

Philippians: To Live is Christ – 2:1-11 - Love Redefined



In this short passage Paul outlines a countercultural Christian definition of love that impacts how we live.

Sam discussed the challenge in defining what love is and suggested that the reason we spend our lives seeking love is because God designed us as lovers. Sam went on to discuss contemporary definitions of love that are focused on romantic relationships and can feel very pressurised. Western culture often turns love inwards and focuses on our own happiness.

In contrast, Phil 2:5-11 shows how Jesus reverses the human condition of grasping, allows himself to be enslaved to free us and breaks the curse through his obedience.

Christian love comes first from God but chooses to serve instead of grasp. Christian love is active and costly but totally worthwhile.

Hannah showed from Phil 2:1-4 how we are called to love selflessly in response to God's love for us. As God's church we are meant to be united, so that the world will see God through us, as Jesus prayed in John 17: 20, 21.

Read Philippians 2: 1 - 11

Questions

1. Have you ever stopped to consider what love is? How would you describe it to someone who didn't know?
2. In what ways does Jesus' example of love differ from our culture's understanding of it?
3. What does it look like practically for us as a church to be united, 'one in spirit and of one mind'?
4. How can we find strength and motivation day by day to love people selflessly like Jesus does?
5. Hannah suggested three responses to this passage:
 - a. Repent from selfishness and from not loving others selflessly
 - b. Ask God for more of His grace and power to be able to love others
 - c. Receive more of God's love - before loving others truly we have to know God's love

In small groups, share which of these is most relevant for you and pray for each other.