



September 11 & 12: Undeserved Love

Series Overview

We are in this world to make an impact and love others. If we are going to truly impact our world, we must display the life of Christ in our own lives. *Galatians 5:22-23* says ²²*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.* This kind of life will make a difference in our world and in the lives of the people around us.



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Sermon Highlights

1 Corinthians 13:1-3, ¹If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ²If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. ³If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

1. Remove the obstacles!

Notice what love is *not* in *1 Corinthians 13:4-6, ⁴Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.*

Jesus removes obstacles from our lives but then He wants to use our love to impact others by being His hands and His feet ... by loving others the way Jesus would, if He were in our place.

2. Offer unconditional love!

1 Corinthians 13:7-8, ⁷It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. ⁸Love never fails.

The word "always" reminds us that this is a love with no strings attached. We exist to impact others with the love of Jesus Christ. Inside these walls, outside these walls—we do not deserve to wear the name of Christ and be called Christians unless we love the undeserving like He loves us!

3. Make the first move!

Romans 5:8, But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

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

How will you impact others with Jesus' love?

On laziness...

- I want you to be concerned about your next door neighbor. Do you know your next door neighbor? –Mother Teresa
- Your neighbor is the man who needs you. –Elbert Hubbard
- *The entire law is summed up in a single command: Love your neighbor as yourself. –Galatians 5:14*
- Love means loving the unlovable—or it is no virtue at all. –G. K. Chesterton



Take it home ... Practical Applications

Consider the people you encounter in your life and ask yourself how you can show the love of Christ to them. Make a decision to actively display God's love to someone who is hurting or undeserving.



Take it to the source ... Bible Study

Introductory question: What is your favorite movie with a redemptive love theme? What strikes you about that story?

Read *1 Corinthians 13:1-3*.

1. What are your thoughts about the three spiritual gifts or actions that Paul lists here? Would you consider them as valuable? Why?
2. Why does love play such an important role in each of these actions?
3. Have you ever met a “spiritual” person who practiced their Christianity without love? What effect did that person have on you?
4. Why is it necessary to have God’s Spirit if we are going to truly show the love of Christ to others?

Read *1 Corinthians 13:4-6*.

1. Are there any obstacles in your life that keep you from loving others? Which of the characteristics in this list do you need to work on?
2. What practical things can you do to remove those things that hinder your spiritual growth and your effect on others?
3. How can these characteristics reflect God’s love to our society that finds it harder and harder to find true love?
4. How can your small group work together to help each other develop characteristics that display God’s love to each other and to the world around them?

Read *1 Corinthians 13:7-8a, 1 Peter 4:8 and John 13:34-35*.

1. What does the word “always” say to you? Does this describe your love for other people? Why or why not?
2. What keeps you from being a person that loves “always”? What can you do to make your love for others more consistent?
3. Consider the four words—*protects, trusts, hopes, perseveres*—in *1 Corinthians 13:7*. What does each word mean to you in the context of a loving relationship? How can you live out those action words to those around you?
4. Why is *now* such an important time to actively show the love of God instead of just talking about it? How can that love make a difference to our community and to our world?



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All Bible references are from the New International Version unless otherwise stated.

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