

December 22, 2024

The Promise of Love
Pastor Brian Greenleaf



John 3:14-21, Romans 5:7-8

Love is something more than a just a word, but a _____.

The mission of Jesus was the _____ of God's love.

It's much easier to love the _____ than it is the _____.

The cultural symbol for love is a 

The Bible's symbol of love is a 

God loves the world with the self-less, costly love of _____. In response, Christians should not love the world with the selfish love of _____.

“If love is the soul of Christian existence, it must be at the heart of every other Christian virtue. Thus, for example, justice without love is legalism; faith without love is ideology; hope without love is self-centeredness; forgiveness without love is self-abasement; fortitude without love is recklessness; generosity without love is extravagance; care without love is mere duty; fidelity without love is servitude. Every virtue is an expression of love. No virtue is really a virtue unless it is permeated, or informed, by love.” Richard Rohr

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Sermon Talks

1. What caught your attention in this week's message? Was there something you had never heard before or something you had a question about?
2. When was the last time you said, "This was the best Christmas ever?" What made you say that? What is the standard, for you, for a Christmas to be the best ever?
3. What are some of the most loving experiences you have ever had? Who was present? What were the circumstances? What made the experience so memorable and transformative?
4. Love came to earth in the form of a person, Jesus Christ. If you have put your faith in Jesus, how has your life changed as a result? How has God shown you love through that relationship?
5. Many of us have read or heard John 3:16 many times. Did you learn anything different about that verse in the message today? If so, what was it?
6. Read Romans 3:7-8. What do those verses mean to you?
7. What is the meaning of the 'monkey jar' illustration? What are you clutching onto? Is your hand still in the 'monkey jar' so to speak? If so, why?
8. How do you respond to the following statements? God loves the world with the selfless, costly love of redemption. In response, Christians should not love the world with the selfish love of participation.

Consider making this prayer a part of your prayer life:

God, you are love, and you love me. Help me to know the inexpressible, glorious joy of being known and loved by you. May I love others because you have loved me and may that love truly bring me to the joy of my salvation. In Jesus' name, amen.