

An Introduction
to God's Life

*In him was **life** and the **life** was the light of men.*

John 1.4

Introduction to God's Life



God's beloved
Husband
Father
Teacher
Member
Friend

Introduction to God's Life

Do you ever feel like your sometimes
just going through the motions?

It seems like maybe there should be
more to life than what you are
currently experiencing?

Introduction to God's Life

“So, how's your prayer life?”

Prayer life
Thought life
Home life
Sex life

Happy wife, happy life
Public life
Private life
Secret life

Introduction to God's Life

As these
diverge,
we experience
greater and
greater
hypocrisy
in our lives.

Public life
(*church*)

Private life
(*family*)

Secret life
(*God*)

As these
converge,
we experience
greater and
greater
integrity
in our lives.

How do we achieve convergence or alignment in life?

Introduction to God's Life

Hi, how are you?

"fine" ...public answer

How are you - really?

"not so good" ...private answer

No, how are you - *really*?

"if you only knew" ...secret answer

Introduction to God's Life

Peter, do you love me?

John 21.15

Introduction to God's Life

Peter, do you love me?

John 21.15

Question

Outward Answer

Inward Thought

Do you love me?

You know that I love you

Definitely

Do you love me?

You know that I love you

I think so

Do you love me?

You know that I love you

Probably not

Introduction to God's Life

Philippians 1.9

*And it is my prayer that your **love**
may **abound more and more***

Introduction to God's Life

Our highest priority: *Love*

Matthew 22.34 - 40

Love God with all your heart, soul and mind

Love your neighbor as yourself

But we don't do this well at all...why not?

Genesis 6.5 and Jeremiah 17.9

Every intention of the heart was only evil continually.

The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately sick.

Introduction to God's Life

Our highest priority: *Love*

Matthew 22.34 - 40

Love God with all your heart, soul and mind

Love your neighbor as yourself

But we don't do this well at all...why not?

Genesis 6.5 and Jeremiah 17.9

*Every intention of the heart was *only evil* continually.
The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately sick.*

Introduction to God's Life

Our highest priority: *Love*

Matthew 22.34 - 40

Love God with all your heart, soul and mind

Love your neighbor as yourself

But we don't do this well at all...why not?

Genesis 6.5 and Jeremiah 17.9

*Every intention of the heart was **only evil** continually.
The heart is **deceitful** above all things and **desperately sick**.*

