

## January 17th, Choosing Love

### Part 3 in the series 'Feeling Good: Living a Life Fully Alive in Christ'

What were some things from last Sunday's message that resonated with you?

Was there anything you wrestled with?

How would you say the world views love?

Do you tend to think of love as a choice?

#### **READ 1 John 4:7-16**

**7** Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. **8** Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. **9** This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. **10** This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

Why do you think John says that love is, 'not that we loved God, but that he loved us...?'

What is the source of our love?

**11** Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. **12** No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

Does knowing God loved you first affect your attitude towards others in any way?

What truth can we meditate on when we fail to properly love one another?

Answer: God's love for us! Christ's atoning sacrifice for our sins. God loves us and his grace abounds.

**13** This is how we know that we live in him and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit. **14** And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. **15** If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God. **16** And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them.

How did God show His love for us?

How does it logically connect then, that if we abide in love we abide in God?

**17** This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. **18** There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

Why can Christians be assured that the best is yet to come?

Why do you think John says 'perfect love drives out fear' not 'perfect courage drives out fear'?

Do you remember Pastor Jim's reference to Dr. Caroline Leaf's book during the message? What was her point about love and fear?

A: "Love and fear, are two different neurological systems in our brains and in any one conscious moment, we will be operating in either one or the other, for each cluster of thoughts we think." ... "Science is in fact showing us that there is a massive unlearning of negative, toxic thoughts when we operate in love."

What do you think John would suggest we do when we are afraid?

A: Maybe to pray loving prayers, think loving thoughts, do loving things, speak loving words. Remember that God first loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice for our sins.

Do you think God ever wants you to be afraid?

If we want to change the way we think, who can we ask to help us?

A: God!

What are some ways we can choose to show love to others?

How might dwelling on God's love for us, change us?