

## Sunday School Intro - What is Love? - 9/12/21

- Prayer
- Introductions
- Plan for the year - See attached schedule
- Memory Verse for the Month - Romans 5:8 "but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."
- New City Catechism Discussion
  - Question 1: What is our only hope in life and death? That we are not our own but belong, body and soul, both in life and death, to God and to our Savior Jesus Christ. - Romans 14:7-8
  - Question 2: What is God? God is the creator and sustainer of everyone and everything. He is eternal, infinite, and unchangeable in his power and perfection, goodness and glory, wisdom, justice, and truth. Nothing happens except through him and by his will. - Psalm 86:8-10, 15

### What is Love?

*Discuss* - What do you think of when you think of love? What is it?

What do the following verses say about love?

- Psalm 11:5,7 "The Lord tests the righteous, but his soul hates the wicked and the one who **loves** violence....For the Lord is righteous; he **loves** righteous deeds"

- Love \_\_\_\_\_ desires \_\_\_\_\_

- Romans 12:10 "**Love** one another with brotherly *affection*."

- Proverbs 13:24 "Whoever spares the rod hates his son, but he who **loves** him is diligent to discipline him."

- Love \_\_\_\_\_ seeks others' good \_\_\_\_\_

- John 15:13 "Greater **love** has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends."

- Love is \_\_\_\_\_ sacrificial \_\_\_\_\_

- Song of Solomon 8:6-7 "for **love** is strong as death, jealousy is fierce as the grave. Its flashes are flashes of fire, the very flame of the Lord. Many waters cannot quench **love**, neither can floods drown it."

- Love is \_\_\_\_\_ strong \_\_\_\_\_

- Romans 8:38-39 "For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the **love** of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

- Matthew 6:24 “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and **love** the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.”

- Love \_\_\_\_\_ serves \_\_\_\_\_

- Galatians 5:13 “through **love** serve one another.”

- Luke 6:27 “**Love** your enemies, do good to those who hate you”

- John 14:15 “If you **love** me, you will keep my commandments.”

***Love is an active, strong, and sacrificial affection for another and desire for their good.***

Read together 1 Corinthians 13 (the love chapter)

- Prayer

***For Next Time: - Memorize Romans 5:8 “but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”***

#### Important Dates

- Youth Group every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month (not during Thanksgiving and Christmas weeks) - 9/22, 10/13, 10/27, 11/10, 12/8, 1/12, 1/26, 2/9, 2/23, 3/9, 3/23, 4/13, 4/27, 5/11, and 5/25.

- Ignite Youth Conference – 3/11-12

(takes pleasure in/delights in, desires good for, sacrificial, strong, serves)

## Sunday School - The Supremacy of Love - 9/26/21

- Prayer

- Memory Verse for the Month - Romans 5:8 "but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

- New City Catechism Discussion

- Question 5: What else did God create? God created all things by his powerful Word, and all his creation was very good; everything flourished under his loving rule. - Genesis 1:31

- Question 6: How can we glorify God? We glorify God by enjoying him, loving him, trusting him, and by obeying his will, commands, and law. - Deuteronomy 11:1

**Review - Love is an active, strong, and sacrificial affection for another and desire for their good.**

### **The Supremacy of Love**

In Galatians 5:22-23 we see the fruit of the Spirit.

- "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control"

- Which character trait is listed first? Why do you think that is?

In the following verses, discuss how important love is compared to other things.

- 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 "If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing."
- Colossians 3:12-14 "Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony."
- Galatians 5:14 "For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself.""
- Matthew 22:34-39 "But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself."
- 1 John 4:8 "Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love."
  - What character trait most clearly defines God?
  - In order to define love, we look at who God is. Everything God does comes from love.
- Turn to and read Psalm 136. What is it that the author wants us to know about God?
  - How has God demonstrated his love for us? [If you know the memory verse, you know the answer to this question...]
  - How do we enter into His love?

- Prayer - Including: confession - ways we have not loved others or God, adoration - praise for God being love, thanksgiving - thankfulness for what God has done to show his love, supplication - for us/our church to grow in love, for those who hear the sermon to know God's love and enter into it

***For Next Time: - \*\*\*Complete the Bible study worksheet for next week on 1 Corinthians 13:1-3.\*\*\****

***- Memorize Romans 5:8 "but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."***

## Sunday School - Aspects of God's Love - 10/10/21

- Prayer
- Memory Verse for the Month - 1 John 4:8 "Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love."
  - Review Romans 5:8
- New City Catechism Discussion
  - Question 7: What does the law of God require? Personal, perfect, and perpetual obedience; that we love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength; and love our neighbor as ourselves. What God forbids should never be done and what God commands should always be done. - Matthew 22:37-40
  - Question 8: What is the law of God stated in the ten commandments? You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below—you shall not bow down to them or worship them. You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God. Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Honor your father and your mother. You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not give false testimony. You shall not covet. (Exodus 20)

***Review - Love is an active, strong, and sacrificial affection for another and desire for their good.***

### **5 Aspects of God's love**

God's love is very complex. It has many different attributes and forms and is not shown in the same way in all situations. Here are 5 different ways the Bible talks about God's love.

#### **1. The special love of the Father for the Son and the Son for the Father.**

- John 3:35 "The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand."
  - John 5:20 "For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing."
  - John 14:31 "I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father."
  - Matthew 3:16-17 "And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."
- Why does it matter that the Father and the Son love each other? (because then we know they are capable of loving us, they saved us to bring us into their love, if the members of the trinity didn't love each other then God wouldn't be a loving God and would not love us or save us, etc.)

#### **2. God's love for all he has made.**

- Genesis 1:31 "And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good."
  - Matthew 6:26 "Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them."
  - Matthew 6:28-30 "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field"
  - On your own time, you can read Job 38-39 to see the love God put into all He made.
- Why is it encouraging that God loves His creation so much? (because it means he loves us that much more as those made in his image > that is what Jesus is arguing in Matthew 6, God takes so much care of little things and so won't let little things in our lives go without care, etc.)

### 3. God's salvation-offering love for His fallen world.

- John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."
- 1 John 2:2 "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world." Propitiation means "wrath-absorbing sacrifice"

- How does God show His love for the whole world? (offering Jesus to any who would believe in Him for salvation, the common graces of good things in the world like creation/pleasures of life, etc.)

### 4. God's particular, effective, selecting love toward his elect. [what is elect?] (those who are elect have been chosen by God to be saved/adopted as His children to live with him forever and inherit all things in Christ)

- God's love is for His children is not the same as for the whole world. John 15:19 "If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world".

- Deuteronomy 7:7-8 "It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the Lord set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, 8 but it is because the Lord loves you"
- Ephesians 1:4-5 "he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,"
- Ephesians 5:29-30 "For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, 30 because we are members of his body."
- *The distinguishing factor between God's elect and others is not merit but God's love.*
  - In other words, Christians didn't earn God's love, it's not based on us. How does God show love towards His elect that He doesn't show to unsaved people [can reference above verses]? (adoption, made holy and blameless, nourished and cherished, eternity with Him in heaven, etc.)

### 5. God's love towards his people conditioned on obedience.

- It doesn't have to do with becoming saved but with our relationship with him once we are. For example, for parents with their children love feels very different when being punished than when enjoying something together even though the parents do both out of love.

- Exodus 20:6 "showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments."
- Psalm 103:13, 17-18 "As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him...But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children's children, 18 to those who keep his covenant and remember to do his commandments."
- Colossians 1:10 "walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him"
- How can we walk more fully in God's love? (obedience)
- Prayer - Including: confession - disobedience to God/not walking in His love, adoration - praise for God's different aspects of love, thanksgiving - thankfulness for what God has done to display his love, supplication - for us to walk more fully in His love/show God's love to others

#### **For Next Time:**

- **Memorize 1 John 4:8 "Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love."**
- **Review Romans 5:8.**

## Sunday School - God's Love for God - 10/17/21 - Leader

- Prayer
- Memory Verse for the Month - 1 John 4:8 "Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love."
  - Review Romans 5:8
- New City Catechism Discussion
  - Question 9: What does God require in the first, second, and third commandments? First, that we know and trust God as the only true and living God. Second, that we avoid all idolatry and do not worship God improperly. Third, that we treat God's name with fear and reverence, honoring also his Word and works. (Deuteronomy 6:13-14)
  - Question 10: What does God require in the fourth and fifth commandments? Fourth, that on the Sabbath day we spend time in public and private worship of God, rest from routine employment, serve the Lord and others, and so anticipate the eternal Sabbath. Fifth, that we love and honor our father and our mother, submitting to their godly discipline and direction. (Leviticus 19:3)

***Review - Love is an active, strong, and sacrificial affection for another and desire for their good.***

### **God's Love for God**

We as humans mimic things that we love. For example, we mimic things people say or do or dress. We mimic attitudes and styles and priorities. We love something, and then we mimic it. Our sense of self takes shape around it so that what we love actually shapes us.

- What are some examples from your lives where you or someone else has mimicked something you loved?
- As we are influenced by others it is often hard to tell where we (our thoughts, attitudes, beliefs, priorities) end and others (who have influenced us) begin. What are some ways you think/act that have been shaped in you by others?
- Jesus describes this same mimicry of the Father: John 5:19 "Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does."
  - How do we grow in our mimicking Jesus? (by continuing to have him before us [in prayer, the Word, fellowship, worship, etc.] which influences us and shapes us, we have to see it in order to mimic it)
- Mimicking shapes our thinking to be like others. When we don't know where our thinking begins and theirs ends, we know we are being indwelt by others. This idea can help us think about the Trinity, where the Father, Son and Spirit indwell each other completely, sharing one nature and essence yet are distinct persons.