Introduction to God's Life

Our highest priority: *Love*

Matthew 22.34 - 40

*Love God with all your heart, soul and mind
Love your neighbor as yourself*

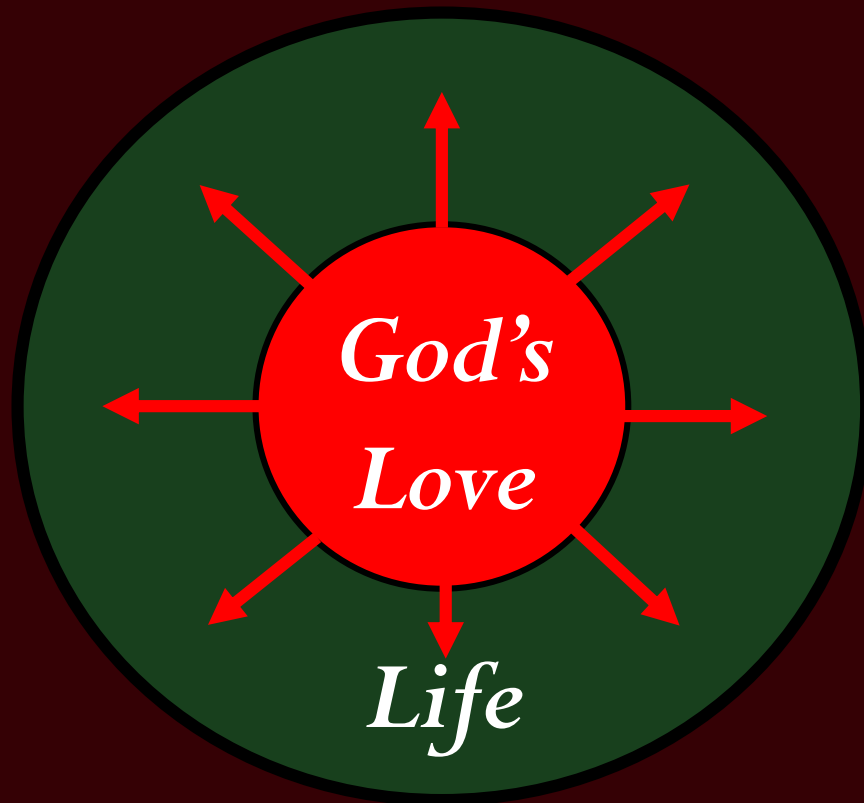
My only hope: God's *Love* in me

1 John 4.10

In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us!

Introduction to God's Life

The Invasion:



His Love for you is
unconditional.

NOT based upon:

- your performance
- your circumstances
- your love for Him

Introduction to God's Life

So in fall 2019, we looked at:

- our identity in the love of God
(*I am a beloved, adopted child of God. (1 Jn 3.1-2)*)
- the definition of God's love
(*sacrificial, unconditional commitment*)
- how God communicates His love
(*through His Son, His Word and trials*)
- the language of God's love
(*Chapman's 5 love languages: quality time, physical touch, acts of service, words of affirmation, giving and receiving gifts*)

Introduction to God's Life

We also looked at:

- some adjectives that describe His love
(“steadfast” Ps 90.14 “abundant” Ps 106.45)
- the barriers to God's love
(*not a priority, superficial knowledge, fear*)
- Characteristics of love-starved people
- the effect of God's love on my life

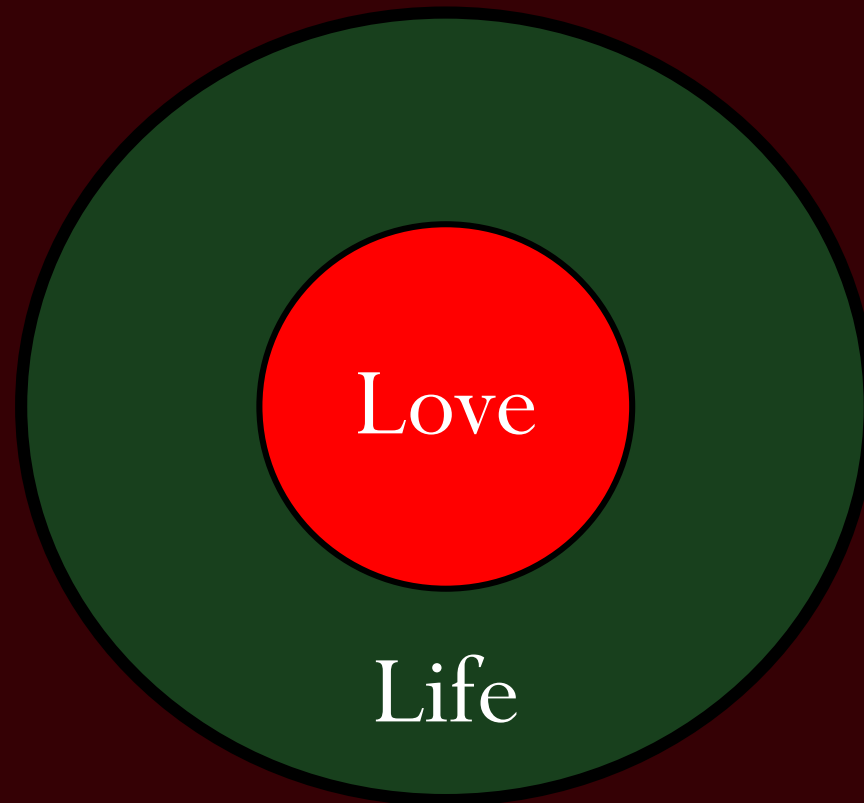
Introduction to God's Life

We also looked at:

- The Love of a Father
(Luke 15 – the prodigal actions of a loving Father)
- Abiding in God's Love
(John 15 – the metaphor of fruit attached to the Vine)

Introduction to God's Life

Love is at the heart of Life



Introduction to God's Life

Life is a precious gift —
Love is the *motivation*.

