

## Three Degrees of Love for 2018: Missional

### 1. **Three degrees of love**

- a. **Personal** - God's personal love for His people that is the source and motivation for other genuine, Christ-like love
- b. **Communal** - Love one another; faithful, imaginative, intentional obedience to the command of Jesus to love in the ways and for the reasons He loves
- c. **Missional** - the genuine, sacrificial effort to express and live the love of Jesus into the lives of others so that they may know in a life-changing way the love of God in Jesus Christ.

### 2. **Three questions:**

- a. **Personal love: Do we know beyond doubt that we are loved by God?**
  - i. God has fully demonstrated the depth of His love for you
    - (1) by sending His Son
      - (a) to die on the cross in your place;
      - (b) to take upon himself the full measure of your sin and the justice due
    - (2) By accepting the Son's sacrifice and offering you new and eternal life in Christ through simple faith in Him
  - ii. God
    - (1) Made a plan
    - (2) Carried out the plan
    - (3) Enacts the Plan
    - (4) Pays the price of the plan
    - (5) Bestows the benefit of the plan
    - (6) And asks only faith and love in return, and He even gives that!
  - iii. Do you know you are loved?
- b. **Communal love: How do we love as Jesus loves and are we loving one another in that way?**
  - i. Jesus loves
    - (1) Jesus loves with life sustaining devotion to the Father
    - (2) Jesus loves with life surrendering determination for the Father's plan
    - (3) Jesus loves with life changing precision
    - (4) Jesus loves with life embracing compassion
  - ii. Do we love one another in the ways and for the reasons Jesus Himself loves us?
- c. **Missional love: How might Cornerstone expand Christ's missional love in our community this year?**

### 3. **Biblical instruction**

- a. **The Greatest Commandment question provides the field for missional love**
  - i. Love your neighbor as yourself
  - ii. Who, then, is my neighbor?

- b. The parable of the good Samaritan provides the method for missional love**
  - i. Ordinary actions
    - (1) Lawyers try to justify themselves
    - (2) Merchants going from Jerusalem to Jericho
    - (3) Robbers
    - (4) Priests and Levites observing the Law to the letter
      - (a) We do not know what these two are thinking because Jesus does not tell us
      - (b) What we do know is that their conduct raises a question: why did they not stop and help?
  - ii. Extraordinary mercy: compassion
    - (1) Everybody has what culture of the day assumed they would have
    - (2) Samaritan has what no one expected: compassion
      - (a) Came to where he was and had compassion
      - (b) He went to him, bound up his wounds, used his supplies.
      - (c) Set him on his own animal, took him to an inn, and took care of him.
      - (d) Paid for extended care!
    - (3) It was an extraordinary in that it was personal, precise, complete
  - iii. **Ordinary expectation: “You go, and do likewise.”**

#### 4. The Methods for Missional Love

- a. A right relationship with God includes self-giving compassion for others**
  - i. Real faith in God includes genuine compassion for others
    - (1) “Compassion is YOUR pain in MY heart.”
    - (2) Compassion is the pain of your fallenness, the pain of your sin and sorrow active in the heart of God moving Him to action
  - ii. Jesus, in this parable,
    - (1) demonstrates that we should “worry less about who a neighbor is than about being a good neighbor.”
    - (2) So, the real question is not, “Who is my neighbor?” The real question, from Jesus to us is, “How can I be a good neighbor?”

#### **b. Three Characteristics of Missional Love**

- i. Missional love involves investment of personal interest in the needs of others
- ii. Missional love involves investment of personal effort in the needs of others
- iii. Missional love involves investment of personal resources to meet the needs of others

#### 5. Missional love exemplified in Jesus

- a. **Philippians 2:5-8 (ESV)** <sup>5</sup> *Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,* <sup>6</sup> *who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,* <sup>7</sup> *but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.* <sup>8</sup> *And being found in human form,*

*he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.*

- b. “As I have loved you,” Jesus said, “love one another.”
- c. Missional love involves
  - i. setting aside self for the sake of Christ and of others.
  - ii. Being aware of the needs others have
  - iii. Becoming personally involved in meeting those needs with the resources God has entrusted to your hands

**6. How might Cornerstone engage in missional love in 2018?**

- a. Love List - hospitality aimed at encouraging God’s people along the way
- b. Others