

LOVE IS A VERB: LOVE DOES

Scripture used: [1 John 3:16-18 \(NIV\)](#) and [1 Timothy 6:17-19 \(NLT\)](#)

OVERVIEW

As our church begins our annual Be Rich to Others Outreach, Pastor Hurmon encouraged us as a church to remember that love is not a feeling or an attribute, but it is an action that is concrete in its impact. In other words, love does. The Be Rich to Others Outreach allows us as a church and individuals to practice a discipline of putting feelings into actions, to follow in the footsteps of God to allow our love for others to be made concrete. This year, we will be serving others through prayer, through the making of homeless hygiene kits, and through unconditional gifts of generosity that will be given to non-profit partners that are making a life-changing impact in our community. For all the details, please make sure you watch the very beginning of this week's message!

KEY POINTS

- 1) Our Scripture calls us to love in actions and in truth. In [Mark 4:35-41](#), the apostles are in a storm on the sea and ask Jesus: "Do you care if we perish?" Jesus has been asleep for a while. This is a metaphor for life in the times of the coronavirus, or other times of trouble. It seems like we're navigating an unending storm, and perhaps we feel like Jesus is asleep, and no miracle has come. It's ok to ask the question, "Does God care?" God can handle our honest emotions. But we must also be open to the assurance that God has given us. We must remember that, in the end, Jesus laid down his life. This is how the writer of 1 John has the assurance that God's love is real ([1 John 3:16](#)). If God has demonstrated to us what love is, then He also invites us to do the same for our brothers and sisters.
- 2) [1 Timothy 6:18 \(NLT\)](#) reflects the way that Jesus makes love practical: when we have possessions, and we see a brother or sister in need, we must act. Pastor Hurmon was reminded of this recently when he stepped out of his car in downtown San Jose and almost tripped over a homeless man sleeping on the ground. Though NBCC is working for the long-term transformation of those in the downtown, in the immediate moment Pastor Hurmon felt helpless to meet the man's needs. But Pastor Hurmon realized that just because he couldn't do everything didn't mean that he couldn't do anything, and he chose to do a small act of kindness by providing a hot drink and breakfast to the man. We can't let false or externalized guilt or judgment lead to a calloused heart that does nothing; love starts somewhere.
- 3) All of us can benefit from what Paul taught Timothy, whether we consider ourselves "rich" or not. The first teaching is the wisdom to recognize that it is likely we are richer than we think we are. The US, and our region in particular, are geographies of great abundance by world standards. Even when we are impoverished, we have access to emergency care, and a social safety net that is non-existent in many parts of the world. Many of us struggle with having any financial margin. Sometimes this comes from objective cost of living demands, but often a part of our lack of margin is the inability to differentiate between wants and needs; and instead of being grateful for our many blessings, we are discontent until we acquire more. We must discipline our appetite for things, and find contentment in what we have. Too often, we see money as a way to build a wall of safety around us, and we take pride in achieving security. But this is not real protection, it cannot be trusted. Only God can be trusted through life, and at the end of life. Consider this thought experiment. What brings us more anxiety right now - not having God, or not having money? What about on our deathbed - would we be more worried about not having God, or not having money? If we would prioritize having God at the end of our lives, then we should trust God in the course of our lives as well.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - What are the influences in your life that make you less generous, and what makes us more generous? Consider your family influences, your cultural influences, and your personal experiences.
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Consider [1 Timothy 6:17-19](#). How does it make an argument for responsible generosity? Have you experienced irresponsible generosity or irresponsible frugality (think about hoarding, for example) in your life? How does our relationship with God, and the wisdom that God teaches, lead us to a responsible generosity? What are the next one or two steps to being able to practically live in a way that is both responsible and generous?
- 3) **DO** - Commit to participating in our Be Rich to Others Outreach! Join us next Sunday for the next message in our series, "Love is a Verb."