

Love

pursue it above all else

Start Here

- Who is one of the most loving people you know? What is it about them that makes you say this?
- What are the real signs that make you know you're loved by someone?

Discuss

- Often a mother's love is cited as the greatest love. What is it about a mother's love that is unique?
- Why is such robust and relentless love so attractive to us and inspiring?

Explore the Word (Part 1)

Jesus talked about love on multiple occasions. What he taught pushed the boundaries of our understanding of what love is, and with his death on the cross, he demonstrated ultimate sacrificial love that we are called to emulate.

Read the following verses:

- Matthew 22:36-40
- John 13:34-35
- Luke 6:32-36

Discuss the following questions:

- Why do you think love is the greatest commandment?
- What is the greatest evidence that we are disciples of Jesus? Why?
- Who are we called to love? How does Jesus want us to express that love?

Main Idea

The greatest evidence that we are Jesus' disciples is that we love one another.

Love is the sign of maturity and spiritual growth - that we are becoming more and more like Jesus. As it says in Luke, it's when we love like him, we show that we are children of God.

Therefore, our goal should be, above all else, to pursue love.

Explore the Word (Part 2)

Read 1 Corinthians 13

- In verses 1-3, what attributes or abilities does Paul say are meaningless without love?
- Which of these attributes or abilities do you naturally value most?
- Why is it true that without love, they are not profitable?

Read this list taken from verses 4-7 slowly and consider that Jesus is the perfect example of this love towards us

- Love is patient
 - Love is kind
 - Love does not envy
 - Love does not boast
 - Love is not proud
 - Love does not dishonour others
 - Loved is not self-seeking
 - Love is not easily angered
 - Love keeps no record of wrongs
 - Love does not delight in evil
 - Love rejoices in the truth
 - Love always protects
 - Love always trusts
 - Love always hopes
 - Love always perseveres
- What are you most thankful for as a recipient of this kind of love from Jesus?
 - We are able to love others because Jesus has first loved us (1 John 4:19). Take time to evaluate yourself according to this list. Which areas do you need to become more like Jesus in his love?

Practice Together Now

Is there one person you are finding difficult to love now?

- According to the list above, how are you failing to show love to them?
- How can you choose to love them?
- What immediate good can you do to them without expecting anything in return?
- Write a prayer which expresses both your thanks to Jesus for the different characteristics of his love towards you, and invite him to make you more like him in that area.
 - For example, “Thank you Lord for your patience with me when I repeatedly fail you. Help me to be patient with _____.”

Review your Practice Daily

- Memorize 1 Corinthians 13:4-7.
- Meditate daily on one aspect of Jesus’ love towards you. At the beginning of each day, consider a practical way you can do good and show love to somebody you normally find it difficult to love.
- Read the following verses: 1 John 4:7-21
- Come to the next step ready to celebrate, reaching the end of this journey. Prepare some thoughts to express your appreciation of one another.