

LOVE

1Co 13:12-13 (TPT) For now we see but a faint reflection of riddles and mysteries as though reflected in a mirror, but one day we will see face-to-face. My understanding is incomplete now, but one day I will understand everything, just as everything about me has been fully understood. [13] Until then, there are three things that remain: faith, hope, and love—yet love surpasses them all. So above all else, let love be the beautiful prize for which you run.

Today's topic: LOVE

Far too many times in too many places and with too many people this is the missing ingredient.

We have our doctrine. We have our music style and our dress codes. We have our steeples topped with a cross and our baptismal filled with water but what we don't have is this crazy Divine thing called love.

Love is the beautiful prize.

Love gives life meaning - the meaning of life is love

No book has ever outdone the Bible in talking about love. The scripture draws portraits of love, tells stories of love, has songs about love, poems about love and contains the story of the most loving person to ever walk the planet. So needless to say I am not gonna completely cover this topic in 33 minutes.

But I'm gonna do the best I can.

In Mark 12 a scholar asked Jesus, "What is the meaning of life?"

Mar 12:28 (TPT), "Teacher, which commandment is the greatest of all?"

Mar 12:29-31 (TPT) Jesus answered him, "The most important of all the commandments is this: 'The Lord Yahweh, our God, is one!' [30] You are to love the Lord Yahweh, your God, with every passion of your heart, with all the energy of your being, with every thought that is within you, and with all your strength. This is the great and supreme commandment. [31] And

the second is this: 'You must love your neighbor in the same way you love yourself.' You will never find a greater commandment than these."

Now that's beautiful, but what does He mean, exactly, by the word love?

It's an unclear word in English because you can love your mom and you can love pizza. And if the word love means the same thing in both cases your momma is going to feel real bad.

To understand what Jesus meant we have to adjust our very concept of love.

When asked what was the most important thing in life Jesus gave a compound answer.

- You are to love the Lord Yahweh, your God, with every passion of your heart, with all the energy of your being, with every thought that is within you, and with all your strength. This is the great and supreme commandment.
- And the 2nd which is like the first is You must love your neighbor in the same way you love yourself.'

So which is the most important? Loving God or loving your neighbor? Jesus answer is "YES"

For Jesus they're two sides of the same coin. **Your love for God will be expressed by your love for people and vice versa. They're inseparable.**

1Jn 4:20-21 (NASB) If someone says, "I love God," and yet he hates his brother or sister, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother and sister whom he has seen, **cannot** love God, whom he has not seen. [21] And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God must also love his brother and sister.

Hate: doesn't mean only to feel passionate dislike. It also means to be indifferent, to refrain.

To have the ability to help someone and be indifferent towards them is to hate them.

Remember the story of the good samaritan?

- Robbers

- Priest
- Levite
- Samaritan

The Priest didn't do the beating but did he love or hate the man?

The Levite didn't strip him and leave him for dead but did he love him?

The Samaritan actually demonstrated love.

Love is not a feeling. For Jesus love is action.

Its a choice that you make, much like God did, to see to the well-being of people other than yourself.

Jesus took this radical concept of love even further He said, [Mat 5:43-44 \(NASB\)](#) "You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR and hate your enemy.' [44] "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

[Mat 5:43-44 \(TPT\)](#) "Your ancestors have also been taught 'Love your neighbors and hate the one who hates you.' [44] However, I say to you, love your enemy, bless the one who curses you, do something wonderful for the one who hates you, and respond to the very ones who persecute you by praying for them.

And going even further He said [Mat 5:46 \(NASB\)](#) "For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Even the tax collectors, do they not do the same?"

The ultimate litmus test of love is how you treat the person you can't stand.

This kind of enemy-embracing love imitates the very character of God Himself

Who loved us and gave Himself for us even while we were still His enemies.

[Rom 5:8 \(NASB\)](#) But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

So the question is where does this kinda of love come from and how do we engage in it?

Rom 5:5 (AMPC) Such hope never disappoints or deludes or shames us, for **God's love** has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit Who has been given to us.

Remember I have told you, *"God never requires anything of you that He does not first provide for you."*

God doesn't expect you to love people in your own way

God doesn't expect you to love your enemies in your own strength

No, first He pours His love into you through the Holy Spirit.

