

Love

Great Lakes SALT 1/4/15

Ephesians 3:14-19

*For this reason I kneel before the Father, [15] from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. [16] I pray that out of his glorious riches **he** may strengthen you with power through **his Spirit in your inner being**, [17] so that **Christ may dwell in your hearts** through faith.*

*And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, [18] **may have power**, together with all the Lord's holy people, **to grasp** how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, [19] and to **know** this love that **surpasses knowledge**---that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.*

LOVE

Tonight we are talking specifically about LOVE

*- **If you had to pick 1 Word** (not God, Jesus or Holy Spirit)*

*How do **YOU** define Love???*

What does love mean?

*- **Relationship Bloopers***

*- **Love defined by Culture:***

- *What does the Bible say?* (4-500 verses about Love in the scriptures)

What I've Learned About God's Love

- From the bible, and from real Christians

- not exhaustive, just things that SURPRISED me...

1. Love Pursues. (chases?) *Jeremiah 31:3, Hosea 3:1* (love is active, initiates)

- The bible teaches that God has always loved you... *(more than that)*
 - He has been chasing after you your whole life...
 - From the time He formed you in your mother's womb all those years ago, all the way up to tonight...

Jeremiah 31:3 *"I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness."*

- Most religions are man's quest to find God...

- Christianity has this incredible doctrine called the INCARNATION.

- God's quest to find YOU.

- **Alaska** *(Jesus left Heaven for you, couldn't stand to be without you)*

- John 15:16 *"You did not choose me, but I chose you..."*

2. Love Serves. *1 John 4:10, Romans 5:8, John 13*

- True Love is about ***giving***, not ***taking***

- Jesus ***showed*** us what Love is:

1 John 3:16 *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.*

- True love is ***selfless*** not ***selfish***

- ***Fruit tree*** (*appetite*)

- ***Opposite*** love is hate? NO, Selfishness...

- ***Mother Theresa***

(I wouldn't do that for a million dollars...)

- ***Pick any character from NT...*** (*Strengthening angel*)

Matthew 25:40

...'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

3. Love Fights. John 2:13-16, Exodus 15:2-3, Eph 6:13-18

- True Love is **NOT Weak...**

- *Is it possible to get mad at someone you love? (Because you love?)*

- *Anger vs Tolerance --- (think of your **mom...**)*

- *the more you care (love) the less tolerant*
- *the less you care (love) the more tolerant*

- *Lover not Fighter t-shirt...*

- ***Mingle IHOP** (I care more about his future than his feelings)*

4. Love Lasts. Romans 8:38-39, Psalm 52:8

- ***Wedding Day** --- marriage VOWS (better or worse...)*

- True Love is Not **temporary** or **conditional**.

(Athlete performance based)

- Agape/Quessed. (*Commitment, steadfast, stubbornly loyal*)

Romans 8:35,38-39

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? [38] For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, [39] neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- Here in college
- After you're married
- After you've raised a family
- When you're lying in the hospital bed breathing your last breaths

- When we've been there 10,000 years bright shining as the sun...

5. Love Changes Everything. 2 Cor 3:18, Romans 12:2

- True Love is Always ***Transformational***
 - It changes whatever it touches.
 - It beautifies whatever is touched by it.

The Transforming Power of Love

G.K. Chesterton, from Orthodoxy

"Let us suppose we are confronted with a desperate thing -- say Pimlico (a city). If we think what is really best for Pimlico we shall find the thread of thought leads to the throne or the mystic and the arbitrary. It is not enough for a man to disapprove of Pimlico: in that case he will merely

cut his throat or move to Chelsea. Nor, certainly, is it enough for a man to approve of Pimlico: for then it will remain Pimlico, which would be awful.

The only way out of it seems to be for somebody to love Pimlico: to love it with a transcendental tie and without any earthly reason. If there arose a man who loved Pimlico, then Pimlico would rise into ivory towers and golden pinnacles; Pimlico would attire herself as a woman does when she is loved. For decoration is not given to hide horrible things: but to decorate things already adorable. A mother does not give her child a blue bow because he is so ugly without it. A lover does not give a girl a necklace to hide her neck.

If men loved Pimlico as mothers love children, arbitrarily, because it is theirs, Pimlico in a year or two might be fairer than Florence. Some readers will say that this is a mere fantasy. I answer that this is the actual history of mankind.

Men did not love Rome because she was great. She was great because they had loved her.”

Chesterton describes here an eternal principle –

A thing must be loved, before it can become loveable.

1. Can you think of any examples of things that weren't loved? What happened to them?

Unloved things always stay, or become ugly – true of gardens, things, and people!

2. Can you think of any examples where love brought beauty?

Conclusion

Tolstoy --- paint him better

Bring your bible to the altar:

- 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

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.

Eli is patient, is kind,???

-

To what degree is that true?