

## ULC Sermon Study Resource

### *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality — Growing In Maturity*

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**Prayer:** Pause for a few moments to go to the Lord in prayer. Ask that He would draw near to you in this time, and open your heart and mind to hear His Word.

**Icebreaker:** What's your favorite Valentine's Day memory?

**Reading:** Mark 12:28-34

**Outline:** Emotionally mature adults trust God loves them, and love from a place of safety and belonging:

- I. Love and trust (v. 28 - 29)
  - a. "Hear, O Israel, that the Lord is one" is an invitation to trust preceding a command to love.
  - b. God is the only one who we can trust with absolute confidence.
  - c. We hear and trust that God is one, and that Jesus' resurrection proves He is trustworthy.
  - d. Trusting that God loves us is vital for building loving relationships and loving others well.

**Q: How does God invite people to trust Him in the story of Scripture?**

- II. Love and safety (v. 30)
  - a. Because we are loved, we can love others from a place of safety.
  - b. Safety helps us slow down and listen to others, and to recognize that we love imperfectly.

**Q: Do you think the scribe feels safe in God's love? Why or why not?**

- III. Love and belonging (v. 31-34)
  - a. Trust and safety build to a real sense of belonging in God's love. When we embrace Him as our "Abba, Father" (cf. Romans 8), we can love others boldly because He loves us.
  - b. Belonging in God's love means we don't need to "do" enough for Him, but can rest in "being" His beloved daughter or son and take great joy in abiding in His love.

**Q: Why do we first belong in God's love, then "love your neighbor", not vice versa?**

### **Reflection/Application Questions:**

- 1) Has someone you loved broken the trust you had in them? How did that affect your relationship with them? Did this breach of human trust make it harder for you to trust God as well?
- 2) How can remembering and celebrating God's faithfulness help you grow in trusting Him?
- 3) How can we foster "safe spaces" where we can belong without feeling the need to put up a facade for others? How has belonging to God's love changed you?
- 4) Who are emotionally and spiritually mature adults in your life who can help you grow in love?

### **Suggestions for further study:**

- John 21:15-18 **Q: Why does Jesus ask Peter three times "do you love me" to restore him after Peter had denied Jesus three times before Jesus' crucifixion?**
- 1 Corinthians 13 **Q: How is love central to the life of the Christian, and why does it remain?**
- 1 John 4:7-21 **Q: Why does John say "whoever loves God must also love his brother"?**

**Closing Prayer:** "Lord, thank you so much for the gift of this day. Thank you for encouraging us to come before you and draw near to you. Thank you so much for loving us no matter what. Lord, sometimes we struggle with trusting you or questioning how much you love us, and we pray that you would grow our trust, safety, and belonging in your love. Let us hear, O Lord our God, that you are one, and the only one who we can trust above anything else. We pray this in Your Name, Jesus, Amen."