

If God Is LOVE, Does He Get To Define It?

What Love is not:

Mark 12:28-34, Jeremiah 17:9-10, Matthew 15:16-20, James 2:14-26

- Loving God is not about what we:

FEEL

BELIEVE

- Our **FEELINGS** about God that aren't **FOUND** in the **BIBLE** are **FRAUD**.
- Our **BELIEF** in God, if not backed by **OBEDIENCE**, is the same as the **DEMONS**.

What love is:

Mark 12:28-34, John 13:34-35, 14:20-21, 15:1-17, James 1:27, 2:14-26,
1 Corinthians 13:1-13, Deuteronomy 6:1-12

- Love is a **CHOICE** backed by **ACTION**.
- Love is a **RESPONSE**.

Life Group Study Questions

For the week of October 6, 2019

QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time, caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

MY STORY

1. Have you ever been on the receiving end of a random act of kindness or a "pay it forward" moment? What was that experience like?

2. This weekend Chris taught that loving people is best lived out through action. One tangible way to better understand love in action is through a concept/tool developed by Gary Chapman called, "Love Languages." The 5 Love Languages are:

- *Acts of Service* (kind or thoughtful deeds done for someone)
- *Words of Affirmation* (words to appreciate or uplift people)
- *Quality Time* (receiving another person's undivided attention)
- *Receiving Gifts* (getting tangible gifts)
- *Physical Touch* (appropriate touch i.e. holding hands, hugging, sitting side-by-side)

Of the list above, are there one to two that seem to fit you the best?

Take the Love Language quiz here: 5lovelanguages.com/quizzes

DIGGING DEEPER

1. Chris mentioned in his message that Jesus is calling us to love differently. This can be hard to understand because our current culture often has a different perspective on the meaning of love. How does 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 challenge the version of love we see in culture today?

1 Corinthians 13:1-13 – New International Version (NIV) - *If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ² If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³ If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. ⁴ Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. ⁸ Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. ⁹ For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰ but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. ¹¹ When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. ¹² For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. ¹³ And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.*

What could it look like to love your neighbor, co-worker, family member or friend the way the passage above describes?

2. For many of us the idea of loving God can seem confusing or vague. The good news is there are several passages that help clarify how we can do that well. How might the passages below help you grow in your understanding of what it looks like to love God?

1 John 2:3-6, 9-11 - New International Version (NIV) - *We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. ⁴ Whoever says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. ⁵ But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: ⁶ Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.*

⁹ *Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates a brother or sister is still in the darkness. ¹⁰ Anyone who loves their brother and sister lives in the light, and there is nothing in them to make them stumble. ¹¹ But anyone who hates a brother or sister is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness. They do not know where they are going, because the darkness has blinded them.*

1 John 3:14-18, 23-24 - New International Version (NIV) - *We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love each other. Anyone who does not love remains in death. ¹⁵ Anyone who hates a brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him. ¹⁶ This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. ¹⁷ If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? ¹⁸ Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.*

²³ *And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. ²⁴ The one who keeps God's commands lives in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.*

1 John 4:7-12 - New International Version (NIV) - *Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹ This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. ¹⁰ This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹ Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹² No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.*

After reading the verses above, why do you think loving God is so closely tied to loving people?

3. Over the past two weekends, Chris mentioned Jesus' conversation with the Sadducees (Mark 12:24) where Jesus tells them they do not know the scriptures. How could James 1:21-25 have helped the Sadducees see the importance of God's Word and also help us grow as followers of Jesus today?

James 1:21-25 - New International Version (NIV) - *Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you. ²² Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. ²³ Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror ²⁴ and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. ²⁵ But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.*

When it comes to knowing and understanding the Scriptures as the James passage describes, what is one method or practice that has been helpful to you?

TAKING IT HOME

When it comes to you knowing and understanding the Scriptures, is there one method or practice you might want to try this week?

Which point from this weekend’s message or Life Group study is most important for you to remember?

PRAYER REQUESTS

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REAL MAN WEEKEND – “The Palomar Experience”- Oct. 25-27

Lookin’ for some crazy guy stuff to do? Want to kick back or get refocused on God? Join us for another epic men’s weekend that will get you recharged and refreshed as **Chris Brown & Trent Jenkins** lead us into a look at what a real man is and isn't! The weekend will also include plenty of “man” event options like paintball, high ropes course, skeet shooting, archery, zipline, horseback riding, etc. Space is limited so don’t delay! Room Options: \$155-\$199 *Register online at northcoastchurch.com/real-man-weekend*



COMMUNITY SERVICE IMPACT

Community Service is a ministry of North Coast Church dedicated to being the hands and feet of Jesus and showing God’s love in tangible ways through service to the community. There are many options for you to serve. For ideas, check out NorthCoastCommunityService.org