

Illogical Love 2021

Part 1: It's Personal

John 15:9-13

Bottom Line: Love is deciding to prioritize a person over your personal priorities.

ME: Some of the most meaningful words I've heard in the last year are...

I miss you. You're not alone. I'm with you.

WE: If this year has shown us anything... it's our innate need for connection, relationships... LOVE

Almost like someone designed us like this.

Interesting thing...

We all agree we need love

We all agree the world needs love

But we can't seem to agree on what love is.

We love the idea of love... But what is it? Everyone seems to have their own definition.

"Love your neighbor..." Everyone agrees that's a great idea.

But what does that truly mean?

Example: Both political parties claim to be the ones that truly love their neighbors.

Love often has a mystical/ethereal feel to it... Can't grasp it. Can't control it. We seem to fall in or out of it by accident. We just can't seem to help it!

It's intangible... just happens like magic.

But if we really look at it... **Real love is practical, not magical.**

It's not just something we send out into the universe or think about for others... It's seen in what we do.

It's not something we feel for faceless ideas of people "out there"

Love is seen in its most practical form in personal relationships... not some abstract idea floating out there...

Love your neighbor = love the person who is in front of you

Jesus actually told AND showed us the secret to love... But it's so simple and so counterintuitive it seems **illogical**.

GOD: Jesus' best friend, John, records some of Jesus's last words to his closest followers before his execution.

"Things are going to get crazy... here's what I need you to know..."

Jump in middle of conversation...

V. 9 *I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love.*

“As Father”- When start to grasp Jesus’ identity this has some heavy meaning...

Trinity God (F, S, HS Equally and fully God) eternally existing in perfect relationship with each other.

Jesus is saying this is the love he offers... this eternal, perfect, fully knowing and fully accepting love is available to anyone who is willing to accept it.

Jesus- “I love you, now remain in my love.” Remain in love? Not really up to us right... fall in and out?

Remain- Abide, continually live in it, be in it, have it define you...

“Sounds great! How do I remain? Hope it’s not some rules or religious thing...”

V. 10. *When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father’s commandments and remain in his love.*

“I knew it. If I want to have Jesus keep loving me, or to be “accepted” I have to follow his rules.”

People really don’t like being told what to do.

Isn’t it sad that’s what we immediately jump to?

Not what he is saying... “if you want my love to define you, if you want to enjoy my love in every aspect of your life... if you want to discover what the Father’s love truly is... follow my commandments.”

Still though... commandments... reminds you of the 10 right?

“Ugh this is why I don't like religion!” Me too... but check this out.

V. 11 *I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow!*

Joy? From following rules?

Remaining in his love... obeying his commandments... overflowing joy? What?

This is the part that many many people, Xian or not, miss about Jesus.

V. 12 *This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you.*

Not over 600 religious leaders had at the time, not even 10... Just one simple command... love

We try to make things so complicated... Jesus makes it simple... LOVE.

But this brings us to our main question... “what is LOVE?”

We all have our own definition of love...

Was Jesus just the first hippie? It’s not just a wispy feeling... you can’t command feelings and Jesus commands us to love.

Obedying a command or not is a decision... **Jesus' love requires a decision not a feeling.**

Is he saying what the world needs is tough love? “Love is calling out all someones’ wrongs, giving harsh consequences, exerting the righteous rule over those who are going the wrong way?” Nope.

We all have our own version of what love is... but Jesus’ didn’t actually leave it vague so we could give it our own meaning...

“Love each other **IN THE SAME WAY** I have loved you.” **The truest/perfect example of love is Jesus.**

V. 13

What does Jesus’ love look like?

First... literally laid down his life... died for us.

But also laid down every moment of his life... became a human and daily used his life to serve those around him.

Jesus’ love led him to die for and live for others.

This is the illogical part of love... **Real love is prioritizing a person over your personal priorities.**

- Putting your preferences, wants, dreams, hopes, priorities... second to someone else’s.
- Using who you are, what you have, not to your advantage, but to serve someone else

See... **Hate is not the opposite of love... selfishness is.**

When your goal/focus in life is YOU... your preferences, your comfort, your goals... people become merely tools or obstacles for you to get what you want.

What do you do with tools- use them

Obstacles- Remove them

You either end up using or removing everyone around you.

So what Jesus is saying, though at first it might seem illogical (especially in real world practice), is...
If you want to have joy, overflowing joy... choose to stop focusing on what you want and focus on what is good for others.

YOU: How? Try really hard? Write reminders? Beat yourself up every time you fail?

This is not something you muster up...

Simply willing yourself to love like this and you will simply make yourself exhausted, frustrated, and disappointed.

Love like Jesus in two easy steps: Accept his love for you. Allow it to flow to others through you.

Accept- Have you? Secure? Not secure- always protecting, defending, trying to provide for self
What makes it so hard to extend it to others.

Are you secure in his love for you?

Complain when things don't go your way or are you secure he is in control and has your best interest in mind?

It's Jesus' love loving through you...

Remaining in his love... it's a cycle of accepting his love, and allowing that love to flow to others, which in turn helps you to understand and accept even more how much he loves you... that you can then give out to others.

Like a fountain...

Homework: Everyday- Read: 1 Cor 13:1-7 Pray: Let your love radiate out of me today.

Was going to say "shine."

Life is too short, this world too dark to settle for a little light here and there...

The people in our circle need an explosion of light and love.

Start with those right in front of you... right now. "What are you doing?"

WE: We were made **FOR** love and **TO** love.

Not sentimental feelings that come and go based on our level of sleep, how many drinks we've had, or how much the other person smells like sunshine in a bottle.

We were made to accept, enjoy, and share the love of Jesus.

By making a daily decision to prioritize a person over our personal priorities.

Not logical. But it's the path to true joy and what those around us need most.

Even if you are not totally sure about EVERYTHING about Jesus, can you commit to accepting his love and allowing his love to flow to others this week?

What if...

Marriage, Family, friendships, work, city, country.

The most illogical love is the most powerful love

OUTRO

Next few messages about how this practically plays out in specific relationships.

QUESTIONS :

1. What stood out, challenged, bothered, or confused you from this week's message and passage?
2. Read Paul's description of love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. Which of these descriptions grabs you the most? Why do you think that is?
3. How's your cycle of accepting Jesus' love and allowing it to flow to others? How can your group pray for you in this?