May 1945, his unit was attacked on top of a jagged 400-foot cliff in Okinawa. The Americans were forced to retreat, leaving dozens of wounded men behind to certain death at the hands of the enemy.

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- **The Act of Love:** Instead of retreating, Doss stayed behind. For 12 hours, under constant fire, he dragged wounded men one by one to the edge of the cliff and lowered them down on a rope.
- **The "Unfailing" Love:** Every time he saved a man, he prayed, "Lord, please help me get just one more."
- **The Connection:** He saved 75 men that night—including some of the very men who had bullied and beaten him weeks earlier.

The Transformation (The Healing)

The healing that followed wasn't just physical. When the men saw Doss—bloody, exhausted, and unarmed—risking his life for them, the **culture of the entire unit changed**. * The hatred and mockery were "healed" and replaced by a deep, sacrificial respect.

- Before their next mission, the soldiers (who had previously mocked his faith) refused to go into battle until Doss had prayed for them.

F. Healing Application

- Love heals trauma.
- Love heals rejection.
- Love heals bitterness.
- Love heals identity wounds.
- Love heals relational fractures.

Conclusion

Love as the deepest root.

When you are rooted in love:

- Identity becomes secure.
- Belonging becomes natural.
- Healing becomes possible.
- When love is the root, Christ is the centre and freedom is the fruit.



Respond in three movements:

1. Identity Healing

Pray over those who struggle with self-worth or shame.

2. Belonging Restoration

Pray for reconciliation in families, marriages, friendships.

3. Heart Healing

Invite the Holy Spirit to uproot bitterness and plant love.

Goals

To Do