What is the Trinity? (that God is 3 persons, each person is fully God, and there is 1 God)

- The Trinity is unique to Christianity alone, and a triune God is the only God that could be love. Why does God need to be a Trinity in order to be loving? (because God must eternally have others to love if he is to actually be loving in His nature)

"The first thing that is true because of the trinity is that God is Love. Love is who God is, and this is only possible because he was always loving. He was always loving the other members of the trinity. Think about a single-person God such as in Islam. A single-person God has been alone for all eternity. That god is fundamentally self-centered and self-gratifying because he is all that exists. That god does not have love in his nature...A God of love needs others to love. A single-person God, because he is all alone, is not love and does not love. It isn't who he is. And for the same reason, a single-person god is

not compassionate, not merciful, not generous, not kind, and on and on. But our God, the trinitarian God of eternal love doesn't need to make humans in order to be himself. His love for you doesn't depend on you."

- The Trinity also means that God's passion for His own glory and praise is actually not self-centered or arrogant since it is a passion for the other members of the Trinity.
- God's love always exalts God's own glory, and this is wonderful news for us because God's glory is the most satisfying and joy-producing thing of all time.
  - Psalm 16:11 "in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore."
  - How does God being glorified/exalted bring us satisfaction and joy? (people being saved means they are glorifying God AND saved from wrath, the eternal worship of God forever will be the most joyful thing we can experience, our growth in Christ brings us more joy and God more glory, etc.)
- **God's glory and our good are not opposed to each other. He doesn't have to pick between the two. They always go together.**

It is the same way with God's glory as it is with his God-centered love. When God the Father loves God the Son for God's sake, the whole universe gains. Indeed, the whole universe gets created in the first place!

- Why does God's love overflow into creation? (He wants others to share in His love, He wants His Son to get more glory from created beings, etc.)
  - John 3:35 "The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand."
- We must also love others for God's sake. For example, with children, if we love ultimately for our own sake, we exploit them. If we love them ultimately for their sake, we spoil them. We must love them for God's sake. How can we love others for God's sake? (be concerned with their eternal good, be concerned with how they glorify God, be concerned with their salvation in Christ, be concerned with God's glory rather than your own, etc.)
  - We want others to glorify God more and to see God in us as we love them.

Read Philippians 2:5-11.

- Christ gave his life for who's glory? (the Father)
- Who does the Father exalt to rule over all things? (the Son)
- Who wins in this Christ-exalting God-glorifying situation? (God, Christ, us)
  - Why do we win? (because we get to live in the loving presence of God himself forever, because everyone will bow down someday and we won't need to have our legs broken to do it)

**God's love for God is the foundation of all the good in the world and of all love. It is vital to everything good that God loves God most because...**

- 1. Without it, He wouldn't be God.**
- 2. God's glory is what brings ultimate joy and satisfaction.**
- 3. It is why He created us and saved us.**

- Prayer - Including: confession - things we have done for our own glory, adoration - praise for God's worthiness of all glory and honor and praise, thanksgiving - thankfulness for what Jesus did for the glory of the Father and what the Father did to exalt the Son, supplication - for us to live more for God's glory and not our own

**For Next Time:**

- **Memorize 1 John 4:8 "Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love."**
- **Review Romans 5:8.**

### Sunday School - Loving One Another - 11/28/21 - Leader

- Memory Verse for the Month - John 13:35 "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

- Review Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, 2 Corinthians 9:7

- Prayer

- New City Catechism Discussion

- Question 17: What is idolatry? Idolatry is trusting in created things rather than the Creator for our hope and happiness, significance and security. (Romans 1:21, 25)

- Question 18: Will God allow our disobedience and idolatry to go unpunished? No, every sin is against the sovereignty, holiness, and goodness of God, and against his righteous law, and God is righteously angry with our sins and will punish them in his just judgment both in this life, and in the life to come. (Ephesians 5:5-6)

### Review

***Love is an active, strong, and sacrificial affection for another and desire for their good.***

### Loving One Another

***Devotion to God finds its outward expression in loving others.***

1 John 3:10 "By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother."

- What does evident mean? (clear and obvious)

- Who are the children of God? (whoever practices righteousness and love his brother)

- Any other observations from this verse?

- Why do you think loving God look like loving people? (because people are made in his image so loving them is loving the one in whose image they are made, we are commanded to love so loving people is obeying God, God loves people so when we love people we are saying that being like God is worthy of our effort which shows we love what he is like, we have been filled with so much from God that we can't help but pour it out)

- This is why the greatest two commandments are loving God and loving your neighbor. Doing one involves doing the other.

- Read together 1 John 4:7-12.

- What is true about the person who loves others? (v. 7-8 - has been born of God and knows God, v. 9 - has life through the Son, v. 10-11 - God loves them and sent his Son to be the propitiation for their sins, v.12 - God abides in them and his love is perfected in them)

- 1 Peter 1:22-23 "Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God"

- Why does this verse say we should love one another? (because we have been born again)

- 1 John 5:1 "Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him."

- A lot of these verses emphasize "brothers". Who is that referring to? (other believers)

- How should these verses impact our view of the church [meaning God's people]?

***Do not allow a lack of love for someone to reside in the heart unchecked and unchallenged.***

- 1 John 4:20-21 "If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother."

- How do we know if someone is lying when they say "I love God"? (they don't love their brother)

- What are some examples that might illustrate this?

- Why is it dangerous to harbor hate against someone according to this verse? (it is a sign you do not love God)

- 1 John 3:17 "But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?"

- James 2:15-16 "If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that?"

- If God's love abide in us, how should we treat people in need? (open our heart to them and meet their needs)

- What are some needs people have that you could meet?

- Prayer - Including: confession, adoration, thanksgiving, supplication

**For Next Time:**

- ***Memorize John 13:35 "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."***

- ***Review Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, and 2 Corinthians 9:7.***

Sunday School - Love is Patient and Kind - 12/5/21 - Leader

- Memory Verse for the Month - John 13:35 "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

- Review Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, 2 Corinthians 9:7

- Prayer

- New City Catechism Discussion

- Question 19: Is there any way to escape punishment and be brought back into God's favor?

Yes, to satisfy his justice, God himself, out of mere mercy, reconciles us to himself and delivers us from sin and from the punishment for sin, by a Redeemer. (Isaiah 53:10-11)

- Question 20: Who is the Redeemer? The only Redeemer is the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, in whom God became man and bore the penalty for sin himself. (1 Timothy 2:5)

**Review**

***Love is an active, strong, and sacrificial affection for another and desire for their good.***

- 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a "**Love is patient and kind**; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends."

**Love is Patient**

***Patience joyfully accepts delay, suffering, and the shortcomings of others.***

Patience is demonstrated by how we interact with others.

- Acts 26:3 "Listen to me patiently"

- 1 Thessalonians 5:14 "And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all."

- 1 Timothy 4:2 "preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching."

We demonstrate patience with others in 2 ways:

**1. Responding to provocation (intentional)**

- Provocation tends to arouse anger. What do each of these verses say about anger?

- Proverbs 14:29 "Whoever is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who has a hasty temper exalts folly."

- Proverbs 15:18 "A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but he who is slow to anger quiets contention."

- Proverbs 16:32 "Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city."

- Proverbs 29:22 "A man of wrath stirs up strife, and one given to anger causes much transgression"

- What would be some loving ways to respond to provocation? Consider these verses. How do we love someone who is provoking us?

- Proverbs 15:1 "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger."

- Proverbs 19:11 "Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense."

- Remember in our definition of love that it is strong: it can hold up under provocation.

- How did Jesus respond in love to the provocation of our sin?

## 2. Tolerating Shortcomings (unintentional)

- What are some examples of situations where we may be irritated or disappointed by others who do not intend to irritate? How would love respond to irritations or disappointments?
- Irritation with others often comes from pride, where we think we know best and are smarter or more capable. How does love view others?
- Ephesians 4:2-3 “with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” What does bearing with one another in love look like from this verse? (eager to maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, basically patience)
- Remember our definition of love that it is sacrificial: it sacrifices our own desires or pride by enduring the shortcomings of others.

## Love is Kind

- Kindness is a sincere desire for the happiness of others. Goodness is kindness in action.
- Galatians 6:10 “So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.” Who are we to love by doing good to? Especially?
- We should not only want to be kind and good to others but to stir up others to do good.
  - Hebrews 10:24-25 “And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”
  - Where specifically does this verse say we are to stir one another up? (in our meeting together, again the vital importance of the local church)
- Galatians 6:9 “And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.”
  - What is our temptation in doing good to others? (getting weary and giving up)
  - How does love respond when growing weary?
- Remember our definition of love that it is active: it continues to do good even when it is hard and inconvenient.
  
- How did/does Jesus show love to us through kindness and goodness?
  
- Prayer - Including: confession, adoration, thanksgiving, supplication

## For Next Time:

- **Memorize John 13:35 “By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”**
- **Review Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, and 2 Corinthians 9:7.**

### Sunday School - Love Does Not Envy or Boast - 12/12/21 - Leader

- Memory Verse for the Month - John 13:35
  - Review Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, 2 Corinthians 9:7
- Prayer
- New City Catechism Discussion
  - Question 21: What sort of Redeemer is needed to bring us back to God? One who is truly human and also truly God. (Isaiah 9:6)
  - Question 22: Why must the Redeemer be truly human? That in human nature he might on our behalf perfectly obey the whole law and suffer the punishment for human sin; and also that he might sympathize with our weaknesses. (Hebrews 2:17)
  - Question 23: Why must the Redeemer be truly God? That because of his divine nature his obedience and suffering would be perfect and effective; and also that he would be able to bear the righteous anger of God against sin and yet overcome death. (Acts 2:24)

### Review

***Love is an active, strong, and sacrificial affection for another and desire for their good.***

- 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a "Love is patient and kind; **love does not envy or boast**; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends."

