

# THE JESUS CREED

"Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one.

*Love* the Lord your God with all your **heart**,

with all your **soul**, with all your **mind**, and with all your **strength**."

The second is this: "*Love* your **neighbor** as yourself."

There is no commandment greater

than these.

## Questions for Further Reflection

### Study Guide 1

**Opening Question:** Think of one or two individuals that have had a shaping influence on your spiritual life. What was it about them that impacted you the most? Do you have any sense of what the guiding principle was/is that guided/guides their life?

# Questions for Further Reflection

## Study Guide 1

**Compare and Contrast the Jesus Creed with the Shema. What do you notice / appreciate / etc. as you do so?**

**Deut 6:4-9 (Lev 19:18)**

**Mark 12:28-31**

**Imagine:** Take a few moments to imagine what it would be like, what would be different, what might change, if you were to truly live out what you find in these passages of scripture.

### **What if these Passages shaped the way you prayed?**

Compare and contrast the traditional Jewish prayer from the time of Jesus (the Kaddish) with the Lord's Prayer. What do you notice / appreciate / etc. as you do?

Magnified and sanctified be his great name in the world He created according to His will.

May He establish His kingdom during your life and during your days, and during the life of all the house of Israel, speedily and in the near future.

Amen

Our Father in heaven hallowed be your name

Your kingdom come, Your will be done

On earth as it is in heaven

Give us today, our daily bread

Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil

# Questions for Further Reflection

## Study Guide 1

As you think about how the Lord's Prayer reflects the Jesus Creed, how do your own prayers compare with this pattern? What implications does this have for your own prayer life?

What additional insights do these passages give you about prayer, and how God may be inviting you to pray?

Matthew 11:25-27

Matthew 26:36-46

John 17

**That God loves us as a good and loving father loves his children is the foundation for a healthy spiritual life that embodies the Jesus Creed.**

How easy is it for you to accept and experience God's love in this way? Why do you think it is as easy or as hard as it is? If it is hard, what kinds of things seem to help?

**Learning to share this experience together with each other is a vital part to experiencing and living out what the Jesus Creed is all about.**

What do you think about this statement: *"At the table of fellowship with Jesus, where walls between people are broken down, we find healing, vision and hope?"* Share your thoughts . . .

# Questions for Further Reflection

## Study Guide 1

Take a few moments to list the ways that you see walls dividing people from each other, or make sitting together at the table of fellowship challenging for us:

Jesus was often criticized for sharing table fellowship with those that others had “walled out.” What are the chances that you could be subject to the same criticism that Jesus was? Are you OK with that? Explain.

Reflect on these passages of scripture that describe how Jesus’ practice of “table fellowship” created problems for Himself and His followers. Jot down your reactions to each of these:

Luke 5:27-32

Luke 7:36-50

Luke 1-2

**An even more powerful dimension of the Jesus Creed is the imagery of love** we find reflected in the writings of the prophet Hosea, and in Jesus choice of words to address His father as “Abba.” *Both of these images seek to capture the depth and intensity of the Love God wants us to experience and reflect.*

*What are some of the ways that you find this impacting your spiritual life?*

*Where are some of the places where you would like this to be experienced more fully?*

# Questions for Further Reflection

## Study Guide 1

Here are some examples of people who were impacted by God's amazing love in their lives. What impresses you most about each of these?

Luke 7:36-50

Luke 19:1-10

### **The Jesus Creed is meant to be expressed**

As you recall the parable of the Good Samaritan, think about a time or two where an seeming obligation came into conflict with an opportunity to love another person well.

Reflect on how you dealt with that situation, and how, if you could re-wind and do it again, how you would deal with it now.

Ponder the following additional examples of Jesus showing love:

Mark 1:40-45

Matthew 20:29-34

**As you think back over all that you have considered so far, what are one or two statements that would summarize what has spoken to you the most powerfully?**