CONNECT UP: give the Lord an opportunity to speak to you through his Word

- 1 John 4 tells us twice that “God is love”. What would it look like if God’s love suddenly turned up in the midst of the community around the building where we are meeting? [Help for leaders: Give people space to dream. This is more than an ice-breaker exercise. You’re asking people to imagine what revival would look like locally, if Jesus turned up saying, “The time has come, God’s Kingdom has come near” (Mk 1:15).]

- **Read 1 John 4:7-21.** Wow - this is nothing short of revolution. John insists that God’s love has turned up in our community. God’s love has turned up for us in Jesus (v10) and God’s love has turned up for everybody else in Jesus in us (v12). John insists that, if we love others with the love of God through the Holy Spirit, then the invisible God is made visible in us!

- This is such massive good news that it can blow our minds. We are in danger of missing it. Ask a few group members, therefore, to summarise these verses from 1 John in their own words. Give them plenty of time to attempt to articulate the promise that John makes us here.

- Now lead into some practical application:

- Let’s receive God’s love towards us. **Read Psalm 147:10-11.** Our primary response to God’s love isn’t meant to be saying ‘I love you too’. It’s meant to be meditating on God’s love and then building our whole lives on how true this is for us. You may want to ask various people to read the following verses about God’s love to help you meditate on it:

- Let’s receive God’s love towards others. **Read Romans 5:5 & Philippians 1:8.** God’s love isn’t just something ‘out there’ towards us. The Apostle Paul says, when we are filled with God’s Spirit, it becomes something ‘in here’ towards others. What might this look like in practice?

- Let’s become agents of God’s love towards the world. **Read John 3:16 & 1 John 3:16.** What would it mean for us to be a Life Group that every day proclaims God’s love to the world?

CONNECT IN and OUT: work out the implications of what God says to you as a LG

- Move into a time of **sung worship** to the God who is glorious in love.
- Express your love for God by telling him how much you put your hope in his love.
- Express your love for each other by praying for one another’s burdens.
- Express your love for the lost world by praying that God will show you the key to the hearts of your many nonbelieving friends as a Life Group, so that you can lead them to his love.
- End with a time of commissioning each group member to go out as an ambassador of God’s love to the world. You may find some helpful commissioning words in 2 Corinthians 5:14-21.