### Love does not envy

- What is envy? (a feeling of discontented or resentful longing aroused by someone else's possessions, qualities, or luck. desire to have a quality, possession, or other desirable attribute belonging to someone else.)
  - What are some general examples of envy or some personal experiences of envy?
  - Why do we envy? Why does it make us feel better?
  - Why is envy sinful? (it is discontentment with what God has given us, it believes that God made a mistake in having us in the situation we are in, envy makes an idol out of whatever we think we need, etc.)
  - Why is envy not loving? (it doesn't have an affection for the person but rather for what that person has that we want, it ignores that person in the pursuit of gaining what they have that we desire, instead of being sacrificial it seeks only to gain for oneself, envy is self-focused and not others-focused, etc.)
- Proverbs 14:30 "A tranquil heart gives life to the flesh, but envy makes the bones rot."
  - Why do you think envy destroys us? (envy is always looking for something that we don't have and so is never satisfied - we keep spinning our wheels trying to get what other people have and it never satisfies us which is tiring and demoralizing, envy doesn't recognize God's providence over all things and puts our life solely in our hands which is demoralizing since we realize how little control we have)
- Sin entered the world through Adam and Eve's envy of God. They wanted what he had.
  - Genesis 3:4-5 "But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.""
  - According to this verse, what did God have that they envied? (his knowledge)

- What are some other things about God that people envy? (his power, his control over things, his riches, his worthiness of praise, his independence [not needing others])
  - How does this desire to be like God come out in people's lives in sinful ways? (greed for more money, abuse of other people, being domineering and power-hungry, doing anything for more fame, not caring for others/community)
  - Sin is often putting ourselves in the place of God which is us envying him.
- Remember in our definition of love that it is sacrificial: love looks to give up for others rather than having others give up for us. Love does not envy.
- How did Jesus respond in love to our envy of him?

### **Love does not boast**

- What is boasting? (excessively proud and self-satisfied talk about one's self)
    - What are some things we can boast about? (abilities, possessions, achievements, family, position in life, other people, God, etc.)
    - What are some examples of boasting? (David and Goliath comes to mind)
  - What do we learn about boasting in these verses?
    - Psalm 5:5 "The boastful shall not stand before your eyes"
    - Jeremiah 9:23-24 "Thus says the Lord: "Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the Lord."
    - 1 Corinthians 1:28-29 "God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God."
    - James 4:16 "As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil."
  - Why is boasting not loving? (because it is self-exalting rather than others exalting, it is more concerned with one's self-image than with others, boasting draws attention to self rather than to God)
  - 1 Corinthians 4:7 "What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?"
    - What do we have that we did not receive from someone else? (nothing)
    - What do we have that we did receive from someone else? (everything)
    - So why is boasting ridiculous? (we have nothing apart from God, there is nothing that we could ever have or accomplish that didn't ultimately come from the hand of God)
  - Remember in our definition of love that it is affection for another: love does not ultimately land on yourself but on someone else. Love does not boast.
  - How did/does Jesus show love to us through kindness and goodness?
  - Prayer - Including: adoration (for example see psalms 111/145), confession, thanksgiving, supplication
- For Next Time:**
- Memorize John 13:35 - Review Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, and 2 Corinthians 9:7.**

### Sunday School - Love is not Proud - 12/19/21 - Leader

- Memory Verse for the Month - John 13:35
  - Review Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, 2 Corinthians 9:7
- Prayer
- New City Catechism Discussion
  - Question 24: Why was it necessary for Christ, the Redeemer, to die? Since death is the punishment for sin, Christ died willingly in our place to deliver us from the power and penalty of sin and bring us back to God. By his substitutionary atoning death, he alone redeems us from hell and gains for us forgiveness of sin, righteousness, and everlasting life. (Colossians 1:21-22)
  - Question 25: Does Christ's death mean all our sins can be forgiven? Yes, because Christ's death on the cross fully paid the penalty for our sin, God graciously imputes Christ's righteousness to us as if it were our own and will remember our sins no more. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

### Review

***Love is an active, strong, and sacrificial affection for another and desire for their good.***

- 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a "Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; **it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful;** it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends."

### Love is not Proud

- Love is not arrogant, rude, insisting on its own way, irritable or resentful. We can sum these up by saying that love is not proud. What is pride? (elevating and exalting self, primarily concerned for self, viewing self more significant than others, haughtiness [arrogantly superior])
  - What is humility [opposite of pride]? (counting others more significant than self, elevating and exalting others, emptying self, being servant-hearted, being leadable and teachable)
- Discuss the following about each of these terms: what is it? how does it demonstrate pride? What are some examples of situations where it is demonstrated?
  - Arrogant (having or revealing an exaggerated sense of one's own importance or abilities: it demonstrates pride because of thinking too highly of self)
    - Proverbs 16:5 "Everyone who is arrogant in heart is an abomination to the Lord; be assured, he will not go unpunished."
  - Rude (behaving improperly, offensively impolite or ill-mannered: it demonstrates pride by treating others as if they were less important than us)
    - Romans 13:7 "Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed."
  - Insisting on its own way (thinking I am always right demonstrates pride by having an exaggerated sense of your own wisdom)
    - Proverbs 12:15 "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice."

- Irritable (having or showing a tendency to be easily annoyed or made angry, easily provoked: demonstrates pride by viewing others as an inconvenience or thinking that we don't deserve to be hassled)
  - James 1:19-20 "Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God."
- Resentful (feeling or expressing bitterness or indignation at having been treated unfairly, keeps an account of wrongs: demonstrates pride by viewing how we are treated as the most important thing)
  - Leviticus 19:18 "You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord."
- What do the following verses indicate is the relationship between love and pride?
  - 2 Timothy 3:2 "For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy" (the proud love themselves, not others)
    - Job 39:13 "The wings of the ostrich wave proudly, but are they the pinions and plumage of love?" (no. an example of love and pride not going together)
  - 1 Peter 3:8 "Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind." (humility and love go together)
  - Psalm 31:23 "Love the Lord, all you his saints! The Lord preserves the faithful but abundantly repays the one who acts in pride." (the one who acts in pride does not love the lord)
  - Philippians 4:2 "with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love" (humility is important to bearing with one another in love)
- Remember in our definition of love that it is affection and desire for the good of others: love does not ultimately land on yourself but on someone else. Love is not proud. It is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way. It is not irritable or resentful.
- How did Jesus show love through his humility? Philippians 2:5-8
- Prayer - Including: adoration (for example see psalms 111/145), confession, thanksgiving, supplication

**For Next Time:**

**- Memorize John 13:35 - Review Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, and 2 Corinthians 9:7.**

Sunday School - Love does not Rejoice at Wrongdoing - 1/2/22 - Leader

- Memory Verse for the Month - 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a
  - Review John 13:35, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, 2 Corinthians 9:7
- Prayer
- New City Catechism Discussion
  - Question 26: What else does Christ's death redeem? Christ's death is the beginning of the redemption and renewal of every part of fallen creation, as he powerfully directs all things for his own glory and creation's good. (Colossians 1:19-20)
  - Question 27: Are all people, just as they were lost through Adam, saved through Christ? No, only those who are elected by God and united to Christ by faith. Nevertheless God in his mercy demonstrates common grace even to those who are not elect, by restraining the effects of sin and enabling works of culture for human well-being. (Romans 5:17)

**Review**

***Love is an active, strong, and sacrificial affection for another and desire for their good.***

- 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a "Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; **it does not rejoice at wrongdoing**, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends."

**Love does not rejoice with wrongdoing**

- What is wrongdoing?
  - 1 John 5:17 "All wrongdoing is sin"
    - What is sin? (Sin is rejecting or ignoring God in the world he created, rebelling against him by living without reference to him, not being or doing what he requires in his law—resulting in our death and the disintegration of all creation.)
- What does it mean to rejoice with wrongdoing/sin in each of these verses?
  - Hebrews 11:24-25 "By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin." (enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin)
  - 2 Thessalonians 2:11-12 "Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (taking pleasure in unrighteousness)
  - Proverbs 17:5 "he who is glad at calamity will not go unpunished." (to be glad at calamity)
  - Psalm 141:4 "Do not let my heart incline to any evil,  
to busy myself with wicked deeds  
in company with men who work iniquity,  
and let me not eat of their delicacies!" (heart incline to evil, busy self with wicked deeds, eat of the delicacies of the wicked)
- What are some examples of rejoicing with wrongdoing?

**Reasons why rejoicing with wrongdoing (sin) is not love**

1. It does not love **unbelievers** because their sin will be punished by God.
- What do these verses say is the result of wrongdoing?

- Colossians 3:25 "For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality."

- Ephesians 5:5-7 "For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not become partners with them"

- Why would it be a temptation to join in with wrongdoing?

- What do wrongdoers really need? (Christ) Will rejoicing in their wrong show them this need?

2. It does not love **believers** because wrongdoing hinders their walk with God.

- Galatians 6:1 "Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness."

- James 5:19-20 "My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins."

- How should we interact with other believer's sin?

3. It does not love **God** because it rejoices with what He hates.

- How should we feel about wrongdoing from these verses and why?

