

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. **Enjoy discovering more about Him!**

"7 WAYS TO PRACTICAL LOVE" | 1 COR 16 | PASTOR BRIAN BELL

WARM-UP QUESTION:

What is an action that speaks love to you?

"Giving Generously and Practicing Hospitality" 1 Corinthians 16: 1-12

Paul and others were coming to see and serve the Corinthians, as well as collect money to help people who suffered in a natural disaster. **What is challenging about regularly giving or practicing hospitality? Who are people who practice this well today?**

"Remaining Faithful and Honoring Faithful Servants" 1 Corinthians 16: 13-18

Believers are encouraged to stand firm and be strong in their faith, with all done in love, and to honor others who show this in their service of the church. **Why should strong faith and acts of love go together? Who are people you see as faithful servants?**

"Caring for Believers in Other Places and Greet One Another Affectionately" 1 Corinthians 16: 19-20

Paul reminds believers that each church should care for the bigger community of Jesus followers, and that warm greetings are important. **Why is it hard for churches to care for believers in other places? Who is someone who is good at greeting?**

"Loving the Lord, Eagerly Awaiting His Return" 1 Corinthians 16: 21-24

Paul ends his letter with the warning that love for Jesus is what counts, otherwise when He comes back, he or she will be judged. Jesus coming back is the fulfillment of the hope and faith for all Christians. **How does love and eager anticipation go together?**

REFLECTION QUESTION:

People who love Jesus should show that love in their faithfulness and longing for Jesus to come back as well as showing love in visible, practical ways to others. **Which of these ways to show love and faith challenged you? What is one that you could easily start doing this week? What is one that will need some work? Pray and Ask God to give you a strong faith with deep love.**

1 Corinthians 16

7-21-24

7 Ways to Practical Love

I. Announce:

- A. **Welcome:** those online & in Fellowship Hall.
- B. **Slide1 Storm Baseball:** *Faith & Family Night*. Today is the **last day** to purchase tickets to be guaranteed seats in the section with CM. Please visit our website or church app to purchase.
- C. **Slide2 REACH:** Reach will be partnering with *Bridge Builders in San Diego* on **Sun, Aug. 11** to facilitate a **Back to School** picnic and fun activities for **Refugee Families**. This is a wonderful chance for us to come together as a community and make a real difference in the lives of others. **Sign up** and be a part of the **REACH team**. Your willingness to serve will truly make a difference in the lives of those we will be reaching out to.
- D. **Prayer:**

II. Slide3 Intro: 7 Ways to Practical Love

- A. We've been studying **1st Corinthians** since Oct. 15th (9 months - 29 studies).
 1. **Guess which book we'll do next?** Yep, 2 Cor.
 2. **But** you might think *Wait, I came to a last study of a book?* You did, **but** here's the good news, **this is when Paul always gets really practical.**
- B. **Outline:** 7 ways to practical love. [Paul always ends his letters with the *practical*]

III. Slide4a 1) GIVING GENEROUSLY (1-4) READ

- A. In 2nd Cor. ch. 8,9 Paul deals with their attitude and motive behind giving.
 1. **Here**, their giving should be a **priority**, **not** an afterthought.
 2. Paul organizes a **relief effort** to poor Jews living in Jerusalem area.
 - a) **Slide4b** M Luther said, *God doesn't need our good works, but our neighbor does.*

3. This is not about **tithing** (Paul never uses that word in NT. Jesus does 3x's speaking to the Pharisees. 4 other x's in Heb. re: Ab/Mel) Paul is not laying out a law, but a **principal**.

a) It was law (actually 30%, not 10%). **But** it was also shown pre-law back in Genesis (Ab/Melch). I think 10% is a great starting point for some **or** what you're working towards for others. Start at some # or %, and give regularly.

b) **Remember**, whenever it talks about money, it is not for **God**, He doesn't need your money, it's *for you, for your growth, your maturity, in learning generosity*.

4. **Our church** sees aside 10%+ to missions each week. **Kel & I** give 10%, and then when we hear of other opportunities to give: missions, helping others go on mission trips, etc, we pray about those and help as we can.

B. **Slide4c** It speaks to **personal** - each one of you.

C. It speaks to **possibility** - each one of you. Not just those that have means. Widows mite.

D. It speaks to **planning** - put something aside, store it up. You need to be intentional about it or you probably won't do it. Not see if there is *anything left* at the end.

E. It speaks to **proportionate** - as he may prosper. The amount will differ from person to person, **but** we can all have **the same attitude** in giving, in common.

