

## Study Guide – EMOJI - Love, from 8-6-2017

### Warming Up

If you have already found your “soul mate”, share details about how you felt when you first met. If you have still not met your spouse or future spouse, share how you might imagine meeting them. What would it be like? In either case, how did meeting them make you feel?

### Commanded to Love

We often think of “love” as warm and fuzzy, and “commandments” as harsh and firm. But when the Pharisees asked Jesus, “Which is the great commandment in the law?” (Matt 22:34-39), His answer was LOVE – first love of God with all that you have, then love of others as yourself. We might think of love as something that we choose to do towards another person. Does it surprise you that Jesus considered it the most important commandment of God’s law? Does this truth make you feel differently about the importance of being a loving person?

### Types of Love

Storge love is love for family – parents or siblings. Eros pertains to procreation and the almost uncontrollable urges for the activities that can result in procreation. Phileo love is love of the soul – chosen friendship or attraction, which is often reciprocated back to us. But Agape love is the love of John 3:16. It is the highest love – divine love. Jesus loved a world that rejected Him and did not know nor love Him. They (we) did not deserve to receive the kind of love that God had us.

Have you ever made yourself love someone who did not deserve your love, even someone who despised you, and could not be expected to give you anything back in return?

Does it give you any comfort that this kind of love is exactly the kind of love that God has for His children?

Does the understanding to this kind of love cause you to keep loving even though there is nothing in it for you?

How hard is it to push our humanity away and love like God loves? Discuss.

### The Young and the Single (Restless???)

Did it surprise you when Pastor Baugh shared that many women subconsciously (or consciously) base falling in love with what happens at the end of a Disney movie? He pointed out that this kind of expectation leads to disappointment and heartbreak because those movies only show the infatuation phase of a romance, not what the marriage looks like years later.

Do you know of a friend who is still single because they have unrealistic expectations towards their prospective mate and how that love will look like?

One of best quotes that Pastor Baugh gave for single people was to “not give up and follow God.” If God numbers the hairs on your head (John 10:30), does He not know the right person to be your spouse?

Yet, when the desire to give and receive love is burning within you, how easy is it to keep waiting on the Lord?

Do you know of anyone who has stopped following God and moved away from Him and His ways in the pursuit of being loved by another human?

What are some ways that a Christian can compromise his or her faith in the pursuit of being loved?

Certain emotional and physical behaviors of closeness are intended by God for marriage. How has our culture fought a war against saving those activities for marriage?

How is the line blurred?

Give some specific examples of Satan’s ploys in this area. Is our culture falling for them?

### **Married Couples (Husbands and Wives)**

Do you think that many married people think that it is enough to meet their spouse half-way? (After all, that’s only fair.) Pastor Baugh pointed out that this is Phileo love – it could be a business contract, or a keeping of records, and it is not the Agape love that God desires for marriage.

The Bible calls the church His bride. God’s marriage love towards His people is Agape love. It is selfless, loves when unloved, loves even when love is not deserved or earned. It gives 100% in time and effort.

Which kind of love rules your marriage? Which kind should?

### **Conclusion - Image of God**

The Bible tells us that only mankind is made in the image of God. John 3:16 says that God loves with Agape love. When we love the world with Agape love, aren’t we living like the only creature made in God’s own image?

Pastor Baugh said, “Love in meant to be the defining mark of God’s people.” John 13:35 says, “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

How important is it for us to love the world as God loved us?

Give some specific ways that you can do this?