- Psalm 119:53 "Hot indignation seizes me because of the wicked, who forsake your law." (anger against the wickedness because it violates God's law)

- Psalm 119:139 "My zeal consumes me, because my foes forget your words." (zealous against them because they ignore God's word)

- Matthew 21:12-13 "And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who sold and bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you make it a den of robbers."'" (driven to action because of the dishonoring of God)

Has anyone ever rejoiced at wrongdoing? (yes, Jesus)

- Hebrews 1:9 "You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions."

- How did God respond to Jesus' hating wickedness and loving righteousness? (anointing him as the ultimate king)

- Prayer - Including: adoration (for example see psalms 111/145), confession, thanksgiving, supplication

**For Next Time:**

- **Memorize 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a. Review John 13:35, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, and 2 Corinthians 9:7.**

Sunday School - Love Rejoices with the Truth - 1/9/22 - Leader

- Memory Verse for the Month - 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a
  - Review John 13:35, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, 2 Corinthians 9:7
- Prayer
- New City Catechism Discussion
  - Question 28: What happens after death to those not united to Christ by faith? At the day of judgment they will receive the fearful but just sentence of condemnation pronounced against them. They will be cast out from the favorable presence of God, into hell, to be justly and grievously punished, forever. (John 3:16-18, 36)
  - Question 29: How can we be saved? Only by faith in Jesus Christ and in his substitutionary atoning death on the cross; so even though we are guilty of having disobeyed God and are still inclined to all evil, nevertheless, God, without any merit of our own but only by pure grace, imputes to us the perfect righteousness of Christ when we repent and believe in him. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

**Review**

***Love is an active, strong, and sacrificial affection for another and desire for their good.***

- 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a "Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, **but rejoices with the truth**. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends."

**Love rejoices with the truth**

- What makes you happy?
  - Why do those things make you happy?
  
- What is truth/what does it mean for something to be true? (something that does not change based on someone's opinions/experiences/etc.)
  - What are some examples of things that are true? (e.g. gender)
  
- What are some truths that the Bible mentions?
  
- What is so great about truth from these verses/Why does truth matter?
  - Psalm 145:18 "The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth." (the Lord is near to those who interact with him in accordance with what is true, the Lord is not near to those who call on him based on falsehoods)
    - What would it look like for someone to call on the Lord not based on truth? (basically anyway people try to reach God without going through the one mediator Jesus)
  - Proverbs 12:19 "Truthful lips endure forever, but a lying tongue is but for a moment." (truth and the person who speaks truth will live forever but falsehood and whoever speaks falsehood will perish, true things last but false things will be exposed and don't stand the test of time)
  - Proverbs 14:25 "A truthful witness saves lives, but one who breathes out lies is deceitful." (the truth saves people's lives, falsehood allows others to die)
  - John 8:32 "you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (the truth brings freedom)

- What is most important truth to rejoice with? (the gospel)
  - John 14:6 “Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”
  - Look again at the above verses. How does believing in the truth about Jesus Christ make those 4 verses true?
  - Psalm 145:18 “The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.” (if we believe in Jesus, God responds to those who call on him because Jesus is our mediator)
  - Proverbs 12:19 “Truthful lips endure forever, but a lying tongue is but for a moment.” (the one who is trusting in Jesus will live forever but whoever does not will perish)
  - Proverbs 14:25 “A truthful witness saves lives, but one who breathes out lies is deceitful.” (whoever is a witness to Jesus will save the lives of those who believe in him, but if we are not witnesses to Jesus we are deceiving others as to what the truth is)
  - John 8:32 “you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” (believing in Jesus brings true freedom rather than slavery to sin)
  
- In these verses, what can we enjoy/rejoice in AND what truth gives us a reason to rejoice?
  - Romans 5:3 “we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance,” (suffering, the truth that God shapes us through suffering/we become more like Christ/the truth that God exists means there is a purpose to existence otherwise everything is meaningless)
  - Philippians 1:18 “Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.” (the proclaiming of Christ, the truth that Christ is the only way of salvation)
  - Philippians 2:28 “I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again” (rejoice at seeing people we love, the truth that people are made in the image of God and that fellowship with others is vital to our flourishing)
  - Ecclesiastes 2:24-25 “There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God, for apart from him who can eat or who can have enjoyment?” (enjoy our toil/eat/drink, the truth that enjoyment is a gift from God and our food is from him)
  - Ecclesiastes 5:19 “Everyone also to whom God has given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them, and to accept his lot and rejoice in his toil—this is the gift of God.” (wealth and possessions and work, the truth that these things have been given to us by God)
  - Jeremiah 2:7 “And I brought you into a plentiful land to enjoy its fruits and its good things.” (the good things of the land, they are given to us by God)
  - 1 Timothy 6:17 “As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy.” (riches, God provides them for us to enjoy)
  
- God wants us to enjoy everything he has made, but we can only really do that if it is based on truth and the ultimate truth of what God has done for us in Christ.
  
- Think back to some of the things that make you happy. How can we rejoice in those things in relation to what Jesus has done for us/How can we enjoy things in a way that testify to the greatness of Christ?
  
- Prayer - Including: adoration (for example see psalms 111/145), confession, thanksgiving, supplication

**For Next Time:**

**- Memorize 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a. Review John 13:35, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, and 2 Corinthians 9:7.**

Sunday School - Love Never Ends - 1/16/22 - Leader

- Memory Verse for the Month - 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a
  - Review John 13:35, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, 2 Corinthians 9:7
- Prayer
- New City Catechism Discussion
  - Question 30: What is faith in Jesus Christ? Faith in Jesus Christ is acknowledging the truth of everything that God has revealed in his Word, trusting in him, and also receiving and resting on him alone for salvation as he is offered to us in the gospel. (Galatians 2:20)
  - Question 31: What do we believe by true faith? Everything taught to us in the gospel. The Apostles' Creed expresses what we believe in these words: We believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. (Jude 3)

**Review**

***Love is an active, strong, and sacrificial affection for another and desire for their good.***

- 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a "Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends."

**Love never ends**

Use the below verses to help discuss these questions. [Remember that love rejoices with the truth, so any believing or hoping would be in accordance with truth.]

- What does it mean for love to bear all things? (it can hold up under many stresses/weights/burdens)
  - believe all things? (it is rooted in the truth which can never change)
  - hope all things? (always acts in accordance with hoping for the ultimate good of others)
  - endure all things? (love continues no matter what might threaten to end it)
  - never end? (not only does it continue on in general but in the same quality, it doesn't lessen over time but continues strong forever)
  
- Song of Solomon 8:6-7 "for love is strong as death, jealousy is fierce as the grave. Its flashes are flashes of fire, the very flame of the Lord. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it. If a man offered for love all the wealth of his house, he would be utterly despised."
  
- Proverbs 17:17 "A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity."
  
- Matthew 22:39 "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."
  - What kinds of things does our love for ourself endure? What if we loved others as constantly as we loved ourselves?
  
- John 15:13 "Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends."

## **God's Love**

- Marvel at God's love from these verses. Who is this love directed towards? (His children)
  - Romans 8:38-39 "For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."
  - Lamentations 3:22-23 "The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness."
  - John 13:1 "when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end."
  - Psalm 103:17 "But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him"
- God is the perfect picture of love to us, and because he loved us we aspire to love the way he does.
- Why does this quality of God's love (never ending) give us hope? (because we know that if we are trusting in him as his children He will never turn away from us no matter what we go through, God's love is why we can be confident we will be in heaven [if we have faith, see catechism question])

Open to 1 Corinthians 13 and read the entire chapter.

- Love will never end. What things in this chapter will come to an end? (prophecy, tongues, knowledge)
- What is greater between faith, hope and love? (love)
- Prayer - Including: adoration (for example see psalms 111/145), confession, thanksgiving, supplication

### **For Next Time:**

- ***Do Bible Study Worksheet on John 15:9-13.***
- ***Memorize 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a. Review John 13:35, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, and 2 Corinthians 9:7.***

Sunday School - God's Love and God's Sovereignty Part 1 - 2/6/22 - Leader

- Memory Verse for the Month - John 15:13 "Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends."

- Review 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, John 13:35, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, 2 Corinthians 9:7

- Prayer

- New City Catechism Discussion

- Question 32: What do justification and sanctification mean? Justification means our declared righteousness before God, made possible by Christ's death and resurrection for us.

Sanctification means our gradual, growing righteousness, made possible by the Spirit's work in us. (1 Peter 1:1-2)

- Question 33: Should those who have faith in Christ seek their salvation through their own works, or anywhere else? No, they should not, as everything necessary to salvation is found in Christ. To seek salvation through good works is a denial that Christ is the only Redeemer and Savior. (Galatians 2:16)

**Review**

***Love is an active, strong, and sacrificial affection for another and desire for their good.***

**God's Omnipotence and Omniscience**

- What do you think it means for someone to be all-powerful [omnipotent]? (can do anything, nothing outside of them can make them do anything [truly independent], perfectly free will, doesn't need anyone's help to accomplish something, nothing happens apart from them OKing it)

- What would it be like to know someone like that? How would we interact with them?

- What do each of the following verses say about God?

- Jeremiah 32:17 "'Ah, Lord God! It is you who have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you."

- Matthew 19:26 "with God all things are possible."

- Luke 1:37 "For nothing will be impossible with God."

- Ephesians 3:20 "Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think"

- Psalm 115:3 "Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases."

- What do you think it means for someone to be all-knowing [omniscient]? (they know everything, they know all possible futures, they know all details of all events, they know all facets of every individual including all thoughts that everyone has, they know how everything works, they know anything that anyone could ever have the faintest thought of doing and all the possible results from those actions)

- What would it be like to know someone like that? How would we interact with them?

- What do each of the following verses say about God?

- 1 John 3:20 "God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything."