1. 2 Cor.9:7 ***Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.***

F. It speaks to **private** - no collecting when I come. Paul didn't want them to give because **Paul the Apostle** was there.

G. **Some** of you get an **attaboy** from the Lord this morning, so many have been very generous. **Others**, need to be challenged to grow in the area of generosity.

H. **Martin Luther** said that there's **3 conversions** that are necessary: **One** is the conversion of **the heart**. **The other** is the conversion of **the mind**/thought life. **The third** is the conversion of **the purse**/wallet. [Jesus agrees when He said, ***where your treasure is that's where your heart will be also***].

I. **Who embodied this expression of love the best? Jesus**. **Giving generously**, no one gave like **Jesus**, *living and then laying down His perfect life*. He gave His all.

IV. Slide 5 2) PRACTICING HOSPITALITY (5-12) READ

- A. (5-7) Paul was very **practical** in planning, yet very **flexible** to the **Spirits** leading!
1. I may write the script of my life, but God has editing rights. Sometimes He'll add a whole new scene. **Key: if the Lord permits.**
- B. Paul explains, *I don't wanna transactional relationship.* I don't want to just drop money and leave. I want relationship, deep friendship, deeper fellowship, with you. Let's meet up.
- C. **If the Lord permits** - God is in charge of our schedules. When it comes to travel plans that get messed up, altered, or flight changes. **Remember, if the Lord permits!** *Oh, so we don't need to freak out if our flight is delayed.*
- D. **Slide 6a** (8,9) **Opportunity + Adversity**
- E. **Encouraging news.** *For a wide door* (stands wide open) *for effective work* (active, powerful, adapted to success) *is open to me, and there are many adversaries* (oppositions).
1. An **adversary** or an **opposition** doesn't automatically = **closed door**.
 2. **Slide 6b** It was G. Campbell Morgan, that said, "*If there is not **opposition** in the place where you are serving, then you're serving in the wrong place.*"
 3. Alexander Graham Bell said, "*When one door closes, another opens, but we often look so long and regretfully at the closed door that we do not see the one that has opened for us.*"
- F. (10,11) Paul said he had no one *like-minded* like Timothy (Phil.2:20 only here). **Like-minded, like-souled** (sense). **One who shares the same soul. Yet** so different from Paul.
1. **So opposite from Paul.** Paul goes around *gets beat up, left for dead, goes right back in the same city.* Yet he has to tell Timothy, *God did not give us a spirit of fear/cowardice but power, love, & sound mind/self-control/self-discipline.*
 2. **Don't treat him 2nd best or as 2nd string.** [I've said it b4 I'll say it again, it is **not** a compliment to me to say, *we only like listening to you*].
 3. **Both** were doing the Lord's work. **Both** deserved support and respect.
- G. (12) **Apollos** - **did't want to come visit?** He didn't want to play into party-politics, *I am of Paul, I am of Apollo, I am a Cephas, or I am of Christ.*

H. Who embodied this expression of love the best? **Jesus. Practicing Hospitality**, Jesus was a friend of sinners, always welcoming the least and the lost. *I go to prepare a place for you, that's hospitality!*

V. Slide7 3) REMAINING FAITHFUL (13,14) READ

A. 5 Commands:

1. **Be watchful** (like our lil owl pic) - on alert, stay awake.
2. **Stand Firm in the faith** - take a stand (i.e. for truth), don't run from it.
3. **Act like men/women** - grow up, be courageous.
4. **Be strong** - **not shredded-ab's but** having an **inner strength** (maybe one who can handle criticism & temptation). *Be strong* 33 x's in scripture.
 - a) Paul prayed for the Ephesian Christians, *that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit* {key *in the inner man*.
5. **Let all that you do be done in love** - Love always brings us back to that perfect balance (lest we become Zealots, **or** repeat the Crusades).
 - a) This command adds depth to the other 4. Don't miss the connection of (13,14). *Be strong & then Let all that you do be done in love. Be bold and be big-hearted. Be compassionate and courageous. Share the truth but do it in love.*

B. Who embodied this expression of love the best? **Jesus. Remaining faithful**, look at the story of **Jesus's courage, strength, and love**. You don't see a better picture of remaining faithful.

VI. Slide8a 4) HONORING FAITHFUL SERVANTS (15-18) READ

- A. I love the **Stephanas family** (crown/στέφανος) - only fam to be *baptized* by Paul 1:16.
1. **Slide8b 1st They Devoted themselves** (15) or *addicted themselves* (lit. appointed themselves) which refers to *a self-imposed duty*.
 2. **2nd They Served the Saints** (16). Though they weren't in a formal position of leadership, *submit to them*.

