

Fearless Series - Love

How God Can Give You a Bigger Heart

Introduction

“Love each other as I have loved you. This is what I’m commanding you to do. The greatest love you can show is to give your life for your friends.”

John 15:12-13 GW

God’s expectation of love is to love the same way he loved us. He taught us to love others by how he loves us.

What is love?

Unselfish, loyal and benevolent concern for the good of another. Warm attachment, enthusiasm, or devotion. An intense feeling of deep affection.

Do you have love?

Love is unselfish, loyal and has genuine concern for the good of another.

- Who is someone in your life who you know loves you?
- How do you know that person loves you?

Captain Miller - *Saving Private Ryan*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lv-67DFIOsM>

“Every day I think about what you said to me that day on the bridge. And I’ve tried to live my life the best I could. I hope that was enough. I hope that at least in your eyes, I’ve earned what all of you have done for me.”

In this movie, Captain Miller (Tom Hanks) has been sent behind enemy lines to bring Private Ryan (Matt Damon) home from the war. He dies in the process of saving him. As he is dying, he says to Private Ryan “Earn this.” By saying this, he is telling Private Ryan “I gave up my life for you and all I want you to do is let it motivate you to do good. “

God feels similar. Jesus died on the cross for you, and doesn’t want you to just walk around feeling guilty, following rules, or trying to look good. He doesn’t want you to blow off what he’s done, either.

He wants you to respond to his love by being loving to others.

This is the impact of love. When you sacrifice, you inspire others to do the same

Your Goal

What can you change in your relationship with God so that you love like he does?

God Loves You at Your Worst

This is love: He loved us long before we loved him. It was his love, not ours. He proved it by sending his Son to be the pleasing sacrificial offering to take away our sins. [11] Delightfully loved ones, if he loved us with such tremendous love, then “loving one another” should be our way of life!

1 John 4:10-11 TPT

God loves you at your worst

When you understand that God loves you even when you really don't deserve it, you will start loving other people.

Love is a choice

Jesus set the bar with the ultimate example of love and sacrifice. It's how we should be for each other.

Do you believe God loves you at your worst?

What does your “worst” look like? What are the things you have done that you most need Jesus to take away from you?

Teacher's Note:

- *Share about a time where you saw that God loved you even though you really didn't deserve it. Maybe a time you got let off the hook when you shouldn't have?*

Love is a Verb

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ssZvboBJvYY>

Love ain't a drug / Despite what you've heard / Yeah love ain't a thing / Love is a verb / So you gotta show me.

Love as God Loves You

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

John 13:34-35 NIV

Love shouldn't feel forced

When you understand how much God loves you, you will want to pay it forward

Love is the way to know you're close to God

The mark of someone with a true relationship with God is how much they love other people, not how well they follow the rules or how perfect they are

How has God loved you?

Think of some examples of ways that God has taken care of you and loved you

Teacher's Note:

- *Share about something creative you did for someone that was above and beyond what was expected of you. What made you want to do it?*

God's Love Makes us Fearless

God's love has reached its goal in us. So we look ahead with confidence to the day of judgment. While we are in this world, we are exactly like him with regard to love. [18] No fear exists where his love is. Rather, perfect love gets rid of fear, because fear involves punishment. The person who lives in fear doesn't have perfect love.

1 John 4:17-18 GW

Love makes you forget you're afraid

God can help you care so much about someone that you stop being afraid of them or what they think of you.

Punishment won't motivate you

The fear of getting in trouble will only get you to do certain things. Love is a more powerful motivator.

What does your fear level show about your relationship with God?

Is your heart more filled with fear (of how you look, getting in trouble, rejection) or love?

Teacher's Note:

- *Share about a time you were afraid to do something but did it anyway because of love. Could be talking to a friend about something you know they might get mad at you for bringing up, telling the truth to your parents because you wanted to be close, etc. How did you feel about it?*

Decision

There is only one happiness in this life: to love and be loved.

George Sand

- **Talk it through:** What are some areas or relationships in your life where you need God's help to become more loving?
- **Take action:** Who are 2-3 people you will decide to start loving? What will you do for them?
 - *Teacher's Note: Walk through step by step what it would take to change. The leader should think through some of this ahead of time. Be as detailed as possible.*
 - *What steps will this decision involve?*
 - *When will you do them?*
 - *Possible pitfalls?*
 - *Who will you ask to help hold you accountable?*

Next steps

This section is meant to be done together over the next 1-2 weeks. Set up times to do some of these together or to do them separately and then talk about what you learned.

- **Read together:** The book of 1 John. Look for the action words associated with love.
- **Watch together:** Stranger Things. Identify how the kids lay down their lives for each other.
- **Do together:** Do something unselfish for a member of your family.

Further study

- 1 Corinthians 13:1-7 NCV
- John 15:12-13 NIV
- Romans 5:6-8 NIV
- 2 Corinthians 5:14 NIV
- 1 John 3:18-20 MSG

