



## The Nature of Love

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What motivates you? What compels you to get up and go to work every day? Do you do it just for the pay check or do you do it because you love your family and want to use your strength to serve them? Do you go to work because you have obligations like the rent or mortgage to pay and food to put on the table? For the rest of February, we are going to be looking at the motivation and compelling nature of love.

True love will motive us and compel us in many areas. Over the next few weeks we are going to explore how love motivates us to serve, to give and to share or witness with others. Every believer has resources of time, talent and treasure that have been trusted to us to use for the advancement of the kingdom of God. Every one of us will give an account to God for how we handle those resources.

If Jesus is living within us and we are allowing Him to control our lives, then the things that motivate Him should motivate us. The passion that He served with is still living and active but now it resides within His people. It is impossible to separate God from love because God is love. Everything that motivates God should motive us. When we see people who suffer, who are sick, who don't yet know God's love, who have needs, we should be moved by God's love and motivated to serve. **1 John 4:7-8 (NLT) - Dear friends let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God. But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love. 1 John 4:15-17 (NLT) - All who confess that Jesus is the Son of God have God living in them, and they live in God.... We know how much God loves us, and we have put our trust in his love. God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them. And as we live in God, our love grows more perfect.**

## **I. Love originates with God.**

God is love. There is no love apart from God. God loved people and His love motivated Him to send us Jesus as a living demonstration of His love. The motivation behind Jesus' service was LOVE. In many places the Gospels record that Jesus was moved with compassion. Whatever He did, He did it simply from His perspective of love.

When it comes to serving, do what you do for the right reason. Don't wait to be moved with compassion, but do it because you see a need and desire to demonstrate the love of God in that situation. Whatever you do in service for the Lord, do it for the right reason. If we serve to be noticed, to get thanks, to earn a merit badge or to meet some need in our life, we are serving for the wrong reason and the end result will not be what it could have been had we served with the proper motivation.

## **II. Love serves with purpose.**

Service should be done on purpose with a willing heart. The purpose for which we are serving is that we are serving Christ Himself. A servant is one who will take direction, has a task or job assignment and will follow through to get the job done. A servant works to do the will of his master. Serving God by serving others is where true ministry takes place. When Jesus multiplied the loaves and fish, He served the hungry people with food and He did it on purpose. His service met their needs.

When Jesus healed people who were deaf or blind, when He healed the woman with the issue of blood, His healing was on purpose. His service met their needs. What are the needs in the lives of people around you? Serve them on purpose. When you serve on purpose, needs are met. Through service and faith, miracles happen to meet the need that is present.

**Matthew 20:28 (NLT)- For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.** President John F. Kennedy said, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." I would say, ask not what God or the church or someone can do to serve you, but what you can do to serve God and others.

## **III. Love serves with passion.**

There are times I have just done things in a haphazard, non-descript sort of way. I'm not proud of it, but sometimes that's just the way it is. There are times you just get done what you have to do. You are on auto-pilot.

I think it works the same way with you as with me. If there is something I am passionate about, I will throw myself into that event or that project with as much energy and gusto as I can give. Why? Because I am passionate about what I'm doing. Passion makes a huge difference in how we approach the things we do and how we get those things accomplished.

If we love God enough to serve Him with all our heart, mind, soul and strength, then we will be passionate in our service. If you are serving with a half-hearted approach, then step back and try to determine why. Love for God and others compels us to serve with excellence. We will not want to do something that is less than excellent, because whatever we do, we are doing it as unto our King.

**Colossians 3:23 (GW)- Whatever you do, do it wholeheartedly as though you were working for your real master and not merely for humans.**  
**Ecclesiastes 9:10 (NLT)- Whatever you do, do well. For when you go to the grave, there will be no work or planning or knowledge or wisdom.**

## **IV. Love serves with power .**

Love is a power in and of itself. The power of love is irresistible. When someone loves you, they go out of their way to demonstrate that love and that demonstration is hard to resist. I want to talk to the married couples here this morning. When you serve your spouse with love, over and over and over, that has to be irresistible and it indicates the depth of your love. Love is powerful enough to break a hardened heart.

## **V. Love is perfected through service.**

Our love is imperfect and service gives opportunity for love to grow and to be perfected. Often our human love is selfish. Our motive for doing certain things can be for the wrong reasons. Let's admit

that at times we serve for the recognition, appreciation, favor or friendship we get in return. When we allow God to live at the center of our lives we look at God and people differently. As we live in God and allow Him to live in us, love grows in power and purity. Our attitudes are impacted when we serve people with love. I mean, how we respect them, care about them, see them, think about them and react to them.

Some of you are in a difficult marriage, some in a difficult relationship with your children or a parent. Some of you are in a difficult relationship with your supervisor at work or a teacher at school, or another student. Try serving them. Go beyond the call of duty. Give of yourself, your time, your energy. Invest in them. If you do that with God's love, it will make a huge difference.

Jesus served God, but He also served His disciples. He washed their feet. He did what no one else there was willing to do. He became their slave. In the movie, "Fireproof," the main character started serving his spouse. At first it was simply an exercise, but the more he served, the more his heart became engaged and the more his love genuinely became perfected. His service changed his attitude toward his wife.

Who should we be serving? First of all we should be serving God. Next we should be serving our family, our brothers and sisters in Christ and also those who don't yet know Christ. We should be

#### **Conclusion:**

Do you have the motivation to help others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen.

serving the people who have been wounded, beaten and robbed by the enemy and left for dead. Jesus told the story of the Good Samaritan. It doesn't matter if the person has the same beliefs as we do or they are from another culture. If there is a need, serve. If you purpose to serve them, no matter what you think of their beliefs or lack thereof, you will have opportunity to show God's love through that service.

There is not one of us here who can't find a place or person to serve. The opportunities around us are so many and so great. Let me suggest to those who are looking for work and currently unemployed, find a place to volunteer. For those who are retired, find a place to volunteer. For those who are employed or students, find a place to volunteer. There are many places of ministry both in and outside of this church that could use more volunteers.

If you love someone you will go out of your way to show it, as described in I Cor 13. You will serve them by not keeping track of wrongs. You will serve them by being patient, kind, by not demanding your own way. You will serve them by not being easily provoked. You can serve without loving, but you can't love without serving.

**1 Peter 4:10-11 (NLT)-God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you.**