

THE LOVE QUESTION

More than anything else, our Lord Jesus desires our love.

KEY POINTS

- ❖ No one in their right mind gets up in the morning thinking, "I'm going to do everything in my power today to become the most hated person on Earth." Everyone wants to be loved.
- ❖ Genesis 1:27 says we are made in the image and likeness of God, and other scriptures, like 1 John 4:8, state that "God is love." So, a desire for love is actually a desire for what God is!
- ❖ John 21 recounts an event that took place two or three weeks after Jesus' resurrection. Jesus appeared to His disciples on the shore of the sea of Galilee – their third time seeing Him since His resurrection. Basically, the story is as follows:
- ❖ Peter had said he was going fishing and some friends – James, John, Thomas, Nathaniel and two unnamed disciples – went with him for a night's work on the boat. A natural thing, as they were no longer travelling full-time with Jesus and they had not yet received the Holy Spirit empowerment for their future evangelistic mission.
- ❖ In the morning, as they came back close to shore, someone called out to them and said, "Hey, guys, do you have any food?" They had caught nothing, so they said, "No." Then the stranger said: "Cast the net on the right side of the boat and you'll find some."
- ❖ Strangely enough, although they were professional fishermen who knew you don't fish during the day, they obeyed the voice of the stranger and cast the net on the other side.
- ❖ Immediately, so many fish jumped into their net that they weren't able to pull it back into the boat. Well, they'd read that script before (see Luke 5), so they immediately knew who was responsible for this massive catch.
- ❖ John shouted, "It's the Lord!" At that point, Peter, the impulsive one, jumped from the boat and swam about 100M back to shore to greet Him.
- ❖ Now, the night of the Last Supper, we remember that Jesus said to the disciples, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered'" (Matthew 26:31).
- ❖ Peter had said, "Even if all are made to stumble because of You, I will never be made to stumble" (v. 33).
- ❖ But Jesus answered him, "Assuredly, I say to you that this night, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times" (v. 34), to which Peter boldly replied (v. 35), "Even if I...die with You, I will not deny You!"
- ❖ During the night, Peter sat in a courtyard outside the hall where Jesus' first trial was held. Warming himself by a fire, he was accused three times of

KEY SCRIPTURES: 1 John 4:8; John 21:1-19; Matthew 26:31,33-35; 1 John 4:19

- having been with Jesus and being a part of His group. He denied it each time, each time more forcibly.
- ❖ With this backstory in mind, let's examine Jesus' interaction with Peter in John 21.
- ❖ Jesus already had a fire going and had fish and bread prepared for them. Still, He asked them to bring some of the new fishes to Him. He fed them all and then He turned His attention to Peter (v. 15).
- ❖ "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?"
- ❖ Note that Jesus didn't ask if Peter would serve Him, worship Him, work for Him, or represent Him well. He asked *The Love Question* to test the strength of Peter's love for Him.
- ❖ This shouldn't seem like a strange question to us. The Lord has and owns everything there is in this universe and beyond. It's all His. But something He does not own and cannot buy is this: our love.
- ❖ God wants us to love Him, because the more we love Him, the more of His love we can actually receive. He has so much He wants to do in our lives. So much He wants to give us.
- ❖ Not just material blessings – He wants to share everything about Himself with us and actively re-make us into His image and likeness. But if we don't love Him, we won't allow Him to do His work in our lives.
- ❖ He desires that we love Him first and foremost, despite all the things that compete for our love: material possessions, people and relationships, our own physical bodies, sensual pleasures, our status in society, power and control over others, etc.
- ❖ 1 John 4:19 explains very simply that "We love Him because He first loved us." We have the ability to love God because He first extended His love toward us. He is love and He is the one who gives us the ability to love.
- ❖ And *your* love is what Jesus desires more than anything else in His universe.

DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. Search the scriptures (using concordances/apps, etc.) and share results/signs of i) God's love for us; and ii) our love for God.
2. Reflect on and pray about how/ (or whether) love for God is being demonstrated in your life.

PRAYER TIME




Jesus, You love me, this I know. Help my love for You to grow and help my life to show it.




