

APPLICATION

- Last week we talked about how love is often felt through the acceptance of another. It is hard to feel loved if we don't feel accepted. Yet when we feel accepted it often makes us feel loved. Why is that? Because acceptance is a choice. It is a positive choice that someone is making towards another. This choice to act positively towards them makes them feel loved because love is rooted in positive choices. People feel loved when we chose to be patient, to be kind, to honor, to not be easily angered or to keep no record of wrong towards them.
- Whom can you choose to love (accept, be patient with, be kind to, forget wrongs, protect, etc.) when you have not felt love for them in the past.
- Know that when you make the choice to love them through actions, positive feelings will come out of, or get all wrapped up in, those love actions.

Prayer

Father in Heaven, thank You that You chose from the very beginning that You were going to accept us and make us Your children through Your Son Jesus Christ. Thank You that You loved us in this way. Thank You that in Him You see us as holy and blameless. Father help us to truly accept Your unconditional love for us and to live as You see us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

Freedom Groups were created with the belief that we are all on a journey through life and that our heart's desire is to be free to be all that we can be. Yet there are many setbacks, heartaches and road blocks along the way. Trying to overcome the issues we face in life by ourselves just does not work. We are all the same, no one is different. We need others to help us successfully walk our journey to freedom. Everyone is invited on this freedom journey. Join in!



WHAT IS LOVE?

NOTES

WARM-UP

- What is a food that you love?
- Is there a movie or book that you love?
- What is a specific thing that you love to do?
- Can you remember a time that you really, really wanted something? What was it? What did you do or go through to get it? How long did it take you to get it?

WORD

God is love. This is how God showed His love to us: He sent His only Son into the world to give us life through Him. True love is God's love for us, not our love for God. God sent His Son to die in our place to take away our sins. That is how much God loved us, dear friends!

1 John 4:8b-11a The International Children's Bible

When we say the word "love," what usually comes to mind are different "feelings." We think of feelings of attraction towards another person, feelings of really liking something, or we think of really enjoying something. For many people, love is just a word used to convey really strong, positive feelings for someone or about something. We say we love football because we really like it. We say we love pizza because we really enjoy the taste of it. Is love really just an expression of feelings just at a more intense level? No, even though the word love is often used that way in our culture. We tend to instinctively know that love is meant to be so much more than just expressing strong feelings. If love is more than just strong, positive feelings what is love?

1 - Love is action.

⁴ Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It does not dishonor others, 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. ⁸ Love never fails. 1 Cor. 13:4-8a NIV

Of all the descriptors of true, God-like love listed in this Scripture, how many are pure feelings and how many are actions? Of the feelings listed, how many are used to describe what love is not like? How is this different than our normal thoughts of love?

2 - Love is a choice!

Since true, God-like love is more action than feeling it means that we can choose to love. We can choose to be patient with someone. We can choose to be kind. We can even choose not to give into feelings of envy. We can choose not to boast or be proud. We can choose to honor others instead of dishonoring them. We can choose to not get angry and to keep no records of wrongs. You get the idea. Love is a choice. Scripture also teaches us that God is love and that He loves you! Since He loves you, according to 1 Corinthians 13 how does God choose to act towards you?

3 - God chose you in Jesus!

⁴ In Christ, He chose us before the world was made. In His love He chose us to be His holy people—people without blame before Him. ⁵ And before the world was made, God decided to make us His own children through Jesus Christ. That was what He wanted and what pleased Him. Ephesians 1:4-5 International Children's Bible

From the beginning of the world God chose how He was going to act towards us in Jesus Christ. In love He chose to make us His own children through Jesus! This Scripture shows us a pattern of how love works. In love He chose and His choice led to, or at least was wrapped up in, feelings. According to the last sentence, what was the feeling(s) God's choice led Him to? According to these verses what does God want and what pleases Him?