



Jeremy White, Lead Pastor
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Valley Church
Week 36: All You Need is Love

Introduction:

The Church at Corinth reminds us that there is no such thing as the “the good ol’ days...”

1 Corinthians 13:1-3

Four Greek words for Love:

_____ – affectionate, friendship love for people, things or experiences

_____ – sexual, romantic love

_____ – love of close family or brotherhood

_____ – selfless, sacrificial, Divine love...highest expression of love

1 John 4:8 – “God is love...”

John 13:35-36 – “As I have loved you...love one another...”

Ephesians 5:25 – “Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the church...”

Titus 2:4 – “Instruct women to love their husbands...”

Matthew 5:44 – “Love your enemies...”

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Agape love: The glorious impossibility!

The Big Idea:

The life of grace is a glorious impossibility! Under grace, the standard is not downgraded, but upgraded from possible to impossible... Grace places us in the position of having to trust Jesus to live His supernatural life of AGAPE in us and through us!

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS AND PERSONAL REFLECTION:

Personal Life:

1. How does it strike you to consider the Christian life as a “glorious impossibility?” In your own words, try to describe what it means to allow Jesus to live His supernatural life in and through you...

Ponderings:

2. Of the four Greek words for “love,” give examples of how or why the first three (storge, eros and phileo) have their limits, while agape does not...
3. Because the Christian life is a supernatural life – a life that is impossible to live by mere human effort – it is a life of grace from start to finish. Explain in your own words how living under New Covenant grace actually raises the standard of living from Law to love...
4. Battling the flesh will always be a reality in the Christian life (see Gal. 5:17), which makes walking in agape love a daily choice. Can you think of an example of when another human being showed agape to you at a time you didn't deserve it? How about a time when you chose agape toward someone else who didn't deserve it? Share about these encouraging stories and what you learned from them...
5. We often acknowledge the wisdom of making sure we set healthy boundaries so our lives are not shipwrecked by toxic people. How does 1 Corinthians 4:4-8 square up with or conflict with this idea? Discuss...
6. Psychologists often talk about codependency...the unhealthy “need to be needed” or “feeling overly responsible for another person's successes or failures.” How is genuine agape (unconditional) love as described in 1 Cor. 13 different from codependency?

Promptings:

7. How are you currently and consciously living supernaturally? In what way(s) might God be challenging you to trust Him for supernatural manifestations of His love beyond your human ability? Discuss...