3. 3rd They **Supplied** what the Corinthians didn't take care of (17).

4. 4th They **Refreshed** Paul's spirit and the Corinthians also. (18).

a) for they *refreshed* my spirit - like Philemon *refreshing* Paul all the time.

b) CM Let's raise up *Stephanas* families!

5. *Think of someone who has *refreshed* your spirit and tell them today!

6. Slide8c Note also it is good & right to *give recognition to such people*.

Christians listen up, we can *recognize* each other (voice, instrument, teaching, service). Just say thank you!

B. Who embodied this expression of love the best? **Jesus**. **Honoring Faithful Servants**, **Jesus** was *The Faithful Servant*, who will one day **honor you** by saying, *well done, good and faithful servant*.

VII.Slide9 5) CARING FOR BELIEVERS IN OTHER PLACES (19,20a) READ

A. A simple reminder that it's not all about CM. Yes we are a family, local church, but let's always see us as part of His global church/church plants/global field workers.

B. Who embodied this expression of love the best? **Jesus**. **Caring for believers in other places**, **Jesus** has a church around the world.

VIII.Slide10 6) GREET ONE ANOTHER AFFECTIONATELY (20b) READ

A. (20) *Holy kiss* (still greet this way through the middle East) - today a *warm holy handshake, a holy hug*. It's not only our awesome greeters, but each of you welcoming new friends coming in, the shy, the introvert, so people feel *welcome*.

1. I would like to add one to that, *a holy lean*. I met someone Wed night at our church that exemplified this, his name was **Dutch**. Dutch knows how to lean in to a new relationship. Dutch just met me but he walked over to me and slowly just leaned in. Dutch is a Golden Retriever (owned by Jackie). A trained and certified therapy animal. Trained to provide comfort and stress relief to others in a variety of situations. Be like Dutch, *lean in!*

B. Who embodied this expression of love the best? **Jesus**. **Greet one another Affectionately** - **Jesus** greeted people affectionately. **He** even touched those who no one else would touch. Leperous, blood diseased, outcast, sinners, the untouchables **He** purposely walked up to and touched!

IX. Slide11a7) **LOVING THE LORD, EAGERLY AWAITING HIS RETURN (21-24) READ**

A. (22) **Accursed** - sounds unChristian. **But** *but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God*, Jn.3:17.

B. **What matters most Paul?** Here's the kind of Christian we should be, *one that loves Jesus*. [we must get our loves right]

1. There are certain behaviors that should mark a Christian. **BUT** it's heart 1st, not behaviors 1st. Your behaviors follow your **affections**. *Slide11b If you love Jesus deeply, it will change your behaviors radically.* Tony Merida

2. If you're asked, *What kind of Christian are you?* Let your answer be, *I'm the kind that Loves Jesus*. (stay away from which **denomination**, or which **brand**, or which **tribe** you belong to)

3. 1 Cor's taught us to **love the Lord Jesus and love His people**.

C. *Slide12 (23) Our Lord, Come! - Maranatha* [μαρανα-θα Master-come] (a transliteration of Aramaic). Why **Aramaic**, in a Greek letter, to a Greek church, who do not know Aramaic?

1. This term had become a **Watchword** & a **Password** in the *early church*.
 - a) A **Watchword** because it summed up **the vital hope** of the early church.
 - b) A **Password** because Christians **identified each other** with this word, which was in a language the heathen couldn't understand.

D. *He Is the Great King that is Coming Again. Our Lord, Come!*

E. (24) *My love be with you all in Christ Jesus* - **Note**, Paul did not **cancel** the Corinthians. Though cantankerous, confused, and difficult to corral. He can end with, *my love be with you all*.

1. How do you do that Paul? He simply thinks of the **love** and **forgiveness** **Jesus** had shown him & how **Jesus** puts up with him w/such great **grace**.
- F. Who embodied this expression of love the best? **Jesus**. **Eagerly Awaiting His Return** - Did you know **Jesus** so desires His own return? *Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, maybe with me where I am.*
- G. ***At Risk Mtg** today at 3-5pm w/**Dr. Brenda Navarette** who earned her PhD in **Clinical Psychology**. She will be sharing her class on ***Building Resiliency in Children***, as well as **her experience in Spain**, where she'll share about some of the dynamics of HT there.
- H. **Very-End: Last words of NT** - ***Surely I am coming soon. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!***
1. **Jesus IS coming back again**—to right all wrongs, heal every wound, and wipe away every tear. So this became **the clarion cry** of the early church.
 2. I say to you, **Maranatha!**
- I. Keywords: second coming, give, love.