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Groups Sermon Study Questions

Love Changes Everything

December 30, 2018

Message Summary

Love changes everything, but human love can sometimes fail. Eros love, attraction, produces a strong desire to possess. This type of love says “give me.” In a good way, eros love is present in romantic attraction. Phileo love, or brotherly love, gives and takes. It says, “because you provide something for me, I will give to you.” Human love can produce an emotional bond, but it can also be lost or twisted into something relationally destructive. Agape love, God's love, says I will give to you expecting nothing in return. Agape love is only sustainable through the power of the Holy Spirit. Believers not only should, but can show agape love for others.

1. Think of someone that you love dearly. In what ways do you show your love to that person?

2. What are some of the most common reasons human love fails?

Consider This

King David lusted for another man's wife, Bathsheba. When he acted upon this selfish desire, an emotional and phileo bond eventually developed and he married her. However, this relationship became destructive to both Bathsheba and David's families with consequences that affected the rest of their lives (2 Samuel 11:2-27).

The Bible teaches that the marriage bed is pure (Heb 13:4) and that sex is good but should be reserved for marriage.

1. Consider Proverbs 5:15-23. Why is unrestrained sexual desire without a marriage commitment destructive?
2. What are some of the consequences of unrestrained lust outside of a marriage commitment (see also Proverbs 5:7-14)?

The high priest, Eli, loved his two sons. When they were bad, he rebuked them but he didn't discipline them as he could and should have (1 Samuel 2:12, 22-25).

3. Read 1 Samuel 2:27-34. What were the results of Eli's phileo love gone awry?
4. What are some other ways our love for family and friends can become destructive?
5. Can you describe situations when a person can and should say no to friends and family members as an expression of loving concern?

Agape love gives to those who don't deserve, and gives without expecting anything in return. Agape love even gives to enemies. **"God so loved the world that he gave . . ."** John 3:16. Even while we were God's enemies, He gave . . . (Romans 5:8-10).

6. Read Ephesians 1:3-8, 11. How does God demonstrate his love for you?
7. How do you know God loves you?

8. Read Romans 8:35-39. Can anything separate you from God's love? Does God's love for you fail when bad things happen? Why or why not?

Agape love acts in the best interests of the object of love. Like a surgeon must sometimes destroy tissue in order to heal, so too God's love is sometimes painful.

9. According to Romans 8:28-29 what can believers know for sure about God's care over them?

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, believers can love with God's love. For, **"We love because he first loved us"** (1 John 4:19).

10 Read Luke 6:28. How can you have love for others who have nothing to offer to you, who don't deserve your love, and even for those who are enemies to you

Moving Forward

Read Matthew 6:6-15

1. What keeps Christians from forgiving?
2. What does it mean to forgive one another from the heart (Matt 18:35)?
3. Who will you forgive this week?
4. Who will you pray for this week?