- 1 Corinthians 2:11 "So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God"

- Isaiah 46:9-10 "I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done"

- Psalm 139:1-4,16 "You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O Lord, you know it altogether...in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them."

- Romans 11:36-39 "Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! "For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?" "Or who has given a gift to him that he might be

repaid?" For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen."

### **God's Sovereignty**

- God's sovereignty is his combination of omnipotence (all-powerful) and omniscience (all-knowing) exercised over his creation. It is his exercise of rule over all things.
  - What are some things you think might be included in God's sovereignty?
- What is included in God's sovereignty in the following verses?
  - Job 12:23 "He makes nations great, and he destroys them; he enlarges nations, and leads them away." (nations)
  - Job 37:10-12 "By the breath of God ice is given, and the broad waters are frozen fast. He loads the thick cloud with moisture; the clouds scatter his lightning. They turn around and around by his guidance, to accomplish all that he commands them on the face of the habitable world." (weather)
  - Matthew 6:26 "Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them." (animals)
  - Proverbs 16:33 "The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord." ("chance")
  - Ephesians 1:11 "him who works all things according to the counsel of his will" (everything)
  - Genesis 50:20 "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today." (the evil of others)
  - Job 1:21 "The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." (trials and suffering)
  - Ephesians 1:4-5 "he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will" (the salvation of people)
- Why is it important that God is sovereign? (so that nothing can thwart his plans, nothings can snatch believers from his hands, so that he can work things out for his glory and our good)
- What would it be like to have a God who was sovereign but not loving? (scary, he would not save people, he would let people do evil to us for no purpose, he would work things against us rather than for us)
- It is very important that a loving God be sovereign. Why? (so that he could actually carry out his plan of love in the world, so that he could make sure that people were brought into his love, so that no one can snatch his people from him, so that he could send Jesus to the cross by the hands of men, etc.)
- If God were not loving he wouldn't save us. If he were not sovereign, he couldn't save us. God's sovereignty is why God's love can actually be shown to us.
- Prayer - Including: adoration (for example see psalms 111/145), confession, thanksgiving, supplication

### **For Next Time:**

- **Memorize John 15:13, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a. Review John 13:35, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, and 2 Corinthians 9:7.**

Sunday School - God's Love and God's Sovereignty Part 2 - 2/13/22 - Leader

- Memory Verse for the Month - John 15:13 "Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends."

- Review 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, John 13:35, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, 2 Corinthians 9:7

- Prayer

- New City Catechism Discussion

- Question 34: Since we are redeemed by grace alone, through Christ alone, must we still do good works and obey God's Word? Yes, because Christ, having redeemed us by his blood, also renews us by his Spirit; so that our lives may show love and gratitude to God; so that we may be assured of our faith by the fruits; and so that by our godly behavior others may be won to Christ. (1 Peter 2:9-12)

- Question 35: Since we are redeemed by grace alone, through faith alone, where does this faith come from? All the gifts we receive from Christ we receive through the Holy Spirit, including faith itself. (Titus 3:4-6)

**Review**

***Love is an active, strong, and sacrificial affection for another and desire for their good.***

**Review God's Sovereignty**

- What is God's sovereignty? (God's sovereignty is his combination of omnipotence (all-powerful) and omniscience (all-knowing) exercised over his creation. It is his exercise of rule over all things.)

- What are some things God's sovereignty includes? (nations, weather, animals, "chance", the evil of others, trials and suffering, the salvation of people, everything)

- Why is it important that God is sovereign? (so that nothing can thwart his plans, nothings can snatch believers from his hands, so that he can work things out for his glory and our good)

- What would it be like to have a God who was sovereign but not loving? (scary, he would not save people, he would let people do evil to us for no purpose, he would work things against us rather than for us)

- It is very important that a loving God be sovereign. Why? (so that he could actually carry out his plan of love in the world, so that he could make sure that people were brought into his love, so that no one can snatch his people from him, so that he could send Jesus to the cross by the hands of men, etc.)

- If God were not loving he wouldn't save us. If he were not sovereign, he couldn't save us. God's sovereignty is why God's love can actually be shown to us.

**God's Sovereignty and Election**

- God's sovereignty includes election [who is saved]. If left to ourselves, we would never choose Him. We need God to give us a new heart.

- Ephesians 1:4-5 "he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will"

- Why did he choose a people for himself? (He loved and willed it > He not only loved us but had the power to act on it [omnipotence])

- 1 Peter 1:3 "According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead"

- In the above verses, who is primarily responsible for our salvation? (God)

- Yet His sovereignty and our responsibility is mutually compatible. Even though God must give us a new heart, we still must and do choose him of our own free will.

- 1 Thessalonians 1:4-5 "For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with **full conviction.**"

- Though loved and chosen by God, the Thessalonians also chose God with full conviction.

- 1 Peter 2:9-10 "But you are a **chosen** race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may **proclaim** the excellencies of him who **called you** out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy."

- We are chosen and called and have received mercy yet we still choose God and proclaim how great God is.

### **God's Sovereignty and His Emotions**

- What are some emotions that God displays in the Bible? (anger, hate, love, jealousy, joy, laughter, grief, mourning [Jesus])

- How can God have emotion since he knows all things that will happen and is never surprised? (though God knows all things He still interacts with creation and responds in time to what is happening, just because God knows everything doesn't mean he stops being who he is)

- Since God is sovereign, we can't separate His emotions from his knowledge, power, and will. If God displays an emotion, it is because he chooses to.

- God has no emotion that makes him vulnerable from the outside, over which he has no control, or which he has not foreseen. They are all self-initiated.

- God is Impassable = not moved by emotion.

- If He loves, it is because He chooses to love.

- What are some times where your emotions lead you to do something you wouldn't have otherwise done?

- As we grow, we become more impassable. We don't stop feeling emotions but they stop dictating our behavior as much. E.g. a little kid when they don't get what they want vs. an adult (ideally...)

- God's will is also never divorced from his love. Love is who he is, so love is always woven with what God does. If God sovereignly ordains something, it is out of love, yet love isn't what made him do it.

- God does not "fall in love" with us, he sets his affection on us. He does not predestine out of whimsy but in love he predestines us [See Ephesians 1 above].

- Why is it encouraging that God's love isn't just emotional? (it means that God will always continue to love us and that his emotions won't just change someday)

- Why does God love people? (not because of anything anyone has done but because he loves and is love, he loves people because he chooses to love them, he loves his children because he chooses to)

Deuteronomy 7:6-8 "For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. It was not because you were more in number than any other people that **the Lord set his love on you and chose you**, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but **it is because the Lord loves you**"

- Why is it encouraging that God loves his children not based on you? (because if it is based on us he might stop loving us someday if we are bad enough)

- We should strive to love others this way: not because they are worthy of love but because God loves us this way.

- Prayer - Including: adoration (for example see psalms 111/145), confession, thanksgiving, supplication

***For Next Time: - Memorize John 15:13, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a. Review John 13:35, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, and 2 Corinthians 9:7.***

### Sunday School - God's Love and God's Wrath Part 1 - 2/20/22 - Leader

- Memory Verse for the Month - John 15:13 "Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends."

- Review 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, John 13:35, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, 2 Corinthians 9:7

- Prayer

- New City Catechism Discussion

- Question 36: What do we believe about the Holy Spirit? That he is God, coeternal with the Father and the Son, and that God grants him irrevocably to all who believe. (John 14:16-17)

- Question 37: How does the Holy Spirit help us? The Holy Spirit convicts us of our sin, comforts us, guides us, gives us spiritual gifts and the desire to obey God; and he enables us to pray and to understand God's Word. (Ephesians 6:17-18)

- God's wrath is an outgrowth of God's holiness and justice.

### **God's Holiness**

1 Peter 1:14-16 "As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

- What is holiness? (without sin, perfect freedom from all evil, the essence of moral purity)

- What are some synonyms we might use for the word holiness? (Sinless, pure, blameless, perfect)

- What is sin? (disobeying God/doing something inconsistent with who God is, valuing something more than God, this could be doing something we should not or not doing something we should)

- Psalm 24:3-4 "Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully."

- In this passage, what can the holiness of God allow and not allow to have in His presence?

- Because God is perfectly holy, how does He feel about sin? (He hates it. Since he is infinitely holy, he hates sin infinitely. He hates sin so much more than we do.)

- Ultimately, all sin is against God because it disobeys his command, mistreats those in His image, and/or treats other things as more valuable than Him.

- Psalm 51:4 "Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight" [This was after David stole Uriah's wife and killed him, yet he acknowledges his sin as being against God.]

### **God's Justice**

Genesis 18:25 "Far be it from you to do such a thing, to put the righteous to death with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?"

- What does it mean for someone to be a judge? (to declare someone innocent or guilty)

- What is God the judge of in this passage? (the whole earth)

- What does it mean for a judge to be just? (the wicked are condemned while the righteous are not, the wicked and righteous are not treated the same, the punishment fits the crime, they see the situation truly)

- Ezek. 33:20 "O house of Israel, I will judge each of you according to his ways."

- What would an unjust judge look like?

- God's Holiness is why any sin against him justly deserves punishment. He is infinitely worthy of our love, obedience, and praise, so to not give him those things perfectly at any point is sin.
  - What does justice say sinners deserve? Romans 6:23 (they deserve death)
  - Who is a part of this group? Romans 3:23 (everyone)
- What does someone need to do to get God's verdict of innocent? (be perfect their entire life)
  - Who has done this and is the only one who ever could? (Jesus)
  - In God's mercy, those who are united to Jesus by faith receive the same verdict Jesus received.
- God is the most merciful and most just judge there could ever be.
  - What if a judge was very just but not merciful? (no one would receive merciful forgiveness)
  - What if a judge was very merciful but not just? (evil wouldn't be punished)
  - How can God be perfectly merciful and just? (by carrying out the sentence on someone else in our place, the crime is still punished but we are allowed to go free because Jesus willingly took it for us)

**God's Justice and Love** - If a judge sentenced a murderer to jail time, would we call that judge unloving? - In the same way, God's justice doesn't mean he isn't loving. We all want justice, just not when we are the ones who are guilty.