Life is a journey —
Love is the *energy*.

Life is measured by experience —
Love is measured by *commitment*.

Introduction to God's Life

*I love only because God first loved me
and whose very love is in me.*

*I live only because God first lives in me
and whose very life is in me.*

Introduction to God's Life

So, am I alive or just
going through the motions?

“dead man walking”

“asleep at the wheel”

“virtually alive” (teens?)

If I recognize that my life with God is not
what I think it should be, what can I do?

Introduction to God's Life

Fake News

vs.

Good News

Introduction to God's Life

1. Prosperity Gospel



Introduction to God's Life

1. Prosperity Gospel

“Your Best Life Now”

- Pastor Greg Gilbert: “It was Benjamin Franklin, not Jesus, who said, “God helps those who help themselves.” That is Osteen’s message, too, only it is more like ‘**God helps those who think well of themselves.**’
- Osteen: “God didn’t make you to be average. God created you to excel...if you will start acting like it, talking like it, **seeing yourself as more than a conqueror,** you will live a prosperous and victorious life.”

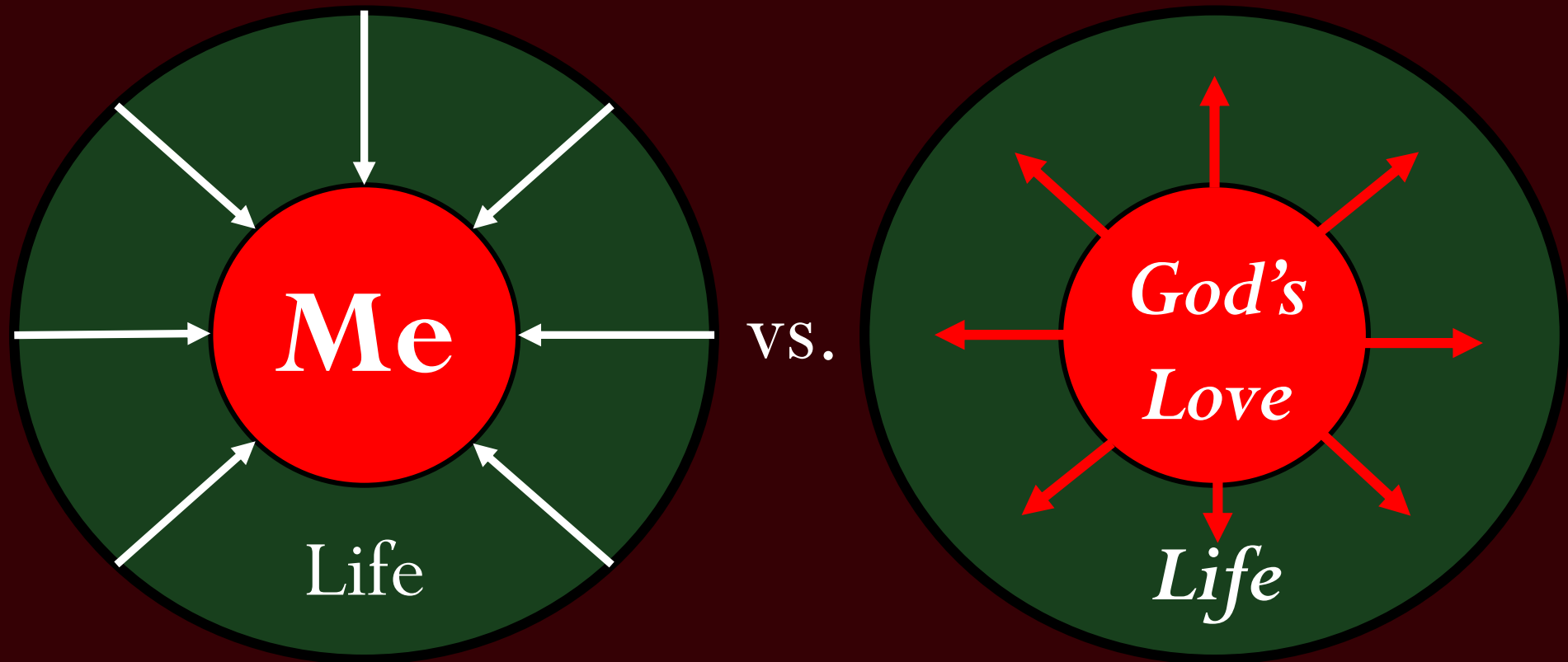
Introduction to God's Life

1. Prosperity Gospel

- Gilbert: “Osteen’s God is little more than the mechanism that gives **the power to positive thinking**. There is no cross. There is no sin. There is no redemption or salvation or eternity.”
- “The really frightening thing is that 8 million people have bought ‘Your Best Life Now’, and a good portion of those have probably walked away thinking they have read the Christian gospel. They think they understand **the message of the Bible, and it is me**. My success. My self-esteem. My house. My car. My promotion.”

