Neighbors & Nations: Made to Worship

Made to Love

Matthew 22:35-40

We're deep into our fall sermon series. This series is built on the belief that when something functions according to its design 2 things happen: it's potential is realized, & its designer is honored. We, along with our neighbors and nations were **Made to Worship** which involves many different forms (Praise, Follow, Belong, Work, Go, Peace). Today, we will see that we were made to **Love**!

It's amazing how ignorant we are about love. I "love" my wife, God, US, rib eye steak. We throw it around like it applies universally (KJV/Charity).

"Love is a variety of different feelings, states, and attitudes." **Wikipedia**

"Love is a feeling of strong or constant affection for a person." **Webster's**

Love is NOT a Feeling, It IS an Action: Love affects emotions, creates emotions & causes emotions but love is not an emotion. If it was, you could not control it, but love is not an emotion! Love is not something you say or something you feel, it is something you DO! Someone who says they don't feel love for their spouse, friend or family member should just act lovingly until the feelings come back. It's easier to act your way into feeling than feel your way into action.

Love is NOT an Event; It IS a Choice: You chose to love & you choose not to love. It is a myth that love is uncontrollable (You can't choose who you fall in love with… wrong!) *"I just fell in love…"* as if it were a ditch you didn't see. The problem is that the person who fell in love, only a few years later fell out.

Main Idea: For God's Glory & Their Good We Extend Love to Neighbors & Nations

"And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. 'Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?' And he said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.'" **Matthew 22:35-40**

3 Truths about the Love of God Expressed in Matthew 22:35-40

I. Love is All Important – Matthew 22:35-36

Jesus is clear: there is nothing more important than love. Not only is it most important in priority, but it will be the governing reality of every other aspect of our lives. We might put it on a list as first, but we should also put it at the center of life!

"If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing." **1 Corinthians 13:1-3**

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The purpose of Salem is to Love God, & Love People. Nothing we do rises above that pursuit, & everything we do flows from it. Our lives should be so ordered, too. Our family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, classmates, roommates, acquaintances, & passing people should associate us with love above all else!

Main Idea: For God's Glory & Their Good We Extend Love to Neighbors & Nations
3 Truths About the Love of God: 1) It's All-Important, 2) …

II. Love is All Consuming – Matthew 22:37-38

Notice that Jesus does not just say "love" and leave it at that.

*"And he said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your **heart** and with all your **soul** and with all your **mind**. This is the great and first commandment."* **Matthew 22:37-38**

The ancient Greeks (language of the NT) had several words to describe love, including *Eros* – romantic/sensual, *Storge* – familial affection, *Philia* – friendship, and *Agape* – most associate with the love of God and the one Jesus uses here.

Heart (*Kardia* – center of human life), **Soul** (*psyche* – immaterial inner self), and **Mind** (*dianoia* – understanding, reasoning, thinking).

"We are to take this list as an emphatic way of saying, 'Love God with everything you are in every way possible.'" **Stuart K. Weber**

We, along with our Neighbors and Nations were made for this type of all-consuming, all-important love. But the object of our love is of utmost importance. Loving anything at this level before God destines us for destruction and devastation.

Main Idea: For God's Glory & Their Good We Extend Love to Neighbors & Nations
3 Truths About the Love of God: 1) It's All-Important, 2) It's All Consuming…

III. Love is All Encompassing – Matthew 22:39-40

"And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets." **Matthew 22:39-40**

"We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him: whomever loves God must also love his brother. Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments." **1 John 4:19-5:2**

Remember, love isn't a feeling, it's an action. Love isn't an event; it is a choice. We act our way into feeling, rather than waiting to feel our way into action.

How to Love the Hard-to-Love:

- **Action Step # 1 – REMEMBER** - God loves the hard-to-love like us
- **Action Step # 2 – PRAY** - It's hard to hate someone while praying for them
- **Action Step # 3 – SERVE** - Find a simple, anonymous way to serve them

Jesus: Who didn't come to tell us about love, but was the highest form of love!!!

"Great love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends."
John 15:13

We were designed on purpose and for a purpose. To love God and love others to the extent that our neighbors and nations see God's love in us so much that they want it for themselves.

Main Idea: For God's Glory & Their Good We Extend Love to Neighbors & Nations
The Love of God is: 1) All-Important, 2) All Consuming, 3) All Encompassing.

Sources and Further Reading Opportunities

- **CSB Study Bible –** Trevin Wax, Ed. (2017)
- **Message of Matthew –** Michael Green (2001)
- **CCE: Exalting Jesus in Matthew –** Mason, Platt, & Merida (2020)
- **Bible Exposition Commentary –** Warren Wiersbe (1996)
- **Holeman New Testament Commentary: Matthew –** Stuart Weber (2000)
- **New American Commentary: Matthew –** Craig Blomberg (1992)
- **Spurgeon Study Bible –** C.H. Spurgeon (2017)
- **Tony Evans Study Bible –** Tony Evans (2019)
- **Let the Nations Be Glad –** John Piper (1993)