Then He requires of you that same love be poured out through you.

Joh 13:34 (TPT) *"So I give you now a new commandment: Love each other just as much as I have loved you.*

With the same intensity, honesty and purity.

Eph 3:16-21 (AMPC) May He grant you out of the rich treasury of His glory to be strengthened and reinforced with mighty power in the inner man by the [Holy] Spirit [Himself indwelling your innermost being and personality]. [17] May Christ through your faith [actually] dwell (settle down, abide, make His permanent home) in your hearts! May you be rooted deep in love and founded securely on love, [18] That you may have the power and be strong to apprehend and grasp with all the saints [God's devoted people, the experience of that love] what is the breadth and length and height and depth [of it];

So you see here the the aim of Christianity is not to master doctrine, or rules of conduct, dress codes and formulas.

The aim of Christianity is to be rooted deep in love. Founded securely on love.

To know by experience the breadth & length & and height & depth of Love.

[19] [That you may really come] to know [practically, through experience for yourselves] the love of Christ, which far surpasses mere knowledge [without experience];

In other words you must experience it to know it. You don't get it out of someones book, or a bible class. You gotta jump in to get wet.

that you may be filled [through all your being] unto all the fullness of God [may have the richest measure of the divine Presence, and become a body wholly filled and flooded with God Himself]! [20] Now to Him Who, by (in consequence of) the [action of His] power that is at work within us, is able to [carry out His purpose and] do superabundantly, far over and above all that we [dare] ask or think [infinitely beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, hopes, or dreams]-- [21] To Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations forever and ever. Amen (so be it).

You see here that your prayer life is directly connected to your love life

1Jn 4:7-8 (AMPC) Beloved, let us love one another, for love is (springs) from God; and he who loves [his fellowmen] is begotten (born) of God and is coming [progressively] to know and understand God [to perceive and recognize and get a better and clearer knowledge of Him]. [8] He who does not love has not become acquainted with God [does not and never did know Him], for God is love.

Our ability to love is determined by our awareness of Love (His) love.

If we don't know that we are loved we will find it impossible to love the unloveable and barely possible to love the lovable. .

But as we become acquainted with God's love for us, it stirs up the love within us and allows us to release the love to flow out of us.

As our awareness of being loved increases our capacity to love increases.

Many christians try to express love to others without fully accepting or even being aware of being loved by God first.

They try to love out of religious duty only to find their love tank empty.

You gotta be loved before you can love.

1Jn 4:10-11 (AMPC) In this is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation (the atoning sacrifice) for our sins.

1Jn 4:10-11 (TPT) This is love: He loved us long before we loved him. It was his love, not ours. He proved it by sending his Son to be the pleasing sacrificial offering to take away our sins.

[11] Beloved, if God loved us so [very much], we also ought to love one another.

[11] Delightfully loved ones, if he loved us with such tremendous love, then “loving one another” should be our way of life!

1Jn 4:17 (AMPC) In this [union and communion with Him] love is brought to completion and attains perfection with us, that we may have confidence for the day of judgment [with assurance and boldness to face Him], because as He is, so are we in this world.

1Jn 4:18-19 (AMPC) There is no fear in love [dread does not exist], but full-grown (complete, perfect) love turns fear out of doors and expels every trace of terror! For fear brings with it the thought of punishment, and [so] he who is afraid has not reached the full maturity of love [is not yet grown into love's complete perfection].

Why is there no fear in love because love fulfills all the requirements.

A love life is the perfect life.

Rom 13:8 (NASB) Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for the one who loves his neighbor has fulfilled *the* Law.

Rom 13:10 (NASB) Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of *the* Law.

Gal 5:14 (NASB) For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the *statement*, “YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.”

1Jn 4:18-19 [19] We love Him, because He first loved us.

1Jn 4:19-21 (TPT) Our love for others is our grateful response to the love God first demonstrated to us. [20] Anyone can say, "I love God," yet have hatred toward another believer. This makes him a phony, because if you don't love a brother or sister, whom you can see, how can you truly love God, whom you can't see?

Lets make a commitment to keep it Real at Real Life church not be phonies.