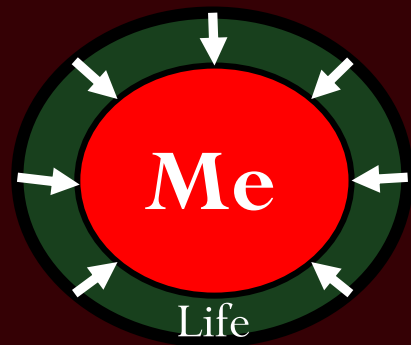
Introduction to God's Life

Prosperity Gospel

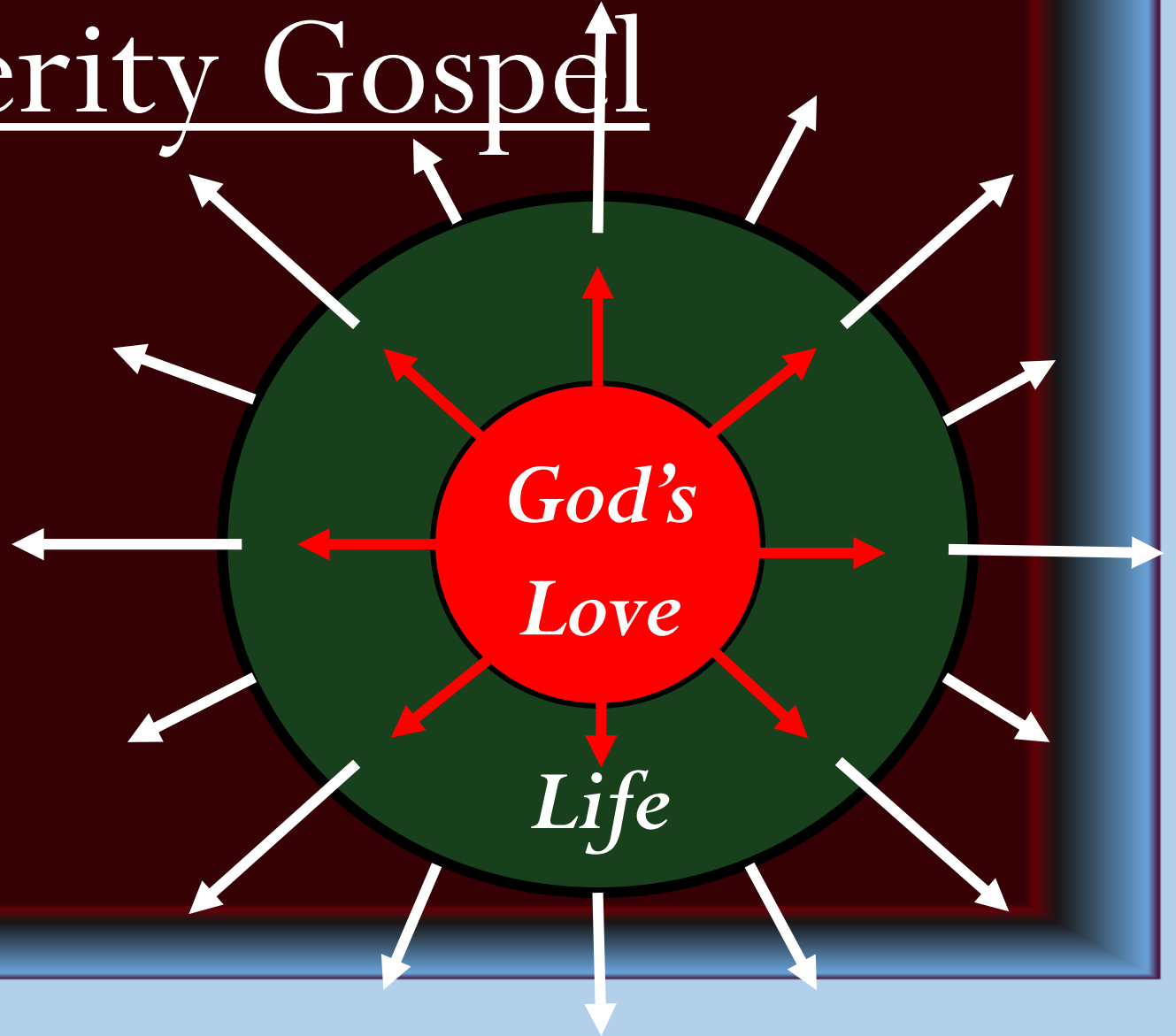


Introduction to God's Life

Prosperity Gospel



vs.



Introduction to God's Life

2. Second Baptism

R.C. Sproul:

“More books about the Holy Spirit have been written since the mid-twentieth century than were written in all the years of church history before then combined.

Much of this is due to the Pentecostal and charismatic movements, with their emphases on the **baptism of the Holy Spirit** and “sign gifts” such as tongues.

Introduction to God's Life

2. Second Baptism

These traditions tend to distinguish between *Spirit-filled* Christians and *non-Spirit-filled* Christians. Anyone who trusts in Jesus for salvation is a non-Spirit-filled Christian, while Spirit-filled Christians have experienced a second work of grace known as the baptism of the Holy Spirit—an infilling of God's Spirit with power and gifts for ministry. Normally, Pentecostals believe speaking in tongues proves that one has received the Holy Spirit.

Introduction to God's Life

2. Second Baptism

When we separate the baptism of the Holy Spirit from conversion, **we end up with second-class citizens in the kingdom of God**. But as the Lord has poured out His Spirit on all His people, this is impossible. Christians may be at different points in their sanctification and level of Christian maturity, but **no Christian lacks the Holy Spirit in his life**".

Introduction to God's Life

2. Second Baptism

1 Cor 12.12-13

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.

For **in one Spirit we were all baptized** into one body — Jews or Greeks, slaves or free — and **all were made to drink of one Spirit.**

Introduction to God's Life

I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.
(John 10.10)

The desire to live abundantly is not evil.

But you will never find it by looking to
prosper yourself
or by trying to supercharge your
Christianity through a second baptism.

Introduction to God's Life

Perhaps you're thinking, "I'm not a fan of Joel Osteen or of the belief that I need a second baptism."

...but do you have *your own version* of "Meism"?

