

Eric Starner

Camp Pastor

I John 4:19

"We love, because he first loved us."

Discussion for the younger kids:

Do you love your parents? Isn't it cool that they loved you before you were even born? And after you were born, they loved you even when all you could do was cry and make messy diapers. You love them because they first loved you! God is the same way. He loved us before we were born and while we were doing nothing good for Him. What a cool God!

For Further Discussion:

Have you ever asked yourself what the meaning of life is? It is that all consuming question that everyone asks but no one can seem to answer. Why am I here, what is my purpose, and am I really all that important? I truly believe that this verse answers that very question. If you have ever read the Bible or have listened to a sermon, you have probably heard that God loves you and that you are supposed to love God and love others, but I don't believe that most of us truly understand the power of those statements of truth. The first and foremost reason we are on this planet is to be loved by God. God created man in his image and He created man to be in relationship with Him. He was a relational being from the very beginning. God's deepest desire was to daily walk and be in intimate constant communion with His creation that He dearly loved. The reason of our existence is to receive the love that God has for us and then because of that love shown towards us we are to release this love back to Him and to the rest of the world. We love because He first loved us. So often we turn this concept upside down and believe that we must love Him and others to receive His love. That is one of the biggest deceptions ever placed in the Body of Christ. People try to work at receiving the gift instead of working out of the gift already received. The greatest desire that God has for us is that we would receive the love, grace, and mercy He so freely offers us, and then for us to live our lives out of this all-consuming love that now dwells in us.

If you would like to ask Eric more about his devotional, you can send an [email](#) to him at camp.

