

Perfect Love

Scripture used: 1 John 4:18-19 (NLT)

OVERVIEW

Big Idea: Love is hard, binding and transformative. Perfect love drives out insecurity, hopelessness, and brokenness.

Today we had a guest preacher, Matt Tejuco from San Francisco Christian Center. Matt is a youthful-looking youth pastor. His father died of cancer when Matt was 7, and his beleaguered mother raised six children on her own. Matt grew up in the insecurity of not knowing whether he was loved. He first experienced love in the faithful community of the "Body of Christ" - the Church, and its men's ministry of supportive men who somehow made up for his missing father.

KEY POINTS

- 1) **God's love is unlike anything else.** God is our Father, and His love is healing, comforting, and chastising at times. God cares about us. This is the kind of love that does not have to be earned, by accumulating credentials and claims, or ingratiating oneself. It is not self-gratifying love, or strictly reciprocal love ("You love me, thus I'll love you back"). God's love is not just a concept. He demonstrated it by giving His only son to us sinners, sacrificing His everything so we could be rescued.
- 2) **Perfect love is incarnate in a Perfect Son.** The communion is His body broken for us, His blood shed for us. The act of loving others, particularly those who are confused and frustrated, is our response.
- 3) **Perfect love drives out fear.** Pastor Matt used the image of the giant trees at Muir Woods which have stood for more than a millennium as their roots grow outward and become ever-stronger as they intertwine with other roots. Same for us: Connectedness and love drive out anxiety and fear when we face the storms and seemingly insurmountable challenges.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - God wants to give us His perfect love, yet so many of us seek to earn it from others. What has your experience of love been like? How are your experiences similar or different from perfect love? How would your life change if you stopped trying to earn love and attention?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Ask yourself, "Where am I settling for an easy love?" Pastor Matt challenged us to move beyond what's convenient to real love. We need to push ourselves to become better.
- 3) **DO** - Find somebody who is struggling. Reach out in a deliberate, tangible, and even sacrificial way. Make yourself available.