Do you feel like *God is obligated* to meet your needs because of your commitment to Him?

Is He your *personal genie*? - that if you rub the lamp of your life just right, He will grant you your wishes?

(UCLA)

Pop Quiz: What happens when your cup gets bumped?

Introduction to God's Life

1. Hunger for the *material*
2. Hunger for the *spiritual*
vs.
3. Hunger for the *relational*

Introduction to God's Life

3. Live God's Life

How?

Simple but not easy.

Introduction to God's Life

3. Live God's Life

1 Corinthians 6.19b-20a

You are not your own,
for you were bought with a price.

Introduction to God's Life

3. Live God's Life

Galatians 2.20

I have been crucified with Christ. **It is no longer
I who live, but Christ who lives in me.**

And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the
Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Introduction to God's Life

3. Live God's Life

C.S. Lewis: Mere Christianity

And now, what does it all matter? It matters more than anything else in the world. The whole dance, or drama, or pattern of this

three-Personal life is to be played out in each one of us...

or (putting it the other way round) each one of us has got to enter that pattern, take his place in that dance. There is no other way to the happiness for which we were made.

Introduction to God's Life

3. Live God's Life

C.S. Lewis: Mere Christianity

Good things as well as bad, you know, are caught by a kind of infection, if you want to get warm you must stand near the fire: if you want to be wet you must get into the water. If you want joy, power, peace, **eternal life**, you must get close to, or even **into**, the thing that has them. They are not a sort of prize which God could, if He chose, just hand out to anyone.

Introduction to God's Life

3. Live God's Life

C.S. Lewis: Mere Christianity

They are a great fountain of energy and beauty spurting up
at the very center of reality.

If you are close to it, the spray will wet you: if you are not,
you will remain dry.

Once a man is united to God, how could he not **live forever**?

Introduction to God's Life

Is God alive?

Acts 14.15...*we bring you good news,
that you should turn from these vain things
to a living God, who made the heaven and
the earth and the sea and all that is in them.*

Introduction to God's Life

Is God alive?

Dt 5.26 . . . the voice of the living God

Ps 42.2 . . . my soul thirsts for the living God

Ps 84.2 . . . sing for joy to the living God

1 Tim 4.10 . . . our hope set on the living God

Introduction to God's Life

What does it mean that God is living?

Jeremiah 10.10

*But the LORD is the true God
[in contrast to non-living idols];*

he is the living God and the everlasting King.

God has the powerful ability TO BE and TO DO.

(groaning)

Introduction to God's Life

Are you alive?

How do you know?

Introduction to God's Life

Are you alive?

Physically

Beating heart
Breathing lungs
Awareness

Spiritually

Love - Jesus
Life - Spirit
Light - Father

Introduction to God's Life

Are you alive?

2 Cor 6.16...we are the *temple of the living God*; as God said, "I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

Introduction to God's Life

Are you alive?

John 6.57... *As the **living Father** sent me, and I **live** because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will **live** because of me.*

Introduction to God's Life

Where we were

Love of God

God the Son

I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

(Gal 2.20)

Where we are

Life of God

God the Spirit

...give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

(Rom 8.11)

Where we are going

Light of God

God the Father

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights...

(James 1.17)

Love



Life



Light

Introduction to God's Life

Love of God

1 John 4.9a →

In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world,

Life of God

1 John 4.9b

so that we might live through him.

Light of God

Introduction to God's Life

Love of God

Life of God

Light of God

John 1.4a

In him (Messiah) —→ John 1.4b-5

was life,

*and the life was the
light of men. The light
shines in the darkness,
and the darkness has not
overcome it.*

Introduction to God's Life

So, are you willing to take a journey
with me into the very heart of God...

...to explore *His life*...

and see how experiencing *His life*
transforms our lives?

Introduction to God's Life

Questions for discussion:

Can you become more *alive* than
you already are?

And if so, what might this look like?