



Lesson:

This week, for Valentine’s Day, we finished up our series about relationships with a discussion on Love.

We talked about what Valentine’s Day is and how we celebrate it. We also learned that it was originally created as a Christian Holiday called Saint Valentine’s Day. Like with other holidays that we discussed, the early Church was able to use existing pagan holidays and rituals and change the meaning to make it easier for early Christians to not practice the pagan rituals. Then, of course, the day became secularized and commercialized until its now mostly about getting cards and gifts all in the name of love.

We agreed that it makes us feel good when we get Valentine’s cards or gifts from people showing that they care about us or even love us. We said that it would be great if we could get a Valentine’s Day card from God letting us know that he loves us, especially when we don’t feel like we should be loved at all.

We learned that we can know that God loves us from the greatest Valentine’s Day card ever given, the Bible. The Bible is chock full of God’s love for us. It’s God’s Valentine’s Day card to us but we get to celebrate his love every single day.

We then studied several New Testament verses having to do with love. **John 3:16** tells us that God loves each of us so much that he gave his only Son so that we may have everlasting life. **Romans 5:8** shows us that God loves us unconditionally regardless of our sin since we were still sinners when Christ died for us. **1 John 4:16** tells us that God is love and if we live in love, God is in us. **1 John 4:12** tells us if we love each other, God lives in us. God’s love is in us to share with others. Finally, in **John 13:34**, Jesus tells us to love each other as he loved us.

We talked about how Jesus loves us. Jesus put no conditions or restrictions on his love and he loved everyone equally. He accepted everyone just as they are regardless of their sins and did not judge them. He also forgave completely, even if they did not deserve it. He even forgave the people who nailed him to the cross. Jesus also did not walk around telling people that he loved them, he showed his love by his actions of healing, showing compassion and caring about others.

We then learned about three types of love mentioned in the Bible. We learned about **Eros** which is a self-centered physical love based on feelings and emotions without the balance of logic. There was also **Philia** which is mental love which is more “give & take” love between close friends and includes attributes like loyalty, virtue and familiarity.

Finally, we learned about the greatest form of love called **Agape** which is spiritual love. It is “true love” and is selfless, sacrificial, everlasting and unconditional. **Agape** love gives and expects nothing in return. It is given whether the love is returned or not. This is God’s love for us and it is the love that we as Christians should strive to have for him and for each other.

We then studied Paul’s letter to the Corinthians in **1 Corinthians 13** in which he describes the **Agape** love that we all should have for each other. We finished with **Matthew 22:37-40** in which Jesus tells us the two greatest commandments. 37 “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself. 40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

We were created by God to love him and be loved by him in a relationship with him.

We were created by God to love each other and be loved by each other in a relationship with each other.

God IS love and the Bible is the greatest Valentine’s card ever given and it was given by God to all of us.