

Mission Impossible
Love God, Love People
 Matthew 22:35-40

Is it still possible to fulfill the mission that God has given us at Salem Church considering all the challenges we're facing? This new series will address why Salem has not and cannot back off our calling from God as a church. We begin with our purpose...

"Success demands singleness of purpose." Vince Lombardi

Disciples of Jesus: Our primary objective is not to develop our own purposes and build our lives around them. It is to seek God concerning our purpose and build our lives around fulfilling it.

"I cry out to God Most High, to God who fulfills his purpose for me." Ps 57:2

"The LORD has made everything for its purpose..." Proverbs 16:4a

"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

Main Idea: Salem Church's Purpose is All About Love

Two Aspects of Salem Church's Purpose in Matthew 22:35-40

I. Definition of Love

"Agape...means moral goodwill that proceeds from esteem, principle, or duty rather than attraction or charm." Tyndale Bible Dictionary

"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. Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known. So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love."

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

"Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love."

1 John 4:8

II. Direction of Love

- **Love for God:** Primarily we love God with ALL (whole, entire) of our...
 - **Heart:** Seat of desire, feelings, affections, passions, impulses
 - **Soul:** Inner self, being (*psucho* – i.e. psychology)
 - **Mind:** Reasoning, thinking, deciding.

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments." John 14:15 (Jesus)

- **Love for People:** 2nd flows from the 1st (*homoia*: one in the same)
 - **Neighbors:** Fellow person, member of the human family
 - **As Yourself:** In direct proportion to self-concern

"Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."

Romans 13:10

"So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets." Matthew 7:12

This community *must* know that we love them. They may not know what we believe, they may not understand the way we live, they may not know what we do in here every Sunday, but they **MUST** know that Salem Church loves them deeply and that our God loves them *even more!*

"Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know us, because God is love. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another." 1 John 4:7-11

Our ability as a church and as individuals to love God and love people is wholly dependent upon experiencing the love of God given to us through Jesus Christ's death on the cross. Once we have received that love, then we have the hope of giving that kind of love.

Salem Church Exists to Love God and Love People!

Sources & Further Reading Opportunities:

- *Tyndale Bible Dictionary* – Elwell & Comfort (2001)
- *Tyndale Concise Bible Commentary* – Hughes & Laney (2001)
- *New Bible Commentary* – D.A. Carson, R.T. France (1994)
- *Critical & Explanatory* – Jamieson, Fausset & Brown (1997)
- *Bible Knowledge Commentary* – J.F. Walvoord & R.B. Zook (1985)
- *Faithlife Study Bible* – J.D. Barry (2012)
- *CSB Study Bible* – Editor Trevin Wax (2017)
- *Evangelical Commentary on the Bible* – Richard J. Erickson (1995)

