

WORSHIP

SUGGESTED WORSHIP SONGS:

Your Grace is Enough, This is Amazing Grace, Beautiful Savior, Grace That Won't Let Go

WELCOME

I Love You. When was the last time you said "I love you", and what exactly did you mean when you said it?

WORD

MATTHEW 5:27-30

²⁷ "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' ²⁸ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹ If your right eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. ³⁰ And if your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.

What does it mean to say, "I love you"? There are certain types of meaning that we only experience in relationships. It can be so thrilling and enticing that we are desperate to hold on to it and we will do anything in order to engage it. But in order to achieve it, we so often end up doing the wrong thing even if our intentions are good.

Saying "I love you" means more than just the words. It requires that it is demonstrated in our lives so that even without words people would know that it is true and that we really mean it. No wonder, we often get confused when we think about love. But what do the words "I love you" actually mean?

WE CANNOT HAVE LOVE WITHOUT TRUTH

We live in a culture where some people think that love and truth are separate. However, love and truth are inseparable. We cannot have one without the other. Love without truth is unimaginable. If someone comes to you and says, "I love you", does it matter if he is telling you the truth or not? The idea that love exists in the absence of truth is completely false. Love has to be true otherwise it will not mean anything.

WE CANNOT HAVE LOVE WITHOUT COMMITMENT

Love cannot exist outside of commitment. The words "I love you" are meaningful when they are said exclusively and is committed only to you. Outside of this, these words mean nothing. Some people are eager to say "I love you" to gain favor or get something in return, and even to take advantage of

you. But are they actually committed to love you? The words "I love you" involves the commitment to be there in good times and bad. When it comes to love, we are all looking for commitment. The amazing thing about commitment is that it brings the depth and grounding to a relationship that we cannot experience outside of love. Love without commitment is impossible.

WE CANNOT HAVE LOVE WITHOUT OTHER PEOPLE

Love is a quality that exists between two people. You cannot just love yourself alone, you need another person to express that love.

The words "I love you" have to be given by the person freely and willingly. You cannot force it at gun point. You also cannot buy it, or else it becomes meaningless. What makes love love is the fact that it is freely given. God created and structured the world wherein to make love meaningful, man has the capacity to withhold it or give it to others.

But if love is to be given freely, we need a structure that makes it possible for us to do so—freedom. This is where we often get confused. Freedom is not doing whatever we want, whenever, and however we want to. That is not freedom, it's anarchy. Negative freedom is the absence of constraints when nothing stops us from doing anything. It is like a space man floating in space who is free from all external constraints yet powerless to move. Positive freedom is empowerment to move and change.

WORD (cont'd)

Freedom is a moral concept that exists only within a moral framework. If we break the framework, we will also break ourselves and begin to experience all kinds of pain.

The Bible says we are created in the image of God. Therefore, we have the moral law inherent in us. It reflects the very characteristic of God. So, when we do what is morally wrong, we are not only breaking our relationship with God, we are also violating the image of God in us. Whenever we break God's moral law, we do not only hurt someone else, we also hurt ourselves.

Sin has a price that demands to be paid. Consider, for example, how sin diminishes us as a human being. It reduces us into objects. When we sin and break God's moral law, we diminish ourselves on the inside. We become less human and we start treating other people

less as well, thinking of them as objects to be used instead.

Love is a quality between two people. The relationship between a person and an object is one of *consumption* to satisfy need and pleasure. But a relationship between two people is for *connection*. We are designed to have that desire for connection, foremost with God. However, because of sin we have channeled it to other created beings or to things that cannot satisfy the longings of our heart. Only God can fully satisfy our desires.

If we have the connection with Jesus, we are blessed from within. Do not compromise the true mark of a Christian which is the fruit of the Holy Spirit. It characterizes what a fully committed Christian should look like.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. **Tough Commands.** What are the commands of Jesus in **Matthew 5:27–30**?
2. **My Desire.** What satisfies the longings of your heart? How can God satisfy your desires?
3. **Live Out Love.** What will you do differently to live out an uncompromising love to your family, friends and others?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Reflection for today.

How does an uncompromised Christian look like?

The character that should mark out every true Christian is the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Do not compromise on this because this is what a fully committed Christian should look like. Let your life be a living testimony to attract others to Jesus.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of Public Servants and a God-centered Philippines
- Repentance and Salvation

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends