

# Love “Together”

## July 22, 2018

**Our Savior’s Way**  
**Worshiping Sundays 8:00, 9:30, & 11:00 AM**  
**Pastor Kumfer**

Welcome to the 5th week of our “Together” series where we will focus on love. And I wanted to know the best way to explain it to you all so...I googled it. That’s right, I typed the word love into google and came across 9,210,000,000 results in less than a second. There was the definition of love, love’s Wikipedia page, images for the word love, music videos for love, books about love, and so on and so forth. However, with everything about love found on the internet, it took me 18 pages to find one reference to Christians and love and this came in the form of a Bible verse. The verse was from 1 John 4 and said, “Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.”

This verse, and the verse that follows, establishes for us where love comes from. It comes from God. God is the source of all things. He made the world and everything in it so it makes sense that He is the source of love as well. So now, if God is the source of all love, how come He doesn’t appear in our love search until the 18<sup>th</sup> page. Shouldn’t He be clearly present on the first page where we can see His great love for us?

Absolutely, but the reason that He isn’t is because of us. Humanity, regardless of whether or not they are Christians do not appear to love each other very much. And recently we’ve been seeing all the fights about racism and sexism. Do those things come out of a place of love? Or you hear stories about families who fight and

argue all the time. Is that showing love? In a marriage you declare before one another that you will love, honor and cherish your spouse forever, but if that's the case why is the divorce rate so high?

And it's worse for Christians, because Christians are held to the standard of Jesus. We're supposed to show Christ to the world through our lives. If we look through history, we see that in the name of God, Christians have done some pretty horrible things. There was a whole war called the Crusades that was led by Christians. There are Christian people and groups all over the world who bash other groups like the LGBT and abortionists because of what they believe. What about the Christians who judge other people because they aren't living the way God wants? Or the gossipers? Or the violent and angry Christians? What about the Christians who lie, or steal? What about the ones who are racist or sexist or get divorced? What about them? Are they showing love?

My guess is that you've done something that isn't very loving in your life. I'm right there with you. I've done things that don't reflect Christ in my actions. I've intentionally said things that have hurt others. And when we do those things we say, "I'm not perfect. I can't always do what Jesus wants me to do." And that's true. But usually what we mean when we say that is, "I didn't want to. I didn't want to love that other person the way Jesus tells me to. I didn't want to talk with that person directly. I didn't want to..."

It's hard for us to follow the words of Jesus because there are times that we don't want to. Jesus said a great many things and gave us the example of how to live out those things. But how do we do it?

Ephesians 3 gives us the way. Verses 16 and 17 say, "I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith." The first step is through faith in Christ Jesus. Through faith we have strength to do all of those things that reveal that Christ is in us. It's not an easy road, it's not a simple road. It's a road that will be challenging. But it's also a road we're being prepared to go down.

The second half of verse 17 through 19 tells us what that faith does for us, “And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, 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, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.”

Through our faith in Christ, we are rooted and established in love. And being in that place, being held strong in love and established in God’s love through Christ, we are able to comprehend and live out the love of God.

This Ephesians portion also speaks of four dimensions of God’s love, its width, length, height, and depth. Many commentaries take different perspectives on the meaning for this. But my favorite one describes it in this way. The **breadth (width) ... length ... depth ... height** connecting to the fullness of God which we have through Christ. The “breadth” connects to Christ’s world-wide love, for the whole wide world. It’s not for a single place but should be carried into all the world by us, those who believe it. The “length,” it is being extended through all generations and ages. It’s something that is passed down from our parents. Parents teach their children the faith and it continues down the lines. It is a generational faith but one that is also eternal. One that will last beyond us. The “depth,” is profound wisdom which no creature can fathom. We can learn and grow in faith and understanding but there will never be a point in which we completely understand our God. The “height,” it is being beyond the reach of any foe to deprive us of. This is the one that is a little strange for me with its connection but I love the truth in its imagery. The love of Christ is ours. The enemy may try to stamp it out and keep it from us but God is always pursuing us. It’s always available to us even when we sin and fall short of the things God has for us. The author closes by saying that the most essential part of all this is, “to know *the love of Christ*”. Knowing the love of Christ is the essential and transformative thing.

Paul said, "and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God." Daniel

Sherbenske, has some experience with knowing God's love and would like to share his story with you today.

The love of Christ is a transformative thing. It transformed us from sinners with no hope for a future into children of God. It has transformed us from a lost and dying people into believers with hope for a future. And the love of God can continue to transform us. It can transform us into a church that loves like Jesus does. It can transform us and draw us closer together both in our relationships with one another to share God's love which is in us and to grow closer with the God who shows us what love really is.

So be transformed through the love of Christ as you reflect that same love together.