



Loving God

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By Rev. David Koch

Introduction:

Throughout this month of February, I believe God wants us to look at *Love*. This morning will be focusing on *Loving God*. Next week we are going to have an all worship service. It will be opportunity to Love God with our worship. Two weeks from today, we will be focused on *Love in the Marriage* and loving your spouse. We will also be looking at covenants in relationships and those who are married will have opportunity to affirm the covenant of marriage and the last Sunday of this month we will be focusing on *Loving Others*.

1 John 4:16-20 And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God is in him. In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the Day of Judgment, because in this world we are like him. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen.

So let's begin today talking about loving God.

There are many ways we can measure our love for God. Here are three that we find in the Word.

- By our obedience to His voice and His word, we can measure our love.
- By our lack of fear, we can measure our love for God. We can live without fear of judgment and punishment, because of the love and relationship He has established through the covenant of His blood. Perfect love drives out fear.
- A third way we can measure our love for God is how we feel toward our brother. The argument is made here that anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.

Love is hard to define. There have been many attempts to give it definition and verbally put into words what love is.

I Cor. 13 gives us some insight as to what love is. We often look at this in light of our relationships with people, but I'd like to look at the love chapter this morning in regard to our relationship with God.

1 Cor. 13:4-8:13 - Love is patient. Love is kind. Love isn't jealous. It doesn't sing its own praises. It isn't arrogant. It isn't rude. It doesn't think about itself. It isn't irritable. It doesn't keep track of wrongs. It isn't happy when injustice is done, but it is happy with the truth. Love never stops being patient, never stops believing, never stops hoping, never gives up. Love never comes to an end. So these three things remain: faith, hope, and love. But the best one of these is love.

I. Love is patient and kind

Have you ever been impatient in your relationship with God? I think we have all been there. When impatience is displayed in our relationship, there is a lack of love there. God is eternal. He has forever. We measure things according to time, minutes, days, hours, seconds, weeks, months, years. God measures events in regard to eternity; however HE IS ALWAYS on time. Patience is being willing to wait for

something to happen without complaining. To be patient is to be steady, to endure, and wait.

How often have we been impatient with God? How often have we complained that we had trusted God, and He didn't come through on time?

If we find ourselves impatient with God, then know that our love for Him and our relationship with Him needs to grow, our understanding of His timing, His power, His knowledge, needs to mature.

II. Love isn't jealous and doesn't sing it's own praises

In loving God we must understand that we don't sing our own praises. We don't toot our own horn so to speak. Look at what I've done for you Lord. In our boasting, we elevate self.

1 John 2:16

For everything in the world - the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does - comes not from the Father but from the world.

In a covenant relationship with God, we realize that we are the recipients of His grace and love and we enter that relationship grateful for His mercy, care, and grace. We are to sing of His grace and praise Him forever.

III. Love isn't rude or think only of self

What a beautiful picture we have in Christ, the beloved Son, when He came to demonstrate the love of His father to the world. Jesus was submissive to the will of the one He loved. Not what I desire, not what I want, but what your will is.

We get in trouble when we attempt to assert our will into a loving relationship with GOD. He doesn't serve us, we serve Him. Always keep that in mind, when seeking Him.

In any relationship it is rude to not give consideration to the feelings and desires of the one you have a relationship with. It is selfish. As people of God, followers of Christ, it is important that people around us get an accurate picture of God's love, and they will see that as we surrender our lives to God's will.

What was it He prayed in the garden?

Luke 22:42

"Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done."

Hebrews 10:5-10

For this reason, when Christ came into the world, he said, "You did not want sacrifices and offerings, but you prepared a body for me. You did not approve of burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin." Then I said, "I have come! (It is written about me in the scroll of the book.) I have come to do what you want, my God." In this passage Christ first said, "You did not want sacrifices, offerings, burnt offerings, and sacrifices for sin. You did not approve of them." (These are the sacrifices that Moses' Teachings require people to offer.) Then Christ says, "I have come to do what you want." He did away with sacrifices in order to establish the obedience that God wants. We have been set apart as holy because Jesus Christ did what God wanted him to do by sacrificing His body once and for all.

IV. Love isn't irritable

In the original, the word here means exasperated or stirred up. I have seen people get so stirred up at God. He didn't answer my prayer – was it prayed in faith, was it prayed according to His will, was it prayed in humility, was it prayed to bring Him glory, or to satisfy our self?

Obviously there are things we encounter in life that bring the question of "why" to our minds. But to get irritated to the point of being angry with God, only creates barriers between us and God. Anger is a dangerous place to be, especially if it gets us so exasperated or stirred up that it creates barriers between us and God. That can damage our relationship. It's not that God gets offended at our anger, but it is that we shut down and shut ourselves off from HIM.

When we get to the point of being stirred, there are times we say, I will never do this, or I'll not do that, or we put blame, this is why I can't trust.....or we justify our wrong behavior.....because this happened, I won't whatever...

If we truly understand all that it cost God to redeem us and forgive us, then our love toward Him should not be irritable.

V. Love doesn't keep track of wrongs

Obviously we have an incorrect perception of right and wrong. We might not keep a tally of things we think happened to us because we love and serve God, but we might keep a tally of things others do to us because of our faith. LET IT GO! It is not worth the energy to keep a list!

You could go through the Word and ask was it wrong for this one to suffer, or to be persecuted, or to endure hardship, and pain like they did? Did they hold it

Conclusion:

God has created us to love Him. We love Him because He first loved us. Remember the order. It brings Him pleasure when we love Him.

against God, or the people that brought suffering into their lives? I don't think so.

VI. Five things we see about love from I COR 13

1. Love never stops being patient
2. Love never stops believing
3. Love never stops hoping
4. Love never gives up
5. Love never comes to an end