

BELONG SERIES – PART 1: LOVING GOD

Colossians 1:15–20

Philippians 3:8–10

1 John 4:18–21

Introduction

From the very beginning, St Mark's has been about knowing Jesus and making Him known. Everything we do flows from what God has already done for us in Christ. His perfect love drives out fear and frees us to live differently. To love God, then, is not about trying harder but about seeing more clearly who Jesus is, what He has done, and letting that reshape our hearts, priorities, and relationships. This first study helps us reflect on what it means to love God together as His people—especially as we gather each week to remember and respond to His grace.



Share

1. Think of a time when someone's kindness or generosity changed how you saw them. How did their love shape your response?

Magnificent Jesus – Colossians 1:15–20

2. What do these verses show us about the greatness of Jesus and what He has already done for us?
3. How does knowing that Jesus is both Creator and the one who brings peace change the way we see our lives and priorities?
4. Verse 18 says that Jesus has the first place in everything. How might loving Him grow naturally out of seeing Him this way, rather than from a sense of duty or guilt?
5. How might remembering the greatness of Jesus each week as we gather help us keep fear, pride, or distraction in their right place?

Precious Jesus – Philippians 3:8–10

6. Paul describes everything else as loss compared to knowing Christ. What gave him that kind of perspective?
7. How do you see God's grace shaping Paul's desire to know Christ more deeply?
8. In what ways does God help or empower us to love and know Him, rather than leaving us to do it on our own?

From fear to love – 1 John 4:18–21

9. John says perfect love drives out fear. What kinds of fears tend to shape your life, even in your faith or service?
10. What difference might it make if Jesus' love became more precious to you than those fears? What would freedom from fear look like in everyday life?
11. How does love for God naturally lead to love for His people? Why can't the two be separated?

Living it out together

12. Why do you think meeting together with others who know and love Jesus helps us remember what He has done and keep loving Him?
13. Our gatherings are not just weekly events but visible expressions of what God is doing in the world, uniting people around Jesus. How does that change how you think about Sunday?
14. Singing together is one way we express thankfulness for what God has done. How can singing from the heart help anchor our love and trust in Him?
15. Often when we turn up on Sunday, we come hoping the service will encourage or help us. At other times, we arrive with a list of tasks or rosters and our minds are full. What kind of prayer or attitude might help you approach Sundays in a healthy way, ready to remember God's grace and respond in love?
16. What might it look like for our church community to be known as a place not driven by fear but freed by love? How might that shape how newcomers experience us?