

COMPELLED BY LOVE

message one - THE MOST EXCELLENT WAY

Pastor Mike Chapman

When Jesus was asked, "What is the greatest commandment, he replied, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. The second most important is similar. Love your neighbor as much as you love yourself" (Matthew 22:36-39 LB). What Jesus was saying is that the best use of life is love. It is what is most important. It is what matters most to God.

Over the next five Sundays, love will be our topic. So let's begin by asking, "What's love got to do with it?"

GOD IS LOVE

1 John 4:8, Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. (NIV)

1 John 4:16, *God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.* (NIV)

LOVE VALIDATES MY FAITH

1 John 4:8, *Whoever does not love does not know God because God is love.* (NIV)

1 John 4:20, *If we say we love God, but hate others, we are liars. For we cannot love God, whom we have not seen, if we do not love others whom we have seen.* (TEV)

John 13:34-35, *A new commandment I give you that you love one another just as I have loved you...By this all men will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another. (NIV)*

LOVE INTEGRATES MY SPIRITUAL LIFE

Colossians 3:14, *As God's chosen people...clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. (NIV)*

1 Corinthians 12:21-13:1; 14:1, *You are eagerly desiring the greater gifts. Now I will show you the most excellent way. If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal...Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts. (NIV)*

THERE IS A LAST-DAY URGENCY FOR LOVE

Matthew 24:9-12, *Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold. (NIV)*

1 Timothy 3:1-4, *There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God. (NIV)*

DEATH BY LOVE IS THE WAY OF CHRIST

2 Corinthians 5:14-15, *For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.* (NIV)

Galatians 2:20, *I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.* (NIV)

Matthew 16:25, *Whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it.* (NIV)