Series: *Four Gifts*   **Scripture:** *Mark 12:28-34*   **Date:** December 14-15, 2019
Message: *The Gift of Love*

—[LET'S START]—

We all want to be loved. Let's start our group out by sharing what we admire about the other people in our group. One of the greatest gifts that we can give to others is to let them know how we see the handiwork of God in their lives. Take 60-90 seconds to share what you admire about each person in your group.

—[LET'S TALK]—

1. **GRATITUDE AND PRAYER:** What happened last week for which you are thankful? What challenges do you see in your life? Your family? The World? Thank God for the beautiful ways that He has been at work. Pray for the challenges that those in your group are currently facing.

2. In this week's message, Pastor Dale spoke about the gift of love. How does the world define love? How do you think that God defines love?

3. Read Mark 12:28-34. Why do you think that Jesus said that the greatest commandment was to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength?

4. Take some time to reflect upon the Great Commandment in verse 30. What makes it difficult to love God this way? What did Pastor Dale say would happen if we lived our lives with God's priorities as it related to love?

5. Jesus said that the second commandment was this, "Love your neighbor as yourself." What makes it easy to love your neighbor? What makes it difficult? What are some practical ways that you could show your neighbor love this Christmas season?

6. We spend a good deal of the fall talking about the importance of sharing our faith with others. How does this relate to the Great Commandment?

7. Read 1 John 4. This chapter may be one of the best descriptions in all of the Bible of what biblical love is all about. See how many characteristics of love that your group can come up with from this chapter of the Bible. Take turns sharing 1-3 of the characteristics of love that you feel that God may want you to work on in 2020.

—[LET'S ACT]—

Christ-followers ought to be known as the most loving people in the world. Sometimes we find ourselves acting anything like anything but what Christ would have us to be acting like. We just talked about some areas of love that God might want to cultivate in our lives in 2020. Take time to pray for each other. Pray that we might be a group that shows love like Christ.

—[SERMON REVIEW]—

- "When first things are put first, second things are not suppressed but increased." – C.S. Lewis – When referring to the Great Commandment
- We do not need to be cynical about love if we encounter the amazing love of God.
- My ability to love and relate to others depends on my understanding and experience of God's love for me.
- To love someone is to find your joy in their good!
- Human love says, What's in this relationship for me? What am I going to get out of this love affair? God's love isn't like that! His love is more like that of a parent.
- In marriage you go into the relationship with this sense that the other person is going to please you and make you happy. In parenting you realize or learn that love is about seeing your child flourish.
- Human love is as much about receiving as it is giving. God's love is all about giving. His love is all about going the entire length of even dying for us in order that we might experience forgiveness and have the opportunity to become one with God in Spirit and in truth.
- God bent down and conformed himself into our image in order to demonstrate that He really does love us.

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