- We can praise God that in his love He made it possible for our sins to be justly punished and yet still be declared innocent if we have faith in Christ.

**God's Wrath and Love** - God's wrath is the outworking of His justice towards the guilty.

- ***There is no love without wrath. If you love something then you also hate whatever threatens it.***
  - God loves purity, holiness, and goodness, therefore hates whatever threatens it which is sin.
    - Downplaying his wrath downplays His holiness and other perfections.
  - God loves people and therefore hates whatever threatens them which is sin.
    - Downplaying God's wrath downplays His love for people.

- A holy God must have just wrath in order to punish sin, and He does this out of love for those things that sin threatens to destroy.

- Prayer - Including: adoration (for example see psalms 111/145), confession, thanksgiving, supplication

**For Next Time: - Memorize John 15:13, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a. Review John 13:35, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, and 2 Corinthians 9:7.**

Sunday School - God's Love and God's Wrath Part 2 - 2/27/22 - Leader

- Memory Verses - John 15:13, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, John 13:35, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, 2 Cor. 9:7
- Prayer
- New City Catechism Discussion
  - Question 38: What is prayer? Prayer is pouring out our hearts to God in praise, petition, confession of sin, and thanksgiving. (Psalm 62:8)
  - Question 39: With what attitude should we pray? With love, perseverance, and gratefulness; in humble submission to God's will, knowing that, for the sake of Christ, he always hears our prayers. (Philippians 4:6)

**Review**

**God's Wrath and Love** - God's wrath is the outworking of His justice towards the guilty.

- ***There is no love without wrath. If you love something then you also hate whatever threatens it.***
  - God loves purity, holiness, and goodness, therefore hates whatever threatens it which is sin.
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- A holy God must have just wrath in order to punish sin, and He does this out of love for those things that sin threatens to destroy.

**Love and Wrath Relationship**

***Things that make it hard to envision God's love and wrath together:***

***1. The Bible speaks of God's wrath with high-intensity language.***

What do these verses say about God's wrath?

- Isaiah 13:9 "Behold, the day of the Lord comes, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger, to make the land a desolation and to destroy its sinners from it."
- Read Ezekiel 5:11-17.
- Revelation 14:9-11 "And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, he also will drink the wine of God's wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name."
- It can be hard to hear some of these descriptions and think of God as loving.

***2. Love and wrath normally are separate in people; we normally do not think a wrathful person is loving.***

- When people have wrath, what is it like? Is it loving? Any examples?
  - How is God's wrath different?
- God's wrath is not a blind rage. It is an entirely reasonable and willed response to offenses against his holiness. He also still loves people though we have offended Him.

***3. Misconception #1: We often hear that "God hates the sin but loves the sinner" as though He can't have love and wrath towards a person at the same time.***

- Have you heard anyone say this before? Do you think people have good intentions when saying this?
- Though God only hates sin and does love sinners, the idea that God has only love for the sinner is false. 14 times in the first 50 psalms we are told that God hates the sinner, his wrath is on the liar, and so forth. God's wrath rests on sin and the sinner.

- Psalm 11:5 "The Lord tests the righteous, but his soul hates the wicked and the one who loves violence."
- Proverbs 6:16-19 "There are six things that the Lord hates, seven that are an abomination to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil, a false witness who breathes out lies, and one who sows discord among brothers."
- John 3:36 "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him."
- God can love and have wrath for the same person at the same time because the love is based on what God is like while the wrath is based on what we are like in our sin.
- How do the 5 types of God's love help us see that God can love and have wrath against the same person? (God has a love for all creation which includes humans and a love for all mankind by which he sent Jesus that all could believe in him but if they aren't his children they will still suffer God's wrath despite how much love God has shown them [trinity, creation, mankind, children, obedience])

**4. Misconception #2: It is a common misconception that God's wrath is more clear than his love in the Old Testament but reversed in the New Testament, as though his love and wrath don't go together.**

- We feel this way because in the Old Testament, we see the wrath being carried out quickly and constantly throughout the OT.
  - However, the descriptions of New Testament wrath, though in the future, are far more intense. See Revelation 14 above.
- We feel this way because in the Old Testament, God's wrath was poured out on people on earth who were living just like us, and so we feel that intensity.
  - However, New Testament wrath is poured out for eternity, not just in this life.
- The reality is that both wrath and love are ratcheted up in the New Testament with both love and wrath finding their peak at the cross.
  - How do we see love and wrath being displayed at the cross?

**5. Misconception #3: We tend to think of God as being opposed to us (rather than loving us) until Jesus came to calm Him down, as though the Father is wrathful but Jesus is loving.**

- The reality is that the Father, though wrathful, in His deep love for us initiated this plan of salvation for us. John 3:16
  - Romans 3:23-25 "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom **God put forward** as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith."
- The reality is that Jesus, though loving, is the holy and just bringer of wrath.
  - 2 Thessalonians 1:7-8 "when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus."
  - Read Revelation 19:11-16.

**Bottom line:** The Bible is clear that God is both wrathful and loving, that these can be displayed at the same time to the same person, and that the cross of Christ is the heights of these things coming together.

- Prayer - Including: adoration (for example see psalms 111/145), confession, thanksgiving, supplication
- For Next Time: - Memorize John 15:13, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a. Review John 13:35, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, and 2 Corinthians 9:7.**

### Sunday School - God's Love and God's Wrath Part 3: Hell - 3/20/22

- Memory Verses - John 15:13, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, John 13:35, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, 2 Cor. 9:7
- Prayer
- New City Catechism Discussion
  - Question 40: What should we pray? The whole Word of God directs and inspires us in what we should pray, including the prayer Jesus himself taught us. (Ephesians 3:14-21)
  - Question 41: What is the Lord's prayer? Matthew 6:9-13

### **Review**

**God's Wrath and Love** - God's wrath is the outworking of His justice towards the guilty.

- ***There is no love without wrath. If you love something then you also hate whatever threatens it.***
  - God loves purity, holiness, and goodness, therefore hates whatever threatens it which is sin.
    - Downplaying his wrath downplays His holiness and other perfections.
  - God loves people and therefore hates whatever threatens them which is sin.
    - Downplaying God's wrath downplays His love for people.

- A holy God must have just wrath in order to punish sin, and He does this out of love for those things that sin threatens to destroy.

- The Bible is clear that God is both wrathful and loving, that these can be displayed at the same time to the same person, and that the cross of Christ is the heights of these things coming together.

### **Hell**

Disclaimer: Hell is one of the most painful and difficult topics of the Bible, and it is OK to feel sorrow and confusion when we think about the reality of eternal torment in light of God's love. It is a devastating reality.

- What do you think of when you think of hell? What is so disturbing about it (which it should do to you)?
- What do the following verses say about hell?
- Matthew 25:46 "And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."
- Mark 9:43-48 "And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame than with two feet to be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell, 'where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.'"
- Revelation 14:9-11 "And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, he also will drink the wine of God's wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name."

- Try to imagine the moment after death for an unbeliever, standing at the brink of an eternity of punishment for which there will never be any hope of escape, forever. What would that feel like?

- Read and discuss article "What does Hell say about God?" <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/what-does-hell-say-about-god>

- Prayer - Including: adoration (for example see psalms 111/145), confession, thanksgiving, supplication  
***For Next Time: - Memorize John 15:13, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a. Review John 13:35, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, and 2 Corinthians 9:7.***

Sunday School - God's Love and God's Wrath Part 4 - 3/27/22

- Memory Verses - John 15:13, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, John 13:35, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, 2 Cor. 9:7
- Prayer
- New City Catechism Discussion
  - Question 42: How is the Word of God to read and heard? With diligence, preparation, and prayer; so that we may accept it with faith, store it in our hearts, and practice it in our lives. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

**Review**

- Questions?

**God's Wrath and Love** - God's wrath is the outworking of His justice towards the guilty.

**- There is no love without wrath. If you love something then you also hate whatever threatens it.**

- God loves purity, holiness, and goodness, therefore hates whatever threatens it which is sin.
    - Downplaying his wrath downplays His holiness and other perfections.
  - God loves people and therefore hates whatever threatens them which is sin.
    - Downplaying God's wrath downplays His love for people.
- A holy God must have just wrath in order to punish sin, and He does this out of love for those things that sin threatens to destroy.
- The Bible is clear that God is both wrathful and loving, that these can be displayed at the same time to the same person, and that the cross of Christ is the heights of these things coming together.

**Four truths about Hell**

1. Who will be in Hell

- "God has hidden her [an unbeliever] from us. At death, God repossesses all borrowed virtue, the full torrent of her wicked heart is unleashed. She will be fully given over to her sin."
- Who will be in Hell?

2. What Hell says about God

- "Contrary to how we might write redemption's story, the lake of fire warms us with the reminder that our God is powerful, righteously severe, and abundantly merciful toward his own. Heaven will not be heaven, in God's perfect plan, without the reminder of God's righteous condemnation — this beyond, even, eternally exposing the scars of Christ. We will be sobered. We will be amazed. We will be thankful for God's mercy to us."
- What does Hell say about God?

3. What Hell says about Christ

- "With all the torment they experience, they remain but near the surface of that burning lake which Christ, out of love for his people, plunged to the bottom."
- What does Hell say about Christ?

