

2021 Community Groups

WEEKLY GUIDE

September 19th

Pastor Aaron takes us through week two of "Fantasy Marriage". A series that reminds us that our marriages are designed to point to and honor Christ the way He loves the Church. He takes us through 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 and what love is and is not...we have all read it, "love is patient, love is kind...", but it is important to remember, this passage is not a "cheer you up" passage, but a passage to show us how far we fall short of God's perfect love. Because, as you reflect on the individual statements of that passage, and your honest with yourself, it is tough to live up to it. But the love of Jesus is perfect and hits every point...it never fails.

Pastor Aaron's message this week focuses us in on LOVE THAT DOES. Not a love that tries real hard or a love that feels a certain way, but a LOVE THAT DOES.

Ice Breaker:

- How would you personally define love?
- What is your favorite love song or Romantic Comedy and why?

Community Prayer:

Lord, we are consistently challenged to love the way you love us. We try and we fail. We fall short every day and in every relationship. Our prayer as we open today's study and reflect on your teaching, is that you would continue to reveal yourself to us. That we might be encouraged and strengthened to love more like you. To honor our relationships in a way to point others to the hope that can only be found in you and your perfect love for us. Please bless this time and conversation; in Jesus' Name, Amen.

Opening Questions

1. Love is not just a feeling, it's more than emotion, love is an action to be taken. What are loving things that you could do this week for a spouse/friend/neighbor/co-worker?
2. What did you find striking about the statistics Pastor Aaron used in the sermon? (High risk for divorce in our area, Grey Divorce rates, etc...)
3. What are your thoughts on potential reasons behind the Grey Divorce rates specifically?



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EXPLORATION

Read the passages below...what can you learn about what it means to follow Jesus from these passages? (Have someone read from their bible)

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

4. Read the phrases that describe love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8. Which one stands out the most to you? Why do you think that is?
5. If you had to score yourself on each one, would you want to share it in public? (jk....you don't have to do that)

A LOVE THAT DOES...is not proud but is patient

1 Corinthians 7:1-4

6. What do you take away from this passage?
7. How were Paul's words radical in this culture and time?

1 Corinthians 7:32-34

8. How can you and your spouse stay focused on the Lord's affairs and guard against the affairs of the world distracting you?
9. And if you are single, what can you do to serve God without distractions in this season of your life?

A LOVE THAT DOES...does not dishonor but always protects

Hebrews 13:4

10. What are some of the subtle things we do that can dishonor our spouse? How can you protect against that?
11. What overt acts can you take this week that honor your spouse?

1 Corinthians 6:16-20

12. What does it look like to live out a love that protects and honors?
13. Reread verse 20. What emotions does that stir up in you as you think about the context of this passage?

A LOVE THAT DOES...does not delight in evil but rejoices with truth

1 Corinthians 13:6

14. Talk about ways that our culture has grown used to the immorality around us.
15. Can recognize ways that you have softened your views on immorality? What can we do to stay focused on rejoicing with truth?



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A LOVE THAT DOES...keeps no record of wrongs but always hopes
2 Corinthians 5:17-21

16. Do you ever find yourself keeping score in your marriage or relationships?
17. How does God's grace shape your conflict management and desire to reconcile?

Parents' Corner

It's troubling that there has been a recent rise in married couples getting divorced after 30 years of marriage. For couples that have children this seems to coincide with the time that their children are grown up and have left the house. The feeling of grief and emptiness some couples face when their children leave the house is called "Empty Nest Syndrome", and the name "Empty Nest Divorce" has been given to couples who call it quits at the same time.

18. What can couples do to build into their marriage during the busy years of raising children?
19. Even though couples focus on their kids in an attempt to raise them well, why is it ultimately beneficial for their kids if couples focus on their marriages first?
20. How can single parents soften the blow of "Empty Nest Syndrome" so it's not as devastating when they leave?
21. In 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, the Apostle Paul outlines some of the qualities of love such as patience, kindness, honoring others, seeking the benefit of others, etc. How can parents model these to their children both inside and outside the home? At soccer games (is that too close to home)?
22. Pastor Aaron mentioned the importance of commitment and forgiveness in marriage. Why is it important for parents to ask forgiveness from their children when they make mistakes such as losing their temper or overreacting?
23. How can this be used to point children to the gospel and God's grace toward us? (See Romans 5:8, 1 John 1:8-10)



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THE TAKEAWAY

- We cannot do this on our own, that is why Jesus has come to show us true love!
- We learn to love and we are empowered to love as we receive His perfect love!

Tim Keller "The reason that marriage is so painful and yet wonderful is because it is a reflection of the gospel, which is painful and wonderful at once. The gospel is this: We are more sinful and flawed in ourselves than we ever dared believe, yet at the very same time we are more loved and accepted in Jesus Christ than we ever dared hope."

"Marriage requires radical commitment to love our spouses as they are, while longing for them to become what they are not yet. Every marriage moves toward enhancing one another's glory or toward degrading each other."

Dan Allender and Tremper Longman III

PRAYER REQUESTS

