

Sunday, Nov. 4: HC, All Saints, Daylight Savings Time Ends

Message #1: "Love Is Hard Work!"

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

Memory Verse: "We pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another."
-Romans 14:19

Blurb: Every saint in heaven has gotten there (and will get there) with some wrong beliefs and errant thinking. Luckily, it's not about getting it all perfectly correct! Instead, it's about genuinely loving Jesus and seeking to make Him first in your life. And, as Jesus-followers, the same is true with the other people around us. Our relationship with them is not based on the uniformity of our thinking, or them getting certain understandings right. Instead, it is based on love, the love that we choose to have for them. This changes everything! Come this Sunday to hear an alternative to the pervasive culture of hate-speech and animosity. Love looks different!

Opening Song: *All I Have Is Christ* -Sanctify

Welcome: -Pastor David

Memory Verse: "We pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another."
-Romans 14:19

Worship Music Set: - Sanctify

Glory to Glory

Invitation Fountain

All Saint's Day (with kids) -David

John 11:25-27 "Jesus said, 'I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die.'"

For All the Saints (with reading of the names - David)

Worship Prayer - Andrew

Message Bumper

PP#1: Difficult Conversations: How to LOVE someone when you don't agree.

Love Is Hard Work

"We pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another." -Romans 14:19

Difficult Conversations: How to LOVE someone when you don't agree. Love is hard work.
Romans 14:19, "We pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another."

PP#2: *Image for Jesus needs you (perhaps Jesus in an Uncle Sam pose?)*

Our world needs you!
You are God's front line against the hate that spreads.
You, who have chosen Jesus, you are likewise chosen by Jesus, and sent into hostile territory.
I'll not sugar coat it for you. It's bad. Every day you face overwhelming odds. You don't think you can make much difference, but I must tell you, you must press on.
Jesus is counting on you!

PP#3: *Image for feeling threatened when engaging others, normal people who look threatening.*

The hostile territory I'm talking about, is the moment you connect with someone else. And it's dangerous! Because those other people: they don't think like you do. They don't believe like you do. They don't have the same ideas, the same opinions, the same values.

Usually, we try to find something in common to talk about, some connection, something we agree on. Perhaps it's the lousy weather, or the Vikings game. "I like your shoes," or "Have you played this video game?" "Do you like Mexican?"

But the moment you have more than 20 seconds of conversation, you're in too deep. "Man, this economy stinks." "What? Well, actually unemployment is at a historic low." "People are struggling to make ends meet." "It's been nine years of bull market, the longest since WWII."

"Homeless people need to get a job." "Homeless people need resources." "Poor decisions lead to personal messes." "Everyone goes through hard times, and not everyone has a security net."

"Our schools are asking for another levy." "They should learn to work with what they have." "But Forest Lake's levy is behind those of other schools, we're falling behind. They've made drastic cuts already!" "We just passed a bond last election, isn't that enough? Look at the new buildings."

PP#4: *Image for mud slinging political campaigns, both sides using bad ads (Use something MN?)*

"Tim Walz would be the best governor." "What? Jeff Johnson supports values that all of us should." "But Tim Walz has much more experience with six terms in the house." "Jeff Johnson won the debate, hands down."

It's dangerous, because in our culture today, differences of ideas are a big deal...big enough to leave the realm of ideas, and push into our relationships.

"I can't believe you would think like that!" "You must be crazy to vote for him." "Can't you see how ignorant you are?" "I thought God gave you a brain?" "Christians can't vote for her." "You better come to your senses!" "Why don't you just leave!" "Who needs people like you?" "People like you are causing our great country to fall apart." "One day my kids will wish I slapped you upside the head for such stupid thinking."

Actually, that last one was a real quote. A friend of mine got told off with that one. "One day my kids will wish I slapped you upside the head for such stupid thinking." Wow.

Our reality is that we live in a divided and antagonistic society. People feel so strongly about what we think, and we are so aggressive about it, especially when other don't think like we do. This political season, with the election campaigns, is all so dirty and negative. But here's the sad part: all this mud slinging, character attacks, and accusations, they work! Campaigns use them because they bring results. We listen to them! "He did what? I can't vote for him. He's an idiot!"

Our president, tweeting insults and name calling of his rivals late at night. And his administration's opponents saying they so can't stand this violent rhetoric, demand a more tolerant and accepting norm, and therefore call on people to be violent in response.