4. What we learn from fairy tales

- "We know the rightness of the villains being punished. We just don't like the fact that we — and those we love — are by nature the villains of the narrative."
- What do we learn from fairy tales?

"He is the potter; we are the clay. He is all-wise; we are all-foolish, apart from him. He is the Judge of the world; he will surely do right. And right includes hell...In so doing, he communicates the full range of his power and glory to his people, the full loveliness of his Son, and the perfect harmony of his purpose and plan — of which the redeemed will not detect a single off-note."

- Questions?

- Prayer - Including: adoration (for example see psalms 111/145), confession, thanksgiving, supplication

**For Next Time: - Memorize John 15:13, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a. Review John 13:35, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, and 2 Corinthians 9:7.**

### Sunday School - God's Affection for His People - 4/3/22 - Leader

- NEW Memory Verse - Zephaniah 3:17b "he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing."
- Memory Verses - John 15:13, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, John 13:35, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, 2 Cor. 9:7
- Prayer
- New City Catechism Discussion
  - Question 43: What are the sacraments or ordinances? The sacraments or ordinances given by God and instituted by Christ, namely baptism and the Lord's Supper, are visible signs and seals that we are bound together as a community of faith by his death and resurrection. By our use of them the Holy Spirit more fully declares and seals the promises of the gospel to us. (Romans 6:4, Luke 22:19-20)

### Review

***Love is an active, strong, and sacrificial affection for another and desire for their good.***

### God's Affection for His People

- What is affection? (affection is an element of God's love that really and truly desires the object of affection. For example, God loves His people not just because He has a wooden commitment to our good but that he actually feels compassion and a tenderness towards us)
  - God doesn't love His people because He has to. He has an affectionate desire for us and our good. He has a generously abundant love for His people.
  - God loves His people SO MUCH, and we are given many pictures of this in the Bible to help us understand.
- This affection is for the children of God only. Who is a child of God? (those who are united to Christ by faith in what Jesus accomplished for us in his life, death and resurrection for the forgiveness of our sins)
- How do the following verses describe God's love for His people? OR if you are a child of God, how does God feel about you?
  - Hosea 11:8b-9 "My heart recoils within me; my compassion grows warm and tender. I will not execute my burning anger; I will not again destroy Ephraim; for I am God and not a man, the Holy One in your midst, and I will not come in wrath." (God's heart is changed within Him towards His people, His heart recoils from the thought of you perishing [that's what the context is], His compassion is aroused, His tenderness towards us comes out, he will not come to us in wrath [strong connection to previous lessons on wrath here], He will not destroy us, he will not execute his burning anger against us, instead he comes to save and tenderly care for us. He feels this way towards us in Christ.)
  - Read Ezekiel 16:3-14. (we were worthless and abominable children with nothing to offer and no reputation yet He covered our nakedness, He washed us with water and anointed us with oil, he clothed us in the best clothing and jewelry, he fed us the best food, he made us royalty, he made us beautiful, he bestowed on us splendor/compassion [v.5]. His affection is apparent in how much he lavishes upon us all these things. He feels this way and does these things for us in Christ.)

- Isaiah 62:5 "For as a young man marries a young woman, so shall your sons marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you." (God rejoices over His people as a bridegroom rejoices over His bride, unhindered affection and love as if she is the only woman in the world, the way he looks at her)

- How does a bridegroom feel towards His bride?

- Zephaniah 3:17 "The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing." (God rejoices over us, he is glad towards us, he desires to comfort us by his love, he sings over us in his joy and exultation, his joy and gladness towards us are amazing in this verse. He acts and feels towards us this way in Christ.)

- Read Ephesians 1:3-14. (he has lavished upon us every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, he chose us/predestined and adopted us when we were nothing [Like Ezekiel passage], chosen to be holy and blameless/adoption/Redemption/forgiveness/knowledge/inheritance/Holy Spirit)

- Revelation 21:1-4 "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." (He wants to be with us, he wants to be our God and us to be his people and he will do whatever he can to make that happen, He will put a final end to all sadness and pain that we experience)

- Everything God did was so that He could be with us. It wasn't because of anything in us but simply because God has a deep affection for us.

- Prayer - Including: adoration (for example see psalms 111/145), confession, thanksgiving, supplication

***For Next Time: - Memorize John 15:13, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a. Review John 13:35, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, and 2 Corinthians 9:7.***

Sunday School - God's Love and Authority - 4/10/22 - Leader

- Memory Verses - Zephaniah 3:17b, John 15:13, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, John 13:35, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, 2 Cor. 9:7

- Prayer

- New City Catechism Discussion

- Question 44: What is baptism? Baptism is the washing with water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; it signifies and seals our adoption into Christ, our cleansing from sin, and our commitment to belong to the Lord and to his church. (Matthew 28:19)

- Question 45: Is baptism with water the washing away of sin itself? No, only the blood of Christ and the renewal of the Holy Spirit can cleanse us from sin.

***Review - Love is an active, strong, and sacrificial affection for another and desire for their good.***

**God's Love and Authority**

- One of the most difficult things when talking about God's love is that ***almost everyone believes God is loving*** [even non-Christians, but we mean two different things when we talk about God's love].

- "That's how He is, isn't he? Why wouldn't He love me?" These days, no one is surprised if you tell them God loves them, but we mean something different than they mean.

- What do we mean when we tell a non-Christian that God loves them? (that God loved them enough to send Jesus to die on the cross as the punishment for their sin IF they would believe in Him)

- God's love actually demands a response > believe.

- What is the experience of God for those who don't believe? (God's wrath) Those who do believe? (God's affection and everlasting unchangeable love)

- What does culture mean when they talk about God's love? (the acceptance of any way that someone chooses to be, puts no limits on anybody or anything they might want to do, does not condemn any acts of "self-expression")

- *When the culture talks about God's love, they also imagine it to be a love that makes no demands of them but allows them to live however they want. They have taken God's authority out of the picture which has completely corrupted their view of His love.*

***The reality is that God's love makes demands of us. God's love goes hand-in-hand with His authority.***

- His love calls us to surrender ourselves to him. It calls us to repent of our sinful ways and follow Him.

- What are some examples of things Christians do now in response to God's love? (love others, read his word, pray, fellowship with other believers, etc.)

- These demands do not make God unloving; He would actually be unloving if He didn't make demands because leaving us as unbelieving sinners condemns us to Hell and does not allow us to experience His love. I.E. It is loving of Him to command us to do things that will benefit us.

- 1 John 5:3 "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome."

- Titus 2:14 "who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works."

- John 14:21 "Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me."

- John 14:23 "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word"

- God's authority is actually a gift to us. God is love but God is also King, and good authority strengthens and grows, nourishes and draws us out. For example, how does it benefit us to have loving yet

authoritative parents versus a parent that just loves but demonstrates no authority? (we learn obedience and humility yet we learn it in a non-frightening environment because they love us, we are able to learn what it means to love but also what it means to obey, good parents help sanctify our sin, parents that aren't authoritative don't shape their kids desires and sin which leads to kids that are unable to live in a world of disappointment/not getting their way/etc., good parents are a picture of God to us, many other reasons)

- Why is it that we always want the best coach or teacher for things?
- Have you ever had a selfless and loving parent, teacher, employer, coach, pastor, or some other authority in your life that you loved? Why were they so great? Did you feel loved by them?
- Have you ever had a not-so-great authority in your life?
- 2 Samuel 23:3-4 "When one rules justly over men, ruling in the fear of God, he dawns on them like the morning light, like the sun shining forth on a cloudless morning, like rain that makes grass to sprout from the earth."
  - Good authority brings great things.
- Jeremiah 32:38-41 "And they shall be my people, and I will be their God. I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever, for their own good and the good of their children after them. I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them. And I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me. I will rejoice in doing them good, and I will plant them in this land in faithfulness, with all my heart and all my soul."
- What are some things (not people) that are authorities in our lives? (government laws, office rules, traffic laws, rules of sports, meanings of words, gravity, grammar of language, math, etc.)
  - Why is authority so important? (authority is the glue that enables people to live together - there would be no way to organize our lives together, apart from authority all of life would be shaped by the preferences of the moment, there would be no traditions/predictability of behavior/stability of meaning/shared morality, we wouldn't be able to protect anything valuable over time, etc.)
  - Our culture is allergic to authority because we don't know how to call things right and wrong anymore which all authority does (e.g. having a speed limit means it is WRONG to go over the speed limit and RIGHT to go under it). Our society has become about what "I believe is true or right" versus what actually is [=postmodernism].

- Read together Psalm 2. What do we see about God's love and authority? (v. 1-3 people trying to cast off God's authority, v. 4-6 God laughs because it isn't possible and He will send His Son to silence them, v. 7-9 Jesus is the ultimate authority as the ruler of all and destroyer of rebellion, v. 10-12 God's love has made a way out from this wrath > kiss the Son, there is blessing in taking refuge in Him and serving him **GOSPEL**. There is such a clear connection between the loving blessings and their being given to those who accept God's authority [serve with fear, don't "burst bonds/cast His cords off"])

- Prayer - Including: adoration (for example see psalms 111/145), confession, thanksgiving, supplication

***For Next Time: - Do Bible Study Worksheet on 1 John 2:1-6.***

***- Memorize Zephaniah 3:17b, John 15:13, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a. Review John 13:35, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, and 2 Corinthians 9:7.***

Sunday School - Love Gives Whatever the Cost - 5/1/22 - Leader

- Memory Verses - Zephaniah 3:17b, John 15:13, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, John 13:35, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, 2 Cor. 9:7

- Prayer

- New City Catechism Discussion

- Question 46: What is the Lord's Supper? Christ commanded all Christians to eat bread and to drink from the cup in thankful remembrance of him and his death. The Lord's Supper is a celebration of the presence of God in our midst; bringing us into communion with God and with one another; feeding and nourishing our souls. It also anticipates the day when we will eat and drink with Christ in his Father's kingdom. (1 Corinthians 11:23--26)

- Question 47: Does the Lord's Supper add anything to Christ's atoning work? No, Christ died once for all. The Lord's Supper is a covenant meal celebrating Christ's atoning work; as it is also a means of strengthening our faith as we look to him, and a foretaste of the future feast. But those who take part with unrepentant hearts eat and drink judgment on themselves. (1 Peter 3:18)

***Review - Love is an active, strong, and sacrificial affection for another and desire for their good.***

**God's love gave whatever the cost**

- God's love for us GIVES and COSTS.

