

# Week 2

## Bible Study - Responding to God's love for us

Last week we considered the heart of love that God has for humanity. We were left with a sense of the broadness and depth of the love of God as expressed in the sending of his Son, Jesus. This week we will consider how that love of God, expressed in Jesus, transforms our lives into lives of love.

Imagine a setting in which you have felt loved. It might be receiving a thoughtful gift or, as a child, being picked up by a parent after falling and hurting yourself. It doesn't matter what action - if it is inspired by love it will cause some sort of reaction in you. It would be a strange situation in which no thanks or reciprocal love was expressed. Jesus, however, experienced this very thing.

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*Read Luke 17:11-19. Jesus heals ten lepers and one of them returns to thank him.*

Jesus seems perplexed that nine former lepers had not come back. What was Jesus expecting as normal behaviour? Why would this have been a fair expectation?

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Has there ever been a time when thanks was not expressed to you? How did that leave you feeling?

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Do you think the one man's response - throwing himself at Jesus' feet - was too extreme? What level of impact would this healing have had on this man's everyday life?

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What did Jesus mean in verse 19 when he said “your faith has made you well”? Is this any different to the healing experienced by all ten men?

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It seems from Jesus’ questions to the returning leper that experiencing God’s love requires a response, a transformation causing a person to live differently. Paul, in his letter to the Romans, picks up on this idea of God’s love transforming us into people who respond and, as part of this response, love others.

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*Read Romans 12:9-21. In the letter so far, Paul has unpacked the gospel in detail with regard to the sinfulness of humanity and the sovereignty and love of God, who saves us by grace. He opens Chapter 12 with the great ‘Therefore’ implying a new way of living and then in this passage catalogues ways in which we should respond.*

Which aspect/s of Paul’s list stand out to you the most? Why do they stand out?

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How does Paul say we should act towards our fellow believers? How does he say we should act towards everyone else?

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What do you think Paul means in verse 12? How does the following verse relate to this?

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Can you think of any examples from history or people you know who you think do the things in this passage well? What are some specific ways you could improve at loving those around you according to Paul’s teaching in this passage?

## ***Share the Benefit insights***

Share within your group:

- your thoughts about living on the allowance you've calculated for the coming week
- how do you think you will cope?
- what changes will you need to make to your eating, spending and socialising habits?

## **Prayer focus – People in poverty**

Anglicare's response to people experiencing poverty and social exclusion includes addressing immediate need and building hope for the future. Thousands of families living on the margins face constant stress as they try to balance the costs of food, accommodation, utilities and medical bills.

### **Pray:**

- That those experiencing financial distress will find the support they need to overcome immediate difficulties and develop strengths and skills for the future.
- That, in partnership with local churches and communities, Anglicare will work effectively to alleviate social isolation and disconnection.
- For strength and wisdom for staff and volunteers as they deal with stressful situations every day.

## ***Share the Benefit involvement***

During the coming week:

- live on the allowance you have calculated
- donate the difference to Anglicare.