This arguing divides us in all directions: neighbors, coworkers, even in our families. Look around you. See the people sitting near you here in church? These good looking Christians here: there are many who are not going to vote like you think they should on Tuesday.

PP#5: *Image for our society being divided, like an image with fists at each other.*

Our society is being torn apart by how we stand on our differences! Rather than trying to get along, we defiantly entrench in our stance. We vilify those who think differently. We place people who behave differently on a lower level of value. Our mind frames people with different views of the world as stupid, idiots, morons. We feel justified in insulting them, belittling them, wishing curses on them. And when we find people are wrong, we tear into them without mercy.

This is the landscape of our society. And it is erupting into physical violence. Anger, hatred, pain, are spreading. And the drive beneath all of this is fear. Our society is wracked by a godless fear.

PP#6: *Image of Jesus standing over the world, and light coming from Him pushing darkness away.*

Church, this is why Jesus needs you!

You see, into a world torn by evil, Jesus was born as the Light, the Hope, the Peace. He came to heal the ravages of sin, by taking all that punishment on Himself. He paid the price for sin, and won forgiveness for all people. He instituted a kingdom of mercy. He died the death that our sin deserves, dying on the cross, and now offers life abundant and eternal.

This is our Savior. This is our Lord. And this is the Jesus we have chosen to follow.

He creates a new way, a different way, an alternative. And He calls all people to follow Him.

Jesus has a plan. He is working to bring healing and wholeness to a hurting world. He is bringing in a new order, based on forgiveness, mercy, empathy.

And Jesus sends you—you who follow Him and His alternative way—He sends you into this hostile territory of our society, to be different, to show a different way, and to offer that alternative to others stuck in the trap of anger, judging, degrading, condemning, fear.

Jesus is love, perfect love; this is His alternative. He brings love to our world, our reality. And His perfect love casts out fear, and creates new life.

PP#7: Love Is Hard Work

1. We live a life of love (who is Jesus!)

Today is All Saint's Day. We remember and celebrate those who have gone on before us, in faith, in following Jesus, in death. And every saint in glory has gotten there with some wrong beliefs and errant thinking. You see, it's not about getting it all perfectly correct! No. It's about genuinely loving Jesus and seeking to make Him first in your life. And, as Jesus-followers, the same is true for us with those other people around us. Our relationship with them is not based on the uniformity of our thinking, or them getting certain understandings right. Our relationship is based on love, the love of Jesus, that we choose to have for them. This changes everything!

PP#8: Love Is Hard Work

1. We live a life of love (who is Jesus!)

2. This love is Jesus' love

Our daily, walking-around lives, are based on love. But it is not love like the world thinks love is. We live by Jesus' love. And that love is very different. It is not based on feelings, or attraction, or shared interests or beliefs. It is a love that chooses the other first, and then seeks to sacrificially serve them in ways that build them up. Jesus shows us this most perfectly in how, while we were yet sinners, He died for us. He chose us, died for us, offers us life abundant and eternal, and continues to demonstrate His love through serving us and calling us to a different way of life.

PP#9: 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 (CEB)

1 If I speak in tongues of human beings and of angels but I don't have love, I'm a clanging gong or a clashing cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy and I know all the mysteries and everything else, and if I have such complete faith that I can move mountains but I don't have love, I'm nothing. 3 If I give away everything that I have and hand over my own body to feel good about what I've done but I don't have love, I receive no benefit whatsoever.

Take out your Bibles and turn to what we call "The Love Chapter." You've heard it at weddings. It's 1 Corinthians 13. We see God's love in Jesus. And it is poetically described here in 1 Corinthians 13. Let's take a closer look.

We take a running start, and look back at the end of chapter 12. Paul is telling the Christians about the wonderful gifts the Holy Spirit gives. But, he says, don't get too caught up into all these. After all, he says in chapter 12, verse 31, "I will show you an even better way." Chapter 13, verse 1, "If I speak in tongues of human beings and of angels but I don't have love, I'm a clanging gong or a clashing cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and I know all the mysteries and everything else, and if I have such complete faith that I can move mountains but I don't have love, I'm nothing. If I give away everything that I have and hand over my own body, to feel good about what I've done but I don't have love, I receive no benefit whatsoever."

See, all the ways that we look good, or all the gifts we can have, aren't what's best. Love is.

PP#10: 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 (CEB)

4 Love is patient, love is kind, it isn't jealous, it doesn't brag, it isn't arrogant, 5 it isn't rude, it doesn't seek its own advantage, it isn't irritable, it doesn't keep a record of complaints, 6 it isn't happy with injustice, but it is happy with the truth. 7 Love puts up with all things, trusts in all things, hopes for all things, endures all things.

