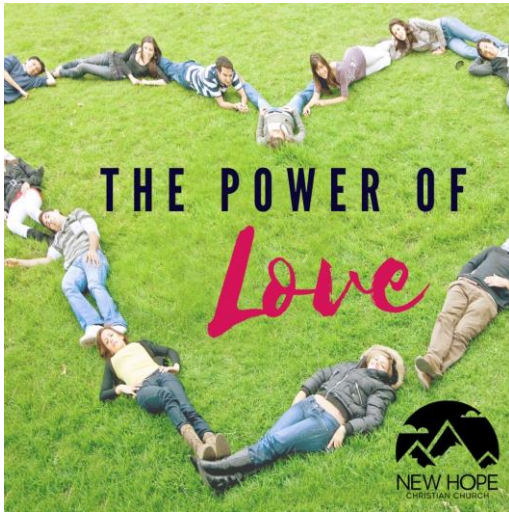


The Power of Love - 7/5/20

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1 John 4:7-21 ⁷⁻¹⁰ My beloved friends, let us continue to love each other since love comes from God. Everyone who loves is born of God and experiences a relationship with God. The person who refuses to love doesn't know the first thing about God, because God is love—so you can't know him if you don't love. This is how God showed his love for us: God sent his only Son into the world so we might live through him. This is the kind of love we are talking about—not that we once upon a time loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to clear away our sins and the damage they've done to our relationship with God.

20-21 If anyone boasts, "I love God," and goes right on hating his brother or sister, thinking nothing of it, he is a liar. If he won't love the person he can see, how can he love the God he can't see? The command we

have from Christ is blunt: Loving God includes loving people. You've got to love both.

1. What we desperately need is a baptism in Christ's Love.

John 13:34 "I give you a new commandment: love one another. Just as I have loved you, you must also love one another"

1.a. What is love? 1 John 2:5-6 "...if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly in him; This is how we know we are in him; Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did."

2.b. How did Jesus walk? He walked in Love! John 3:16 -17 says: ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

Luke 23:34 "Father forgive them for they don't know what they are doing."

2. Do we have the ability to love like that.... the "Jesus style" of loving?

John 15:13 "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends." To love is to choose suffering for the sake of another.

2.a. Jesus Was Young

2.b. He Was Sinless and Perfect, the Most Worthy of Living

1 Peter 2:22: "He committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in his mouth"

John 19:6 "I find no guilt in him."

2.c. He was the only begotten Son of God

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son.....

Ephesians 5:2 Walk in love, as Christ loved you and gave himself up for us,"

3. We are Commanded to Love.

John 13:34-35 "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another"

3.a. Who Is Called?

All who claim to be followers of Christ

3.b. How are we to love?

Luke 6:35 *But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.*

3.c. What is Love in Action? It's Agape Love!

Agape - a pure, willful, sacrificial love that intentionally desires another's highest good. "the highest form of **love**, charity" and "the **love** of God for man and of man for God".

Agape is almost always used to describe the love that is of and from God, whose very nature is love itself

1 John 4:8 *"God is love".* God does not merely love; He is love itself. Everything God does flows from His love.

4. Why Is Love So Important Today?

4.a. How Can We Do This?

1 John 1:4 - *We love because he first loved us.*

4.b. 1 John 4:16-17 *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 in them. This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus.*

Conclusion

So, Here's What I Want to Challenge You With This Week; (Tony Dungy's Challenge)

First, we need to admit that we can't go forward with judgmental, bitter spirits. So, every morning this week, let's ask the Lord to help us: ***Psalms 139:23-24*** *Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. (it might be that we need to ask for forgiveness for sin, bitterness, unforgiveness or hate and asking the lord for His love)*

Second, let's be proactive and by the power and leading of the Holy Spirit, let's look for ways to help make things better. Maybe it's by giving to someone who can't repay you. Or forgiving someone who has done you wrong. Or having a caring and understanding dialog with someone from another race or group. Ask the Lord to open doors of opportunity to share the truth with love.

Finally, as an individual and as a church let's look for opportunities to take a stand for justice and let's make a commitment that: "We are going to be on the forefront of meaningful dialogue and meaningful change." We have to be willing to walk and live in the power of God's love with the understanding that we are not fighting against other people. We are fighting against Satan and his kingdom of spiritual darkness. We win when we love!

***Scripture Assignment this Week:** 1. Write/Type following Verses, One Each Day, in your Own Words. 2. Write/Type what God is Saying to You Personally through it. 3. Write/Type what You will Do as a Result. ***Mon** -1 John 4:7-10, 1 John 4:20-21; **Tue** - Romans 12:21, John 13:34; **Wed** - 1 John 2:5-6, Luke 23:34,- **Thu** John 15:13, 1 Peter 2:22; **Fri** - John 3:16, Ephesians 5:2; **Sat** - John 13:34-35, Luke 6:35, Psalms 139:23-24