

Love One Another

May 6, 2018

Our Savior's Way
Worshiping Sundays 8:00, 9:30, & 11:00 AM
Pastor Bill Mann

What is the most important lesson you can learn in life? The most important lesson in life is to learn how to love like Jesus loved—to learn how to love like God loves you. The single most important reason that God put you on this planet—is not to make money—not to get rich—not to retire—not to have a lot of fun and then die. God put you on this planet to learn how to love and if you haven't learned that then you've missed the point of life.

There's a new book out called "How to Fall in Love with Almost Anyone." The author, Mandy Len Catron and her now husband Mark, on their first date decided to repeat a 20-year-old experiment designed to create love. Two people ask each other 36 questions. The first questions are easy—"Who would you like as a dinner guest?" But then the questions get increasingly more intimate—"Of all the people in your family, whose death would you find the most disturbing?" Finally, Mandy and Mark stared into each other's eyes for four minutes. That was their first date and the beginning of their relationship. Now Mandy and Mark are married and living together in Vancouver, British Columbia. Mandy said, "I tried online dating, but you meet a stranger and end up making small talk and telling each other the story of your life. I wanted to get beyond that."

I did a Google search on the word "love" I found a love calculator. All you have to do is enter your name and the name of another person and it calculates your chances of having a love relationship. Bad news--my wife Sally and I scored only 41% on the Love

Calculator. Even worse news my wife and Ryan Reynolds scored 92%. I have some work to do to. I need to double my score and make up those 41 percentage points.

This morning, Jesus wants to help us out with the question of love. The gospel goes back to Jesus last night with his disciples. He is about to be taken away and crucified. So, Jesus gives some final advice to his disciples. “This is my commandment,” Jesus says, “that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.”

Anne Lamott tells this story about a boy and his sick sister. The girl had leukemia and needed a blood transfusion to live. There were other possible blood donors, but her little brother was the best possible match. So, the doctors and the parents talked to the little boy. They explained that his sister needed his blood if she were going to survive. And they asked him to consider it. The boy thought long and hard and finally he agreed. They laid the boy on a table next to his sister. Into each child’s little arm they ran a line with a needle. The boy watched as his blood passed through the tube and up and then was run into his sister’s arm. He watched very quietly—very intensely. Finally, he turned to his parents and asked, “When do I start to die?” Greater love has no one than this ... to lay down his life for his sister.

The world gives us so many different ways to talk about love. It tells us that we fall into love and we fall out of love. It tells us that love is a warm fuzzy feeling that we get behind our ribcage when someone looks at us in the right way. It tells us that love is something you do in the dark with your clothes off. But Jesus shows us another way. At the place they call Golgotha—the place of the skull—Jesus showed us what he means when he says “love each other.”

A woman I know is having a hard time at work. Her boss is mean and rude. She insults and belittles her. She makes work a trial and has made this woman consider quitting. But then my friend thought about forgiveness. She thought about what Jesus said—“Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.” She

decided to pay back injury with kindness. Greater love has no one than this ... to lay down her life for her boss.

The firefighters of Engine Company 24 were on the 35th floor of Tower 1 of the World Trade Center on September 11th when the call came—"Get out! Get out! Get out now!" The building was beginning to rumble as the firefighters scrambled down the stairs. They found a woman in a wheelchair on the 27th floor. They stopped to help her and got her safely out of the building. Somehow, in the confusion one of the firefighters, Marcel Claes, got separated from the others. He was still in the stairwell when Tower 1 came crashing down. Greater love has no one than this – to lay down his life for a stranger in a wheelchair.

When my wife and I got married we used the traditional wedding vows—"for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish." We were 25 and 26. What does a 20 year old know about love — about what it means to love someone for a lifetime?

What does a 17-year-old know? Pastor Jim Cantelon works among the AIDS victims in Africa. He tells the story of a 17-year-old orphan names Precious. Precious comes from a village full of orphans. Most of the adults were wiped out by AIDS. When she was 12, her father got sick. They buried him two years later. By then, her mother was also sick. She died when Precious was 16. She was left alone to raise her brother and sister. Precious was able to find work as a domestic servant. Each morning she gets up at 3 am to walk 2 ½ hours to her job. And she walks 2 ½ hours back at the end of the day. She is treated like a slave by her employers—who yell at her and beat her. On her way walking to work and back she is in danger of being attacked and raped by gangs of teenage boys. For all of this she is paid \$60 a year. She uses the money to buy three outfits of clothing—one for herself and for her brother and her sister. They eat two meals of ground corn a day. And she makes enough to pay for school for her brother and sister. Precious says she has a dream. She wants her brother and sister to become school teachers, so that one day they will have respect and be able to take care of themselves. When Pastor Cantelon's wife asked

Precious if she went to church, she brightened and said, “Oh, yes ma’am. Every Sunday. We love Jesus. He cares for us.” Greater love has no one than this – to lay down her life for her brother and sister.

“Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so. Little ones to him belong. They are weak but he is strong.” Does the word “love” sound any different when we think about these stories? When we think of Jesus and what he told us and what he showed us? He loved us first. He came to us. He laid down his life for us. Jesus showed us what love is. Jesus showed us love in action. And now, these are his words to us—“Love one another.”

VIDEO: “Love One Another”