

Love is a Choice...and an Action...and an Affection

Dr. Scott Mehl
Pastor, Cornerstone Church of West LA
scott@cornerstonewla.org

The Centrality of Love for Life

Matthew 22:35-40

And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

What counselees are called to do

- In marriage
- In relationships
- In any situation

What we are called to do as counselors

- Love is counseling
- Love is discipleship
- Love is friendship

What God has done for us

1 John 3:11-16

For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another....By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.

1 John 4:10-12

In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

The Definition of Love

1 John 4:7-8

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because **God is love**.

1 John 4:16

So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. **God is love**, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

God's Love Manifests in Choice

God's Choice to Create

Genesis 1:26-27

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.

God's Choice to Redeem

Ephesians 1:3-5

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,

God's Love Manifests in Affection

2 Samuel 22:20

He brought me out into a broad place;
he rescued me, because he delighted in me.

John 11:32-38

Now when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet, saying to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled. And he said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." Jesus wept. So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?" Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it.

Ephesians 5:31-32

"Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

God's Love Manifests in Action

Philippians 2:5-8

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

John 3:16-17

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Romans 8:31-32

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?

The Call to Love

Love is a Choice

Philippians 2:3-8

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility **count others more significant than yourselves**. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. **Have this mind** among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

The Danger of Choice-less Love

Love in an Affection

“Love does not seek its own *private, limited* joy, but instead seeks its own joy in the good – the salvation and edification – of others. In this way we begin to love the way God loves. He loves because he delights to love. He does not seek to hide from himself the reward of love lest his act be ruined by the anticipated joy that comes from it.” (John Piper, *Desiring God*, 100)

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not **irritable or resentful**; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but **rejoices** with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

“The very definition of love in 1 Corinthians refutes [a] narrow conception of love. For example, Paul says love is not *jealous* and not easily *provoked*, and that it *rejoices* in the truth and *hopes* all things (13:4-7). All these are *feelings*! If you feel certain things such as unholy jealousy and irritation, you are not loving. And if you do not feel certain things such as joy in the truth and hope, you are not loving. In other words, YES, love is more than feelings; but, NO, love is not less than feelings.” (John Piper, *Desiring God*, 101)

The Danger of Affection-less Love

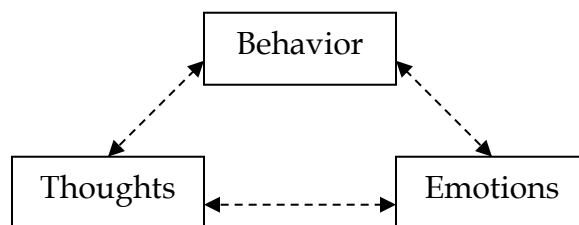
Love is an Action

One Anothers (a selection)

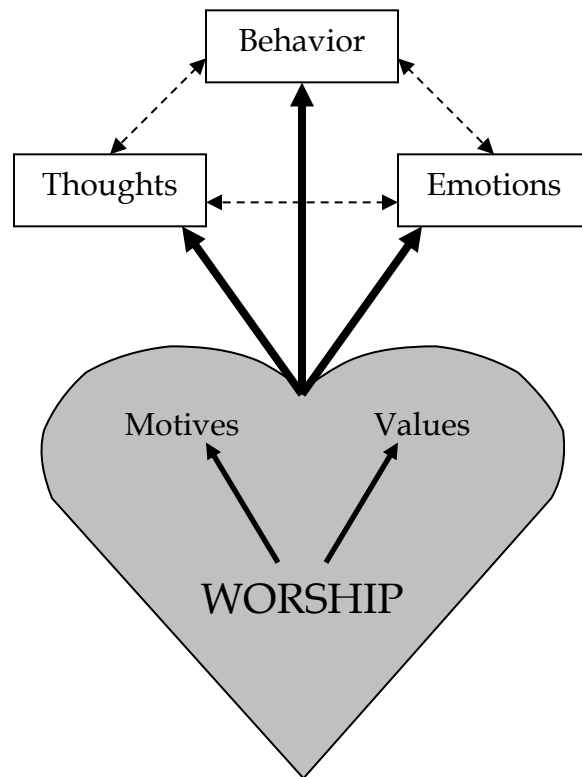
Live at Peace (1 Thes 5:13; Mk 9:50)	Forgive (Eph 4:32)
Show Honor (Rom 12:10)	Submit (Eph 5:21)
Bear burdens (Gal 6:2)	Show hospitality (1 Pet 4:9)
Rejoice and Weep (Rom 12:15)	Pray (Jas 5:16; 1 Tim 2:1)
Care and Suffer (1 Cor 12:25-26)	Encourage (1 Thes 4:18, 5:11)
Be Kind (Eph 4:32)	Confess (Jas 5:16)
Seek to do good (1 Thes 5:15)	Instruct (Rom 15:14)
Serve (Gal 5:13, 1 Pet 4:10)	Teach and Admonish (Col 3:16)
Accept (Rom 15:7)	Build up (1 Thes 5:11; Eph 4:15-16)
Bear with (Rom 15:1; Col 3:13)	Spur on (Heb 10:24)

The Danger of Action-less Love

The Interplay of Choice, Affection, and Actions



The Transformation of Choice, Affection, and Actions



Practical Applications

In Friendship

In Marriage

In Counseling

The Radical Nature of Love

Matthew 5:43-46

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same.

