



The Power of Love

God's commitment to unreservedly care for us



A) The Depth of God's Love

- Love is the commitment to care for others without respect to their response.
- Love is opposite to lust. Love focuses on others (1 Jn 4).
- Lust focuses on gratifying itself: flesh and eyes (1 Jn 2:15-17).

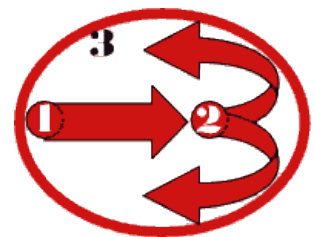
“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (1 John 4:7-10).

God's love flow

(1) God is the great initiator of love. Because God is love, we see His love enter a sin-sick world. (Agape love)

(2) We are recipients of God's love. His love creates a loving nature in our lives. We are restored to an abounding and caring relationship by God our Father.

(3) We bring God's love to others. “Love one another.” We duplicate what God has done for us by His love. They in turn are able to see God's love more clearly and are brought to Him.



Tragedy: Life without love

- The child will not know, respect or exercise politeness, rules of love.
- The child will grow up without affection and be unable to receive people's love.
- The child will be familiar with manipulation, power control, domination and bitterness.
- The child will develop all sorts of insecurities leading to fears and worries.
- This child will seek affection (i.e. attention, friends, drugs, sex) wherever it can be found.

The Fullness of God's Love

- Prayer Goal #1 Rooted and Grounded in Love
“...being rooted and grounded in love” (Eph 3:16-17).
- Prayer Goal #2 Comprehend and know the love of Christ,
“To know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge” (Eph 3:18-19).

Love & Discipline (Hebrews 12:5-6)

“My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are reprovved by Him; 6 for those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and He scourges every son whom He receives (He 12:5-6).

- My son” (12:5)
- “He disciplines”
- “He scourges”

B) Tests of Genuine Love

1. Anger (Matthew 5:21-26)

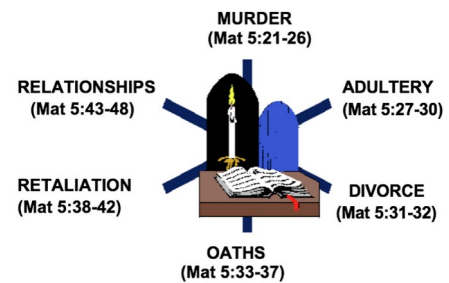
“You have heard that the ancients were told, ‘YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER’ and ‘Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court’ (5:21). “But I say to you...” (5:22)

- No murder and no anger! Murder is wrong, but so is anger and rage. The law does not say, “Thou shalt not get angry,” because the law was a judicial law which needed clear evidence. However, if we love our neighbor, we shall not get angry or breed spite, hate or arrogance.

2. Adultery (Matthew 5:27-30)

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery’ (5:27) “But I say...” (Mat 5:28).

- No adultery and no lust! The Law marker is adultery. But if you are loving, you will not only refrain from adultery but will not lust after another.



3. Divorce (Matthew 5:31-32)

“And it was said, ‘WHOEVER SENDS HIS WIFE AWAY, LET HIM GIVE HER A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE’ (5:31).“But I say to you...” (5:32).

- No divorce and no adultery! We use divorce to carry out our lusts. Do we really love our mates or are we looking for excuses?

4. Breaking Vows (Matthew 5:33-37)

“Again, you have heard that the ancients were told, ‘YOU SHALL NOT MAKE FALSE VOWS, BUT SHALL FULFILL YOUR VOWS TO THE LORD.’ (5:33). “But I say to you...” (5:34).

- No false vows and no lack of integrity! Breaking oaths and vows are in clear violation of not loving our neighbor.

5. Vengeance (Matthew 5:38-42)

“You have heard ..., ‘An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth’ (5:38).“But I say to you...” (5:39).

- No vengeance and no defending of your own rights! If we love, we will not carry out our own vengeance. We will not be insisting on our rights but our opportunities to forgive.

6. Hatred (Matthew 5:43-47)

“You have heard that it was said, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR, and hate your enemy’ (5:43). “But I say to you...” (5:44).

- No hating your enemy and no despising anyone! We are not only not to hate our enemies but to love them. Love goes beyond the issues that might trouble you and stands in the fear of God.
- Conclusion: “Love does no wrong to a neighbor; love therefore is the fulfillment of the law” (Rom 13:8-10). Self grabs; love gives. Be careful of your concept of freedom.

Love’s Mighty Touch (1 Cor 13:1-3)

1 If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. 3 And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing. (1 Corinthians 13:1-3)

- Eloquence (13:1)
- Knowledge (13:2)
- Charitable (13:3)
- Start by examining our motivations.

Personal reflections

- How much room in your heart for God’s love?

- How has God's love kept you from lusting after women and things?
- Give an example on when you through obedience obeyed the unlovely.
- Has your love for God increased in the last year or so? Explain.

Study questions

- How does a person's love differ from God's love?
- Explain the three steps of God's love flow.
- What does it mean to "know the love of Christ ..."?
- If we are to examine our lives and ministries, how should we start? (See 1 Cor 13:1-3).
- What are the two wrong responses to the Lord's discipline (Heb 12:5)? Their meaning?