Start-up: What was the toy/object/pe/activity, etc. you loved the most when you were a small child? How did you show your love for it?

WEEK OF SUNDAY, APRIL 18, 2021

NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week's message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

 (Reminds me/Confirms)
  (New idea)
  (Think about)

 (Do this)
  (Speaks to my heart)
  (Must share)

PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS

Go deeper with your Life Group family.
 CONNECT-REFLECT-DISSECT THE WORD
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You are Life
And You are Love
So You poured out Your love to me
You put Your love
Into my heart
Now I give all my love to You
When You ask me, "Do you love Me?"
I want to say, honestly, "Yes!"
From my heart
With all my soul
Lord, help me to show my love

FAITH SANCTUARY ON-LINE SERVICES

SUNDAY @ 10:15 a.m. – Sunday Bible Study
SUNDAY @ 11:00 a.m. – Worship Service LIVE
SUNDAY @ 3:00 and 8:00 p.m. – Worship
Service Rebroadcast
MONDAY @ 6:30 p.m. – Berean Bible Study on
Zoom, Facebook, YouTube
WEDNESDAY @ 7:00 p.m. – Worship Service
Rebroadcast

FAITH FOUNDATIONS

GOD

We believe there is only one God: the eternal, holy, loving, all-knowing, all-powerful, omnipresent Spirit, creator of all (Deuteronomy 6:4; 1 Timothy 1:17; Leviticus 19:2; 1 John 4:8; Hebrews 4:13; Revelation 19:6; Jeremiah 23:24; John 4:24; Isaiah 44:24; Colossians 1:16).

GOD'S WORD

We believe the Holy Scriptures—The Bible—is God's true and complete Word to humanity, verified most notably through fulfilled prophecies concerning Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Isaiah 41:21-23, 42:8-9, 46:9-10; Luke 24:25-27; John 17:17).

GOD'S CREATION

We believe all people were created in the image of God for His pleasure, to be His children, His church and His bride, living in eternal love and fellowship with Him (Revelation 4:1; Genesis 1:27; John 1:12-13; Romans 8:16; Ephesians 5:25-32; Revelation 19:7).

HUMANITY'S FALL

We acknowledge that we have all sinned and failed to fulfill God's plan and purpose for our lives, through willful disobedience to the word of God and our own conscience. All sinful acts lead to separation and alienation from God's pure, holy presence, eventually resulting in both physical and spiritual death (Romans 3:23, 6:23a).

THE GOSPEL

We believe that Jesus Christ is the Almighty God, fully divine and fully human (1 Timothy 3:16). He came to Earth and suffered death by crucifixion, willingly substituting Himself for us in receiving God's judgment against sin (Isaiah 53:5). But God raised Him from death (Acts 5:30), and He now offers eternal life to all who will believe in Him (John 3:14-17, 6:29; 2 Corinthians 5:18-21; Romans 6:23b; Ephesians 2:4-9). Faith is sparked within us when we hear the gospel, the "good news" that Jesus died, was buried and rose from the dead for our benefit (Romans 10:14-17; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

OUR FAITH RESPONSE

Hearing the gospel is intended to lead us to repentance, a divinely inspired change of heart that causes us to turn away from our sins and turn to God (2 Corinthians 7:9-10; 2 Timothy 2:24-26). Faith and repentance lead us to obey the scriptural command to be baptized in Jesus' name for the forgiveness of our sins and to receive His gift of the Holy Spirit. His Spirit gives us the power to live a righteous, godly life, joyfully sharing the good news of our new life in Christ with others (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38, 4:12; 1 Peter 1:22-23).

CHRIST'S RETURN

We believe our Lord Jesus Christ will soon return to Earth to receive His people to Himself and establish His righteous, eternal kingdom (John 14:3; Matthew 25:34).

April 18, 2021

Faith
SANCTUARY

Know Jesus, Love Jesus, Share Jesus

2021 ~ Live It! ~ 2021

Pastor: Rev. Granville E. McKenzie

*"We love Him because He first loved us.
20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?"*

1 John 4:19-20 NKJV

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