Core: Love

Introduction
Doing the most loving thing (Someone noticing and loving – people bringing me dinner – neighbors cleaning my yard or sending us out to dinner – My wife doing something loving and great.

Main Point: We are making our way through our Core values in this series, and we are over halfway done. Today we are looking at our Core Value, Love. We have defined this Core Value this way:

Love: “Doing the most loving thing because people matter to God, because God is love.”

Let’s talk about this here this morning. I am going to be skipping around a bit this morning, so be ready to turn in your Bible, I am going to be building a kind of Systematic or Biblical Theology.

Transition: There are a couple God is statements in the Bible. One of them is…
I. **God is Love.**

1 John 4:7-8
Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. 8 Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. (ESV)

A. The God that we as Christians worship is love.
B. We become like the god that we worship.
C. If we worship an idol, we will become like that idol.
D. If we worship the true and living God and He lives inside of us by the power of the Holy Spirit, we become more and more loving towards others.
E. And this knowing and loving God shows itself in loving each other.

**Transition:** Let’s flip over to Romans, however, and be reminded that our right
standing before God has everything to do with the gospel of Jesus Christ. We are infinitely and eternally loved in Christ.

II. You are loved in Christ.

**Romans 8:31-38**

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? 33 Who shall bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? 36 As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.” 37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who
loved us. \(^{38}\) For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (ESV)

**Gospel:** In Christ, God’s Children, God’s elect, are justified (Explain: Declared righteous), so there is no condemnation. But more than that Jesus is seated at the right hand of the God the Father interceding, praying us home if you will. We are incredibly, eternally, infinitely loved in Christ, and no one can separate what God in Christ has declared His own. Incredible!!

**So what?**

A. What can separate? (V. 35)

1. **Tribulation** – Squeezed or pressured by difficulty.
2. **Distress:** Helplessly hemmed in on all sides.
3. **Persecution**: suffering because you are a Christian.

4. **Famine/nakedness**: Lack of life’s basic needs of food, clothing, and shelter.

5. **Peril**: facing death.

6. None of these can separate us from the love of God in Christ.

**Not only can we not be separated, but more than that we are…**

**B. Super conquerors.** (V. 37)

1. We are empowered and sustained by the risen savior.

2. The Holy Spirit now indwells us that we are able to ask, what is the worst that can happen?

3. Nothing – I am loved by God.

4. I am not forgotten, I am not forsaken, I am not neglected.

5. I can endure, I can suffer well, I can know contentment, and I can love others.
6. Because in Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, the God of love is inside of me.

So much so, that Paul reiterates this one more time…

C. **Confident** and **sure**.

**Romans 8:38-39**

For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (ESV)

**Illustration:** Time I faced burnout, depression, and contemplated quitting ministry. “Jesus Loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so.” I wept, knowing it did not matter what I did, or if I was success or failure in the world’s eyes, I could live confidently and boldly knowing I was a child of God, fully loved in Christ. That was freeing indeed.
Transition: So, because we are loved…

III. Because we are loved…we love.

Matthew 22:37-40
And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. 38 This is the great and first commandment. 39 And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. 40 On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.” (ESV)

A. First: We love God.

1. This is the idea of worship.
2. We love God with all that we are.
3. We love God with our Heart, Soul, and all our mind.
4. Our total being.

B. Closely connected – Love others.

1. Jesus literally cannot separate the 2 thoughts.
2. We can’t say that we love God and have hatred towards others.
3. And this certainly has no place in the church.
4. We are to love each other, because we have been loved, and we worship the God who is love.
5. Jesus says….

C. The OT hinges on Love.

1. The law of God is loving.
2. The Character of God is loving.
3. When we love God, we love His law, which is both worship to him, loving towards others, and good for us.

**Transition:** Which leads to my final point this morning.

**IV. Practical Wisdom.**

There are so many places I could go for this. And as a reminder our Core Value stems from the Character of God, being known in
Christ, worshiping God in Christ, and the overflow of that is very practical life touches.

This is why we say, “Doing the most loving thing because people matter to God, because God is love.”

**Romans 12:9-21**

Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. 10 Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. 11 Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. 12 Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer 13 Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality. 14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. 16 Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. 17 Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight
18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. 19 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” 20 To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (ESV)

Main Point: What a beautiful passage of scripture.

A. Genuine love:
   1. This is loving without hypocrisy.
   2. This loving without expecting anything in return.

Illustration: If I were to say to you 1 Corinthians 13, what comes to mind? It is the love chapter. And where is 1 Corinthians 13 most often read? Weddings. But you want to know the context of the
passage. Community life in the church, the body of Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:31 – 13:7
But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way. 13 If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. 4 Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; 6 it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. 7 Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. (ESV)

Transition: That is genuine love, and that is a definition given by the Apostle Paul for
church life (Not just marriage). The second thing about genuine love…

B. Church family that honors each other. (V 10 – Outdo each other showing honor– can you even imagine)

**Illustration:** When I do pre-marriage counseling one of the things, I always tell the couple I am counseling is, you marry the entire family.

**Main Point:** Every family has the Uncle, or sibling, or whatever…. You marry the entire family. Families stick. Families don’t quit. Families have a deep commitment to each other. Families can even have a fight or disagreement but work to overcome. Why? Family.

C. Show **hospitality** (V. 13).

1. He is talking about finances and talents.
2. Sharing our time, talent, and treasure with our church family.

3. Small groups are so important.

**Illustration:** Sharing the story of helping someone move – afterwards someone asking if I help people move – nope….

D. **Bless** those that persecute you. (V 14).

E. **Rejoice** with those that rejoice and weep with those that weep. (V 15)

1. Can you really celebrate with someone when they get the house, or car, or vacation that you can’t afford?
2. Or they get pregnant and you are trying, or their loved one battle and defeated cancer.
3. Or do you pause and weep with the hurting.
4. Do you take time to notice?
5. This is love.
F. **Work hard** to be in harmony with one another (VV 16-18)

1. Our church should be a peaceable place to come and serve.
2. We should not be fussing with each other, fussing with leadership.
3. This is a unique thing happening here at DP. I know what you’re going through.
4. Coastal got its start by merging 2 churches.
5. It took time, patience, humility, and even some difficult conversations to have harmony.
6. We are not to be proud in our own eyes or a no it all (V. 15)
7. We are to make every effort to be at peace and harmony with one another, so that we can partner together so the gospel will go forward.

We are to…
G. Leave revenge to God.

And...

H. Love your enemies.

1. By helping when we can.
2. By meeting basic needs.

This is what love is.

Conclusion
Extraordinary story of a small group loving on another member of their group.

God loved us first, and in Christ, that love is unshakable. And because God is in us through the power and working of the Holy Spirit, we are to be a people that loves others. The fruit of the Spirit is…Love.

Pray