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Pendleton First

Opening: DC talk said “Love is a verb” in the 90’s. It’s true, love is not talk but action. Love is not exclusively an emotional response. Love is not a product of our feelings it is in fact a choice. The truth about real Love is that it has great power to turn situations around. No matter your obstacles today, let us learn that Love really works.

Key Scripture: 1 Corinthians 13:1-8 1If I speak with the tongues of mankind and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2If I have *the gift of* prophecy and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. 3And if I give away all my possessions *to charity*, and if I surrender my body so that I may glory, but do not have love, it does me no good. 4Love is patient, love is kind, it is not jealous; love does not brag, it is not arrogant. 5It does not act disgracefully, it does not seek its own *benefit*; it is not provoked, does not keep an account of a wrong *suffered*, 6it does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; 7it keeps every confidence, it believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8**Love never fails;** but if *there are gifts of* prophecy, they will be done away with; if *there are* tongues, they will cease; if *there is* knowledge, it will be done away with.

1. We love a determined Love story.

- a. The love of a Father for his wayward son, a husband for his betrothed wife, a mother’s love battling for her kids, the love an older couple have fostered for each other over decades, or the love people share though severe trial and duress, all of these to us on a deep spiritual level.

- b. Hollywood and Music industry professionals understand the power of love, and therefore it is a powerful marketing tool to connect people to products services and ideas.
- c. Why is this true? God has wired each one of us with a mission critical need to receive and give love.
- d. That need is still present in all of us today, but Satan has worked to deceive humanity into thinking that love is not enough.

2. Knowledge alone does not produce Love.

- a. **1st Corinthians 8:1 Now concerning food sacrificed to idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge makes one conceited (Puffed up with pride), but love edifies people.**
- b. Humanity was not created to be agents of evil, wickedness, destruction or pain, these evil desires spring from our connection to a fallen kingdom. That kingdom is ruled by Satan and is responsible for the evil we see throughout the world. You have a better future prepared for you, one of great love and joy.
- c. How did Satan gain control? Satan took advantage of humanity in the garden, infiltrated the sacred relationship man and God had together and placed a wall between God and mankind called sin. That sin is the result of mankind's eyes being closed to God's truth resulting in a lack of trust in God's character and love.
- d. In the Garden mankind was bent in the opposite direction of God through Satan's deception.
- e. We began **to reason within ourselves**(Determine on our own) what was **good and right**, (true knowledge apart from God). We were deceived in thinking that knowledge produces love, leading to life.

- f. We manifest our distrust in God's character every time we lean upon our own understanding and ability. Therefore, we lean on our reasoning instead of trusting in God who loves us deeply and faithfully.
- g. **Genesis 3:6-7** **6**When the woman saw that the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eyes, and that it was desirable for obtaining wisdom, she took the fruit and ate it. She also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate it.**7**And the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked (vulnerable, unprotected); so, they sewed together fig leaves and made coverings for themselves.

3. Love is distorted and Corrupted.

- a. Who and what love is has been known exclusively to the Christian for nearly 2000 years.
- b. **1st John 4:8** **The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.**
- c. According to a recent Pew Research Poll
 - i. poll **50%** of Americans 18 or older are married which is down 8 percent from 1990's.
 - ii. Good news **88%** of people in America said love was the top reason to get married, bad news **28%** said financial stability and **23%** said legal rights and benefits were reasons for marriage.
 - iii. **64%** of respondents said having shared interests helped people stay married, **61%** said a healthy sex life and **56%** said sharing household chores. (These things are good but is this really what creates a strong bond in marriage? Is this really the reason for marriage?)

iv. Cohabitation in the US is up to **21 million people**. That is a trend that is up **29%** since 2007 **50%** of cohabitants are younger than 35 and the fastest growing sector of those choosing not to marry but still enjoy the “benefits” of marriage are among the **50 and older crowd**.

d. **Do we know what Biblical Marriage is?** Marriage is a union between one biological man and one biological woman. It is a covenant agreement before God that unites two people for this lifetime in an **exclusive relationship**. Marriage is God’s ultimate relationship for Love to manifest through.

- i. Marriage is the only covenant where a sexual relationship can occur, outside of marriage all sex is considered fornication or adultery. This causes many hurts when people live this way.
- ii. Marriage is a picture of Christ being unified with His church. It’s important. **Ephesians 5:31-33**
- iii. Marriage is the rejoining of man with woman, since the woman was created from the man, marriage completes the creation. A Male is not complete unless He is connected to His wife.
- iv. Marriage is not so much about making someone happy but is designed to make **one Holy** and it sanctifies an individual separating them from **worldly temptations** and unifying them for godly purposes. Unfortunately, we see a decrease in marriage and increase in worldliness today.
- v. Marriage is for pro-creation; God has intended that marriage is the foundation for a home to be built on whereby the **next generation** can be adequately cared for and nourished to maturity.
- vi. Marriage, like all covenants is a firm commitment to another party and it takes love, honor, faith, integrity, and

good character to enter it. It also takes forgiveness & humility to stay married.

- vii. **Life Lesson:** Some of the reasons people are not getting married today are because they lack good character, integrity, love and honor. Real love is not afraid of commitment. If your partner won't commit to you in marriage, they are not worth your time. Love is not selfish.

4. God proved that Love works.

- a. **John 3:16-17 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. "For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.**
- b. Jesus ultimate example to humanity was that by Love He would die in our place so we would not have to. Jesus showed the world what selfless love really looks like and what it can accomplish.
- c. **So does love really work?** Ask Jesus. As Christians we believe that the cross was the ultimate act of Love that God expressed to humanity. I believe that Love is truly the most powerful force for bringing change in the earth. No other human on planet earth has had a bigger impact than Jesus. Do you believe this?

5. The Power of Love

- a. **1st John 4:17-18 By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the Day of Judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world. Such love has no fear because perfect love expels all fear. If we are afraid, it is for fear of**

punishment, and this shows that we have not fully experienced his perfect love.

b. Hebrews 2:15 Hebrews 2:15 **Only in this way could he set free all who have lived their lives as slaves to the fear of dying.** **Satan has used the power of the fear of death to enslave humanity. God's love sets us free to fully love.

c. If we really pay attention, we are going to find that most of the evil that happens in this world is rooted in fear in one way shape or form. God's love casts out that fear and replaces it with faith .

d. Are you living out of your fears or your faith? A greater, higher love exists to set you free.

e. Key Point: If we are living out of our fears, we will be constantly self-preserving ourselves, or protecting. If we are living out of our faith, we will become free, vulnerable, self-sacrificing, generous, and ultimately fearless. Christianity is a journey of Growing in the love of God.

6. Our faith must be rooted in Love. Examine your heart this morning.

a. Galatians 5:6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any power, **but only faith working through love.** ** In conclusion our faith cannot even reveal itself unless we have love.