

The Greatest Thing STUDY QUESTIONS

February 2022 (30th January - 26 February)



Today we begin a new series. We have chosen the title 'The Greatest Thing', taken from "The Greatest Thing In The World" which is of course the title of **Henry Drummond's** wonderful little book written in the late 19th century.

We are inviting our writers this month to concentrate on the 13th Chapter of Corinthians which in fact is the subject of Drummond's book. And to use the additional readings to supplement their thoughts. Drummond at the end of his book sets a challenge. He asks his readers to consider reading this passage at least once every day for an extended period of time. In doing so he believed lives would be transformed and relationships renewed and Christian mission would become much more effective.

For Drummond love is an effect. Before there can be love there requires to be a cause. He sites 1 John 4:19 as the reason for love being in our hearts. "We love him because, he first loved us." God is love, he created us and redeemed us out of love. Drummond argues if we reflect the love of Christ we will be changed. We do this through practice, through living close to Jesus. As metal takes on magnetic properties when kept close to a magnet so we begin to take on the properties of Christ's love as we walk close to him. Remember this was a letter written to a community. The greatest thing that could ever happen to the world would be if those of us who profess to be followers of Jesus recognised the love that has embraced us.

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STUDY QUESTIONS

February for many is the month of romantic love for us at Sanctuary First let it become the month when our lives were changed because we have fallen in love with Jesus of Nazareth all over again.

And what is love?

It's the greatest thing.

These discussion questions adapt our monthly themes for small Connect Groups or personal Bible study (look up the [Greatest Thing Resource Pack PDF](#) for more information on this month's theme). The questions are divided into 4 parts to correspond with the 4 weeks of the Daily Worship theme. They are offered as a guideline and there is no need to go through all the given questions in a single session, or in the following sequence. Feel free to pick and choose, or adapt to what interests you or your group.

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STUDY QUESTIONS

Part 1: Love Contrasted

It's not even what you do it's the motive behind it that matters.

*Our key text for the whole theme is **1 Corinthians 13**. We suggest that you read this text each time you come to this material on your own, or as a group, (perhaps you could even read the chapter every day this month) as it is the backbone of the entire theme.*

Read Revelation 2: 4-6

This passage sums up the opening verses of 1 Corinthians 13. How easy do you think it is to go through the rituals of outward worship but lose sight of our love relationship with God?

Read 2 Kings 5: 1-14

Take time to trace the love circle in this story. How many times did Naaman encounter love? Was Naaman looking for the faith mentioned in 1 Corinthians 13:2?

Read Acts 9: 26 & 1 Corinthians 13: 4

How would kindness change our relationship with the world? How did it change Paul's relationship with God?

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Part 2: The Analysis of Love

Love lives a life of self-examination.

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Read Luke 5: 1-11 & 1 Corinthians 13: 4

What do we learn from Peter's attitude to Jesus-the-carpenter becoming Jesus-the-fishing-expert?

Read Philippians 2: 3-4 & 1 Corinthians 13: 4

How different would the world be if it wasn't "Me First"?

Read 1 Corinthians 13: 4-5 & Matthew 6: 14-15

Why is it so difficult not to hold grudges?

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Part 3: The Practice of Love

Love is a verb: the more you practice it and receive it — the more loving you become

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Read 1 Corinthians 13: 6 & John 8: 31-32

Jesus says the truth will set you free. Yet often the truth only causes a great deal more trouble?

Discuss...

Read 1 Corinthians 13: 7 & Hebrews 11: 1

Hope allows us to practice love and love allows us to practice hope. Discuss this in the light of the above passages.

Read 1 Corinthians 13: 8 & Psalm 103: 14

Carole King sings a lyric "...it feels so good to know that I love you." No earthly love can match the understanding or grace of God towards us humans.

How does this help us understand ourselves?

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Part 4: The Defence of Love

The faith is defended when we live it rather than simply talk about it.

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Read Ephesians 4: 11-16, Philippians 2: 5-11, & 1 Corinthians 13: 11

What does it mean to grow up into the full stature of Christ (see Eph 4: 13)? Take some time to read the Ephesians and Philippians verses as a commentary on 1 Cor 13: 11.

How will this change our attitude to the christian life?

Read Luke 6: 27-38 & 1 Corinthians 13: 9

What do you think of Jesus teaching about loving your enemies ? It's pretty specific? Is this where the rubber hits the road? It's not what you say you believe, it's how we live!

Is it a counsel of perfection or is it possible?

Read 1 Corinthians 13: 13 1 John 4: 13-21

Would you be willing to write a love letter to God? What would you put in it? Would it be thankful? Would it express regret? Would it ever be finished?