



# Be Mine♥♥♥

February 14 God's Love

February 21 Our Love

February 28 "Other" Love











Love is one of the most overused and  
imprecise words

Culture has diluted the Biblical meaning of  
LOVE

What we believe about love affects our ability  
to give & receive it

God must be the starting point, God is in  
Godself love, the perfect example

# Greek words for LOVE

**Agape:** self-giving, reaches out for another's sake, active concern, not emotion focused but active compassion, seeks reconciliation and wholeness (shalom), **inclusive**—God extends out of God's very nature

**Eros:** selfish, erotic love to satisfy desire of lover, others complete us, ease loneliness, feeds "I" need, egocentric, **exclusive**—some argue humans are only capable of this



## **Eros LOVE:**

Humans only capable of extending love that meets a need within themselves??

“Humans rarely lose sight of own fulfillment...very nature for desires never to be satisfied. Fulfillment of desire only leads to another desire. When affluence/position rises so do expectations. More praise more affection only increases desire for more. Relationships seen through the lens of our own needs.”

**Is this true?**

God is eternal, holy, good, light, love

We are not. We are limited by our experiences, by our position in time/space, by our psychological and physical conditions, by our dependence on others.

Given the stark difference between God and humanity can we even hope to respond to God's love---let alone extend it to others?

## **Last week reminders:::~::~:**

Impossible to see into another's heart----especially considering we barely are acquainted with our own

**1John 4: 7-12**

Admitting our own relationships not in complete response to or reflection of God's love

Loving well is two fold—two necessary relationships to actively nourish

You and God

You and others

**“I want to do what is good, but I don’t. I don’t want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway...I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong.” Romans 7: 19, 21**

Humans must be able to extend self-giving love or else Scripture wouldn’t be riddled with calls and commands to do so and examples of what it looks like to do so

**We are called to be LIKE Christ and FOLLOW Christ not BE Christ**

# Why is LOVE so hard?

Humans are needy—infants—dependence on people/things outside of self for nurture, self-worth, companionship

“Health” and balance of neediness colors perspective and actions

# Obstacles to receiving and giving love when unbalanced

**Control Seeking**—unmet needs painful, efforts to guarantee outcome... costly, overt control by violence, economic competition....subtle by guilt, manipulation, pity. Joyful spontaneity dies replace by dull ache of constraint/coercion

**Jealousy**—insecure about getting what need from loved one causing resentment of their other relationships, commitments. Unbalanced possessiveness evidences egocentric need vs needs of partner, friend, child. Very anxiety that causes behavior seeking attention has opposite effect.

**Loneliness**—perception of isolation, no one shares our joy or pain, understands us, or cares deeply for us. Occurs even in a busy life full of people. Can be intensely painful. In the midst the desire for something or someone to fill void is compelling...dangerous.

**Self-deception**—we wish to think well of ourselves and resist/pained by suggestion that we are < admirable. We need affirmation that what we believe about self is true. Criticism forces to see self differently. A challenge for close relationships.

**Fear**—common foundation of all previous patterns. Deeply aware of our dependence & vulnerability. Moving toward relational trust requires discernment and courage. Relationships wax and wane...repeated failures, new anxieties arise. Vision often distorted by what we are afraid of...see threats more clearly than possibilities



# Examples of Jesus' Love

**HOPE that we can indeed LOVE**