- What does God's love give to...

- Unbelievers? (they offer a perfect sacrifice to take the penalty for their sins if they would believe in Jesus Christ, John 3:16. Things of common grace: creation, conscience, etc.)

- Believers? (so many things....Himself, the offer of a perfect sacrifice for us, freedom from wrath, His eternal affection, he has lavished upon us every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, he chose us/predestined and adopted us when we were nothing, forgiveness of sins, chosen to be holy and blameless, adoption, Redemption, forgiveness, knowledge, inheritance, Holy Spirit, sanctification, glorification, eternity with glorified bodies in new heaven and new earth with him, freedom from guilt and shame, etc. > we want to just think...wow)

- What did God's love cost? (his life: literally God gave up his life, he left heaven which was perfect, he put on human flesh, he suffered at the hands of his creation, humiliated on the cross, etc.)

- Philippians 2:6-8 "though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."

- Read Isaiah 53. What did Jesus have to endure to love us in this passage?

**Our love should give whatever the cost**

- 1 John 3:16 "By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers."

- What are some things that our love for others might cost us from the following verses? (money, time, attention, energy, hearts, lives, doing what we want, convenience, etc.)

- John 15:13 "Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends."  
(our life)

- Galatians 5:13 “For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.” (our freedom)
- Ephesians 4:2 “bearing with one another in love” (our individualism, being able to just ignore or get away from people that are difficult for us > we bear with them)
- Romans 12 - v.9 “Let your love be genuine” >
  - v. 13 “Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.” (money or possessions, whatever we are contributing, our personal space or time as we seek to show hospitality)
  - v. 15 “Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.” (our emotions/heart)
  - v. 16 “Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight.” (our reputation as we associate with the lowly, our pride/ego)
  - v. 19 “Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God” (vengeance, getting someone back)
  - v. 20 “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink” (again vengeance, money/possessions as we seek to care for our enemies)
- If loving others will cost us, why would we do it according to the following verses?
  - 1 Peter 2:21 “For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.” (to follow Christ example, we were called to do it)
  - John 13:34 “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.” (He loved us first, we are commanded to)
  - John 13:35 “By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” (it identifies us as followers of Christ)
  - 1 John 4:7-8 “whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.” (it is what followers of Christ do)
  - 1 John 4:11 “Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.” (it is the natural response to what God has done for us)
  - 1 Peter 4:18 “Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins.” Cf. Proverbs 10:12 “love covers all offenses.” (it combats sin)
- What are some practical ways we can love people and what will it cost us?
- Prayer - Including: adoration (for example see psalms 111/145), confession, thanksgiving, supplication

***For Next Time: - Memorize Zephaniah 3:17b, John 15:13, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a. Review John 13:35, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, and 2 Corinthians 9:7.***

Sunday School - Love Sacrifices to Forgive - 5/8/22 - Leader

- Memory Verses - Zephaniah 3:17b, John 15:13, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, John 13:35, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, 2 Cor. 9:7

- Prayer

- New City Catechism Discussion

- Question 48: What is the church? God chooses and preserves for himself a community elected for eternal life and united by faith, who love, follow, learn from, and worship God together. God sends out this community to proclaim the gospel and prefigure Christ's kingdom by the quality of their life together and their love for one another. (2 Thessalonians 2:13)

***Review - Love is an active, strong, and sacrificial affection for another and desire for their good.***

**God's love sacrificed to forgive**

- Review: What did God sacrifice in order to forgive? (His Son, God gave up his life, he left heaven which was perfect, he put on human flesh, he suffered at the hands of his creation, humiliated on the cross, etc.)

- Philippians 2:6-8 "though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."

- Jesus sacrificed everything out of love, why? >>>> to forgive us.

- Colossians 2:13-14 "And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross."

- What does God's forgiveness mean for us? (He makes us alive though we were dead, our debt to him is cancelled through the cross, now we can live for Him in this life and live with him in eternity instead of being under his just wrath that was legally demanded because of our trespasses)

**We ought to sacrifice to forgive others**

- What is forgiveness? (overlooks an offense, keeps no record of debt against someone for what they've done, doesn't demand justice or changed behavior)

- Colossians 3:13 "as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive."

- What are some things that people will do that require our forgiveness?

- Why is forgiveness hard?

- What do we sacrifice to forgive others? (our sense of justice, satisfying our need for revenge, our desire to be right or heard, our pride)

- What can help us forgive others? (the Holy Spirit must work in us, being in God's word, meditating on what Jesus has done for us, getting counsel from others, praying about it, God will have vengeance, he feels indignation everyday)

- What is the main reason why we forgive? Remember the parable of the unforgiving servant who was forgiven by the king an enormous debt but then went and throttled someone else for pennies without forgiving them [Matthew 18:21-35]. (we forgive because what God has forgiven us for doing to him is infinitely greater than anything someone else could do to us)

- One thing that is very hard is when those who have done something against us are not repentant and don't care and don't apologize. Again, we must remember that God sacrificed to forgive us when we hated him and didn't care and didn't apologize. Romans 5:8,10 "while we were still sinners, Christ died for us...while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son".

- What are some other reasons we must forgive?

- Matthew 6:15 "but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." (God does not forgive an unforgiving [aka unregenerate] heart, forgiveness is a sign we are saved, its what Christians do in the power of the Holy Spirit)

- Luke 17:4 "if he sins against you seven times in the day, and turns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' you must forgive him." (we are commanded to)

- 2 Corinthians 2:7 "so you should rather turn to forgive and comfort him, or he may be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow." (so that others are not burdened with sorrow over offenses they have caused)

- Think about if there is someone in your life you need to forgive and if you need help doing that.

- Prayer - Including: adoration (for example see psalms 111/145), confession, thanksgiving, supplication

***For Next Time: - Memorize Zephaniah 3:17b, John 15:13, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a. Review John 13:35, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, and 2 Corinthians 9:7.***

### Sunday School - Love Reaches Out - 5/15/22 - Leader

- Memory Verses - Zephaniah 3:17b, John 15:13, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, John 13:35, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, 2 Cor. 9:7

- Prayer

- New City Catechism Discussion

- Question 49: Where is Christ now? Christ rose bodily from the grave on the third day after his death and is seated at the right hand of the Father, ruling his kingdom and interceding for us, until he returns to judge and renew the whole world. (Ephesians 1:20-21)

- Question 50: What does Christ's resurrection mean for us? Christ triumphed over sin and death by being physically resurrected, so that all who trust in him are raised to new life in this world and to everlasting life in the world to come. Just as we will one day be resurrected, so this world will one day be restored. But those who do not trust in Christ will be raised to everlasting death. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-14)

**Review - Love is an active, strong, and sacrificial affection for another and desire for their good.**

#### **God's love reached out**

- The human race needed God to reach out to them in love.

- How did God reach out in love? [John 3:16, Romans 5:8, Philippians 2]

- Why did we need God to reach down to us? (our sin separated us from him, since he is creator and we are the creature we are unable to reach up to him)

- Could God have just not reached out in love? What would be the result for Him and us?

- Love reaches out even when the recipient of love does not deserve it.

- Did we deserve God's love in sending Jesus? (no)

- Do Christians deserve God's love in making them His children? (no)

- What does everyone deserve? [Romans 3:23]

- If we didn't deserve God's reaching out in love, why did God do it? (he is loving and merciful [1 Peter 1:3])

- How do we see God reaching out in love within each of the 4 types of His love that relate to his creation? [all creation, all mankind, His children, His children conditioned on obedience]

#### **We ought to reach out in love**

- Biblical love is not simply emotions or feelings (though those are part of it), but includes attitudes and actions that seek the best interests of others regardless of feelings.

- What would our love be like if it was based only on feelings? (untrustworthy, fickle)

- The Bible often says we should show "brotherly love" [1 Pet. 1:22, 1 Pet. 3:8, Heb. 13:1]. What do you think that means?

- Reaching out in love means we don't just settle for a "I will love them but I can't like him" attitude.

- Nor should we just decide to do acts of love, but we should *desire* to do them.

- What can we do when we don't feel like reaching out to someone in love?

- We want to reach out to others even if they don't "deserve" it. What are some examples of people who we don't think "deserve" our love?

- How does God's love for us motivate us to love others the same way? (he loved us when we didn't deserve it and forgave way more than anything we would have to forgive in others)

- Remember: reaching out in love to others does not earn God's love.

- What are some ways we could reach out to others in love?

- How can people within the church reach out to each other in love?

- Any specific examples that we can put into action?

- Prayer - Including: adoration (for example see psalms 111/145), confession, thanksgiving, supplication

***For Next Time: - Memorize Zephaniah 3:17b, John 15:13, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a. Review John 13:35, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8, and 2 Corinthians 9:7.***