

LOVE IS A VERB: LOVE SERVES!

Scripture used: [1 John 4:7-8 \(NIV\)](#)

OVERVIEW

Today we continued the sermon series “Love is Verb” with an exploration of service. The Scripture [1 John 4:7-8 NIV](#) calls for us to love one another, for love comes from God. Pastor Hurmon gave the example of the common denominator among superheroes which is the willingness to act in love and the commitment to serve others. Even more than special powers, which can be used for good or for ill, the commitment to act for the good of others is the quality which attracts us to heroes. The reason why these stories of superheroes are so popular is because they echo the story of Jesus, the truth of the Gospel, and God has made us in our human nature to be sensitive to stories of selflessness and serving others. It is one thing to know love and be attracted to acts of service, it is another thing to practice love and exercise our will to love others. We have to train our brains to see God’s love and experience it, in order to allow this love to flow through us. Importantly, we have to differentiate between self-focused love and others-focused love. To learn how to love is to practice loving others, not for our self-interest but the good of others.

KEY POINTS

- 1) **Self-Focused Love:** Self-focused love is rarely redemptive; it occurs simply when we love something or someone because we derive a benefit for ourselves. Most of our love affairs start this way; we have our own self-interest that attracts us to the love. Self-focused love is not what is being described in [1 John 4:7-8](#), which describes God’s “other-focused love.”
- 2) **Others-Focused:** Others-focused love is an expression of God’s heart; it occurs when we extend love to someone not for our good but for their good. The fullest expression of this love is when we see Jesus giving up his life in order to provide access to salvation for all of humanity. We have access to real life superpowers through God’s love, the ability to act in service to our brothers and sisters. That’s God’s love.
- 3) **God serves you.** In [Psalm 107:1 NLT](#), the Scripture reads, “Give thanks to the Lord for he is good! His faithful love endures forever.” If you were distraught and weeping last night, God wept with you. If you’re experiencing pain right now, God’s faithful love is experiencing that pain with you. God is attending to you, and even on your worst days, He is being good to you.
- 4) **Extend God’s love and multiply it.** While it is great to show up and be there for our loved ones and serve others we encounter in our daily lives, we grow in love as we grow in our commitment to serve. [1 John 4:7](#) reads, “Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God.” The redemptive call that God gives to each one of us is to continue to use our superpowers to love and serve so that those around us encounter the sacrificial love of God through us.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - The negativity around us is easy to dwell on and be consumed by. We turn on the TV and get distracted by the discourse going on in the world. If we feed regularly on that which is toxic, we will most likely become toxic. To see God’s love around you it is to see the blessings all around you and experience it wholeheartedly. In other words, call it out! When you get home and it’s warm inside from a cold day, call it out! That you have safe transportation to and from where you need to go, call it out! How can we as a community start to “call it out” when we experience God’s love? Share some things you can “call out with your LG. Between now and next week, write down and journal about three things where God has shown up in your life.
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** -Differentiate between passively being grateful vs. actively giving thanks. To passively be grateful is to be more aware of what we are unhappy about and to only begrudgingly acknowledge our blessings in a way that devalues them. To actively give thanks is to open dialogue regularly with God and vocalize our appreciation for the blessings in our life. How can we switch from passively being grateful to actively giving thanks in some areas in our life?
- 3) **DO** - Pastor Hurmon shares the example of taking in his nephew, and recalls being taken in by his great aunt and uncle and how the cycle of showing up for others is continuously present in his life. While you may be unable to show up for others in this way, think about the ways in which you can care for others. How can you show up for others, in any way, big or small?