Love in Action

# Scripture: I John 3:11-20

# Main Idea: Real love is demonstrated in action.

# Introduction

The Flower 2nd Helping of Chicken Soup p. 108

# What is love?

Calvin and Hobbes joke – 2nd Helping of Chicken Soup p. 2

* + 1. What it is not
       1. I John 3:12-15 Cain is used as an example of one who did not show the personality characteristics of love. His envy and hatred of his brother led to murder. This is the obvious point.
       2. But let’s be a little more subtle. Many times we equate things with love that are not the definition of love. For example: Being loved is not necessarily just being a biological family – nor is it just living in the same house.
          1. Love is not found in the parent who says they love the child but then does not want them.
          2. Love is not found in the husband who says he loves his wife but cheats on her.
       3. Love is not manufactured automatically because people entered a church building, took vows, or joined the church.
          1. JoAnne and I visited a church once where no one even spoke to us.
       4. Love cannot be just words
          1. Loving sounding words can be empty or manipulative or even a lie.
          2. Think about the charming salesman who adores your home, wallpaper, taste in clothes, etc. You’re not sure whether he or she really does or not. You are only quite sure they want your business.
       5. There is another confusion about love in our country today. Because you love someone does not mean that you will automatically just approve whatever they ask you to approve either.
          1. In families, many parents try to show love by letting the children do pretty much whatever they want. It is called permissive parenting. It is an unhealthy parenting style. It usually has disastrous results in the children.
          2. In social issues we are told that to love our neighbor is to approve whatever they genuinely feel is the right thing to do. This is just as misguided as permissive parenting.

Example: Suppose I had a brother-in-law who was already way over his head in debt and he drives in my driveway with a new flashy Vette and tells me he is buying it for his wife’s (my sister’s) birthday present. What is the loving thing to say? I mean it is for my sister! But suppose I also know very well that they can’t afford it. ???? Saying “Buy it!” certainly means I am seeking his approval as much as he is seeking mine. Saying, “I don’t think you should buy this” risks being in trouble with both him and my sister. But such an answer genuinely cares for the future financial health of both of them. (Thankfully in real life my sister and brother-in-law are better with finances than I am. So this scenario was totally fictitious. But it makes the point.)

* + 1. What is real love?
       1. Real love is defined by Jesus life
          1. John 15:13 “Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.”
          2. I John 3:16 “This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.”
          3. ill. "When do I die, Daddy" (LI-FR-LO)
       2. So real love means giving of ourselves for those we love. – It is expressed in action as well as words.
          1. In Gary Chapman’s five Love Languages: Words of Affirmation, Quality time, Gifts, Touch, Deeds of service; I notice that one is verbal; four are actions.

# How Do We Demonstrate Real Love?

* + 1. cartoon (MA-FA-MA) "Marriages may be made in heaven but you have to do your own maintenance."
    2. We demonstrate real love by displaying the personality of love.
       1. I Cor 13:4-7 - shows the characteristics of love. “Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5 It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.” NIV
       2. ABC's of Love (LI-FR-LO)
    3. We demonstrate love by giving our attention.
       1. That's how the beautiful love story of Ruth and Boaz started. Ru 2:5-10
       2. For children at least, attention means eye contact.
       3. Attention means listening
          1. You can't show love to another person while you're talking about yourself
          2. Often affairs have begun because one spouse would not do the work of listening and the other spouse found a co-worker who would.
          3. quote (MA-FA-MA) "The exciting adventure of marriage is finding out who the partner really is."
       4. Attention means showing interest in what interests them.
          1. Kids

ballgames, music events, art, good report cards on the refrigerator

* + - * 1. Neighbors, friends

hobbies, gardens, family

special events - weddings, funerals

* + 1. We demonstrate our love by sharing ourselves
       1. I John 3:17 – Love involves giving to those in need
       2. "We can live with our hands tightly clenched, protecting what is ours-and live in turmoil. Or we can take the risk of living with open hands & know God's special kind of peace." (Ronald Hutchcraft Peaceful Living in a Stressful World p. 122)
       3. We love when we take a risk and honestly share our feelings.
       4. sharing our affections
          1. ill 200th hug p 13 in 2nd Helping of Chicken Soup
    2. We demonstrate our love by acts of service
       1. ill. The Haskinville community held a wood bee for my dad after he lost his fingers in the corn-picking accident.
       2. Sam Rayburn was a long time speaker of the House of Representatives. One of his friends lost a teenage daughter. The next morning early, Sam Rayburjn was at his house to see what he could do. He was told there was nothing he could do. "Well, have you had your coffee yet?" asked Sam. "No." So the speaker of the House of Representatives went to the kitchen and fixed breakfast. The friend said to him, I thought you were supposed to have breakfast with the president this morning." Sam replied, "Well, I was, but I called the President and told him I had a friend who was in trouble and I couldn't come"
       3. "Love never asks how much I must do but how much can I do." Frederick Agar
       4. E. Stanley Jones in Growing Spiritually (p. 122) “Without growing in love we cannot grow in God, for His essential nature is love.”

# Conclusion

* 1. Is there someone you've been saying you love but you need to show it in your actions?
  2. What work of loving can you do today for someone you love?
  3. How can we grow in God today by growing in love?