

What is Love?

1 Corinthians 13

January 7, 2018

Here's where we are headed for rest of the month:

This morning – What is love (marriage)?

Tonight and next Sunday night - Ephesians 5.

January 14th – Continuation of 1 Corinthians 13:4-10, “Take out the Trash.”

January 21st – Roles of husband and wife/parents/kids.

January 28th – Isaiah 39, What if I do or don't take my responsibility as parent (grandparent, uncle, aunt, etc.) seriously?

Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, for he has no one to help him up. **Ecclesiastes 4:9-10**

This is true for marriage, but also for every aspect in our life. Everybody needs somebody!

And the Lord God said, “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.”

Genesis 2:18

Therefore, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to be his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

Genesis 2:24

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

1 Corinthians 13:1-3

The word “love” used here and the word “love” used in Ephesians 5 is the word “Agape”. Three types of love and agape is the strongest.

“The Greek word *agape* is often translated “love” in the New Testament. How is “agape love” different from other types of love? The essence of agape love is goodwill, benevolence, and willful delight in the object of love. Unlike our English word *love*, *agape* is not used in the New Testament to refer to romantic or sexual love. Nor does it refer to close friendship or brotherly love, for which the Greek word *philia* is used. **Agape love involves faithfulness, commitment, and an act of the will. It is distinguished from the other types of love by its lofty moral nature and strong character.** Agape love is beautifully described in 1 Corinthians 13. *Agape* is used to describe the love that is of and from God, whose very nature is love itself: “God is love” (1 John 4:8). God does not merely love; He is love itself. Everything God does flows from His love. *Agape* is also used to describe our love for God (Luke 10:27), a servant’s faithful respect to his master (Matthew 6:24), and a man’s attachment to things (John 3:19). The type of love that characterizes God is not a sappy, sentimental feeling such as we often hear portrayed. God loves because that is His nature and the expression of His being. He loves the unlovable and the unlovely, not because we deserve to be loved or because of any excellence we possess, but because it is His nature to love and He must be true to His nature. **Agape love as modeled by Christ is not based on a feeling; rather, it is a determined act of the will, a joyful resolve to put the welfare of others above our own.**

Agape love does not come naturally to us. Because of our fallen nature, we are incapable of producing such a love. If we are to love as God loves, that love—that *agape*—can only come from its Source. This is the love that “has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us” when we became His children (Romans

5:5; cf. Galatians 5:22). “This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters” (1 John 3:16). Because of God’s love toward us, we are able to love one another.”¹

Good for all relationships, but this morning the focus is marriage.

1) True love can only be given if first received.

We love Him because He first loved us.

1 John 4:19

I can’t give that what I don’t have. I can give a fake love, emotions, feelings but not true love. God is love, therefore I can only Biblically and truthfully love others with the love of God.

2) Love is a choice.

It may come with emotions, (and should) but must not be confused with emotions. Love is not feeling, lust, a fling or on and off. We don’t love one minute and not love the next.

Despite what our world, media and TV tell us we don’t go on feelings or on whims, but on Truth.

One chooses to love, Jesus did!

3) I love my spouse best when I am first in a right, love relationship with the Lord.

I am walking and talking with the Lord.

4) Communication is key!

Talk, share, take time for yourself. If you have kids remember, family will always be taken care of when your relationship with each other is first.

MAKE TIME for each other!

Go home and love your spouse!!!

5) I must take out the trash in my marriage, regularly. (will pick up here next week)

“Trash affects us. It contaminates our relationships. It did Cain’s, He had anger in his mind before he had blood on his hands. And Martha? Martha was meddlesome in her attitude before she was quarrelsome in her tongue. And what about the Pharisees? They killed Christ in their hearts before they killed Him on the cross. Mark it down. Today’s thoughts are tomorrow’s actions. Today’s jealousy is tomorrow’s temper tantrum. Today’s bigotry is tomorrow’s hate crime. Today’s anger is tomorrow’s abuse. Today’s greed is tomorrow’s embezzlement. Today’s guilt is tomorrow’s fear”.

~ Max Lucado

Take out the trash!

Prayer Focus:

- **Married: That I would commit anew to love my spouse with God’s love.**
- **Single Adult (desiring to be married): I would pray for my future spouse.**
- **Widowed: I would ask how God might have me mentor or pour into another person or couple.**
- **Kids and students: I would FIRST be the person God wants me to be and then begin praying for my future spouse, focusing on what I am looking for!**

¹ Gotquestions.com (agape love)