So, Paul, describe this godly love for us, will you, please? Verse 4,

"Love is patient, love is kind, it isn't jealous, it doesn't brag, it isn't arrogant, it isn't rude, it doesn't seek its own advantage, it isn't irritable, it doesn't keep a record of complaints, it isn't happy with injustice, but it is happy with the truth. Love puts up with all things, trusts in all things, hopes for all things, endures all things."

Tell me, church, does this describe our society? Well, this is the alternative Jesus is calling you to live, in our society!

PP#11: 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 (CEB)

8 Love never fails. As for prophecies, they will be brought to an end. As for tongues, they will stop. As for knowledge, it will be brought to an end. 9 We know in part and we prophesy in part; 10 but when the perfect comes, what is partial will be brought to an end. 11 When

I was a child, I used to speak like a child, reason like a child, think like a child. But now that I have become a man, I've put an end to childish things. 12 Now we see a reflection in a mirror; then we will see face-to-face. Now I know partially, but then I will know completely in the same way that I have been completely known.

Verse 8, "Love never fails. As for prophecies, they will be brought to an end. As for tongues, they will stop. As for knowledge, it will be brought to an end. We know in part and we prophesy in part; but when the perfect comes, what is partial will be brought to an end. When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, reason like a child, think like a child. But now that I have become a man, I've put an end to childish things. Now we see a reflection in a mirror; then we will see face-to-face. Now I know partially, but then I will know completely in the same way that I have been completely known."

Jesus-followers: it's time to man up! We live in this Jesus-love. That means we put away the childish antics, anger, condemnation, devaluing, hatred, fear. We are completely known by Jesus, and have experienced His love first hand. Growing up means making Jesus' love the way we live, and the way we relate to others.

PP#12: 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 (CEB)

13 Now faith, hope, and love remain—these three things—and the greatest of these is love.

The last verse in this "Love Chapter" is rightfully one of the most beloved verses of the whole Bible. Let's say it out loud together. "Now faith, hope, and love remain—these three things—and the greatest of these is love."

PP#13: Love Is Hard Work

1. We live a life of love (who is Jesus!)
2. This love is Jesus' love
3. Living by love is a continual choice

Jesus-followers, it's all about love. This is the basis of all that we do, how we live, how we behave, what we say, and how we interact with others, how we treat them.

All through November, we're going to be talking about how we Christians interact with others, specifically with those who think very differently than we do. Our society shows us all kinds of wrong responses: name calling, condemning, judging, belittling, hate speech, violence, fear. But we are different, and Jesus sends us out into that cultural landscape to bring this difference.

It is not easy. We have the same feelings welling inside of us like everyone else. But we also have Jesus, and His love to change us. And so, as we are sent, we must make the constant, ongoing choice to live by love. It's a continual choice, one we make over and over again, choosing love, choosing Jesus. We choose Him daily, sometimes every hour. We choose Jesus whenever we talk to others, and they start saying dumb stuff, revealing errors in their thinking, behave wrongly, have such different worldviews. We are tempted to join in the condemning culture. But we choose Jesus, over and over again.

How do we relate to others, when they think so differently? Here in this first Sunday, I want to simply say, it's love. We relate in love. That changes everything. Over the next three weeks, we'll ask, "So, how do we love someone, in our conversations, with whom we disagree?" We love, and

it's hard work. Next week we'll tackle the divisive conversation of human sexuality, particularly homosexuality and the church's response. Yep, we're getting real. Love is radical!

PP#14: "We pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another." -Romans 14:19

Our theme verse for today is 1 Corinthians 13:13, "The greatest of these is love." But for our whole November series, it's Romans 14:19. How do we have those difficult conversations, in a loving way, with people who think so differently? We do it when "we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another." This is what love looks like.

Jesus is sending you. Jesus is depending on you. He needs you to live out His love in your daily lives. It's hard work. It's a choice. But it is the one thing that will change everything.

Amen.

Holy Communion, Offering, Prayers, Apostles' Creed

Prayers - Andrew

Great Thanksgiving

Apostles' Creed

Receiving the Elements

Offering

Song: *I Come with Joy* -Sanctify

Closing Song: *Reckless Love* - Sanctify

Memory Verse: -Pastor David

"We pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another." -Romans 14:19

Announcements: -Pastor David

Benediction: -Pastor David