

The Ultimate Gift: Love
12.14.2014
1 John 4:10-11

WHAT?: Before the beginning

John 17:24, "Father, I want those You have given Me to be with Me where I am, and to see My glory, the glory You have given Me because You loved Me before the creation of the world."

Eph. 1:4-5, For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight. In love He predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will.

SAY WHAT?: The gift of love [v.10a]

1 John 4:19, We love because He first loved us.

*Philip Yancey, "Grace means there is nothing I can do to make God love me more, and nothing I can do to make God love me less."

SO WHAT?: The gift of propitiation [v.10b]

1 John 3:16, This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down His life for us.

NOW WHAT?: Now it's our turn [v.11]

1 John 3:18, Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

1 John 4:16, We know and rely on the love God has for us.

Connection Group Questions
Taken from the sermon on December 14, 2014
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Ice Breaker: What is the funniest thing anyone has ever said, done, or given you to try to win your heart?

Questions for GROUP DISCUSSION- B. Choate

Briefly share a way in which unconditional love, or the lack thereof, affected your journey in a significant way.

Discuss the power and awesomeness of 1 John 4:10, "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."

What are some specific ways that we can bring God's love to where it is lacking?

Questions for PERSONAL GROWTH

Monday- Is there more than one kind of love? Please use a computer or bible dictionary to study the difference between the three main kinds of love mentioned in the bible: Phileo (brotherly love), Eros (self-gratifying love) and Agape (a supernatural love that was demonstrated by Jesus). Now please go to www.openbible.info and study the biblical passages that apply to these three words (type in the word Phileo, Agape or Eros in the search box). After doing so, define the major differences in each. Did God create all these, and which ones does He desire us to express toward others?

Tuesday: Is biblical love a feeling or an action? Now please use a regular dictionary, such as Webster's, to look up the definition of "love". How is the worldly definition different from the biblical kind? How would loving as a result of intentional choice, rather than your own emotions, look different in your own relationships?

Wednesday: Can unbelievers love? Please read 1 John 4:7-12. What are we instructed to do and why? How can a person get God's love? What is an indication that a person is born of God? Is the Lord the only source of "agape" love? If every one of us demonstrates a type of love at some point, does this mean that every one of us is born of God? Why not?

Thursday: So...what does the "so" mean in John 3:16? Please re-read 1 John 4:7-12, along with John 3:16; 13:35. The word "so" in "God so loved the world that..." speaks to the manner in which God loves us, not the magnitude. So, instead of quantity, it refers to manner/method/quality. How does this change your view of His command for you to love your neighbor, your spouse and others in this way? If a person claims to be a "Christian" but harbors bitterness, unforgiveness and malice in his heart, then can he truly say that he is a "Christ-follower"? Prayerfully ask God to shine a light on your love for others. Seek His will for how you can love others with a Christ-like love.

Friday- How will you love today? Please re-read 1 John 4:7-12 as well as John 1:14-18. In what way did God demonstrate His love for us? How was that a choice rather than a simple response to a warm fuzzy feeling? What would have been the result if the gift of grace and salvation to us had depended on our likeability? List three actions that you can take, this week, to demonstrate the unconditional, agape love of Christ to others.

