

THE ULTIMATE VIRTUE—LOVE

I. STRUGGLE WITH LOVE:

Starting Text: Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

1 Corinthians 13:13 And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love

Love definition—"seeking and doing the best for another."

(Loving People, John Townsend, 19)

Can you think of a time when you experienced real love?

What are the mechanics of love?

II. SO HOW DO WE LOVE?

A. LOVE _____:

1 John 4:11 Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another

1 John 3:18 Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth

John 13:34 "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.

B. OFFER _____: creating an emotional bond.

James 1:19 My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry,

C. OFFER _____: Honesty that serves the other person.

Romans 12:9 Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good

1 Corinthians 13:6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

D. OFFER _____: Repairing brokenness.

Matthew 5:43-48 "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor^[a] and hate your enemy.'⁴⁴ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,⁴⁵ that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.⁴⁶ If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that?⁴⁷ And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? ⁴⁸ Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

"An enemy is one whose story we have not heard." Quaker saying (Vanishing Grace, Philip Yancey, 21)

CONCLUSION: You see God loves us recklessly so that we can love others audaciously

FOR FUTHER STUDY:

Loving People by Dr. John Townsend

One Month To Love by Kerry and Chris Shook