

How to Love 4 Joyful Patient Faithful

How to Love Bumper Video

Here we are in the 4th week of our How to Love sermon series. My name is Chris Fluitt and I welcome you to Redemption Church in Plano Tx. Everyone worshipping with us in person, thank you for joining us. Everyone worshipping with us online, thank you for joining us, as well.

The World knows TO LOVE.

Every movie, book, song, everything popular in our culture carries the message that life is better with love.

The Beatles, who changed what it meant to be a rock and role band, recorded these

beautiful lyrics and harmony in their Abbey Road studio.

“And in the end the love you take, is equal to the love you make.”

These words were actually the last that Paul, Ringo, George, and John would ever sing together in the studio. This was the final track of their Beatles career, and it makes this beautiful message of how much we need love.

Ironically, this was their final track because they no longer loved each other and were now beginning to hate each other.

“And in the end the love you take, is equal to the love you make.”

The world knows TO LOVE, but the world lacks the understanding of HOW TO LOVE.

How to Love

Last week we talked about a love that excitedly works, is boiling hot spiritually, and serves the Lord. I encourage you to find that message on our Redemption Church podcast.

In this series we have been focusing on a passage of scripture, Romans 12. Let's read this together.

Romans 12:9 Love must be sincere.

Hate what is evil; cling to what is

good. 10 Be devoted to one another in

love. Honor one another above

yourselves. 11 Never be lacking in

zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor,

serving the Lord. 12 Be joyful in hope,
patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

13 Share with the Lord's people who
are in need. Practice hospitality.

Our prayer for this series is this, "Lord teach us how to love."

We have need to be taught, but we also have need to be un-taught. The world has led us to believe false things about love.

The world: Never content

The world teaches us to never be content or happy with anything. We are taught to be restless in pursuing what we perceive to be better.

John D. Rockefeller was asked "How much money does it take to make a man

happy?” Rockefeller answered, “One more dollar.”

This teaching, to never be content, has led people to strange places. We are never happy with what we have... we always need one more dollar.

We have seen famous, wealthy, well thought of, and attractive people, end their lives. We are all mystified when we see Hall of Fame athletes like Junior Seau, and Academy Award winners like Robin Williams commit suicide. We ask ourselves “why?”

At the risk of over simplifying tragedy, I still need to say, they were not content. I believe on the day of their suicide, they felt a lack of contentment, happiness, and joy. They surely felt more burden in life,

than blessing. They felt like their life was no longer worth the effort of living. This surprises us... Yet we may be living the same way.

If you can't celebrate your successes, but immediately force yourself back to the grind of reaching for something better... you are following the world's teaching of discontentment.

If you are not content with the blessing you have in your hand... your house, your car, your cell phone, or even your relationship... you will seek to trade things in for the latest, better model. ...And you will exhaust yourself by always looking for better.

Perhaps you suffer from the fear of missing out. It does not matter the fun

you are having right now... someone might be having more fun than you right now... you may be missing out.

The endless pursuit of life can lead you to an early grave.

God: Ever Joyful in Hope

God's word over and over teaches us to be content. God commands us to live in joy and happiness with continual rejoicing.

Christians should be full of joy. Are you a Christian? Are you full of joy?

“Well, I would be, if I had something to be happy about.”

*12 Be joyful in hope

If you are only joyful when you get a promotion or a pay raise... you will not be joyful very often.

If you are only happy when you feel and look your best and receive glowing compliments... you will not always be happy.

If you only rejoice after your team has won the championship... you may never be happy again. Cowboys' fans has it really been 28 years since we were able to beat our chest and say "How 'bout them cowboys?"

If you are joyful over something circumstantial, then your life will lack joy.

Yet God commands us to be constantly joyful in what? In Hope!

Perhaps you are following the lesson of the world and are never content. Perhaps you are only joyful for fleeting moments. I invite you today to become consistently joyful in hope.

There is a love that is joyful in hope.

You might hate the word hope because it has let you down in the past. As a child you hoped your parents would not divorce, you have hoped to see healing but instead, had a funeral; you hoped to be a better person only to fail...

It matters where you place your hope.

*Psalm 20:7 (NIV) Some **hope** in chariots and some in horses, but we **hope** in the name of the Lord our God.

1 Peter 1:3 (NIV) Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

You can have a terrible day, but you can still be joyful in hope.

You can be joyful in hoping tomorrow will be better; I get to leave work and see the people I love; God's promises are true and one day we will be in Heaven; then our difficulty will seem so small.

You can hope in a living hope. Jesus is alive. We have a hope that lives.

Here is how to love, learn to be joyful in hope.

The world: Never patient

I have never seen 50 shades of grey... but I imagine it is a sweet romantic tale of two people who decide to patiently build a life of trust and love. Since none of us even know the plot we will just assume that Hollywood has given us another message of patience being a vital component of love.

We know that is not true. The world lacks patience.

We have been yelled at by the boss, not because we were slacking off, but because the boss lacked patience for the time the job required.

Our mothers have been called terrible things as we drive on highway 75, even though we were driving the speed limit, the person on our bumper lacked patience.

I hate to say it, but as your pastor I need to tell you that someone has been talking bad about you in church... They have been ridiculing your intelligence and ability. They have been tearing down your accomplishments and yelling loudly all your failures. Although you have been trying to get in shape and get back in a previous size of jeans, this person has been saying what a fat slob you are. What should we do with such a person... should we allow such a person in our church? I hope you think they should be

allowed in church because you are that person!

You lack patience with yourself. You talk to your self in a way that you would never talk to anyone else. You are most unloving to yourself... you are most impatient with yourself.

The world's lesson on love never includes patience.

God: Ever Patient in Affliction

I told you last week about how God once told me that I didn't have a patience problem, I had a love problem. The first defining word for love in 1 Corinthians 13 is patience. It states, "Love is Patient."

Somebody says, “give me a break.”

Somebody says, “cut me some slack.”

Somebody says, “get off my back.”

Love does it better. Love patiently waits.

Love gives grace. Love gives space.

*patient in affliction

God teaches us to love patiently even in the worst conditions. The scripture says, “patient in affliction.”

I know this about me...

I can be very patient as I am getting a massage

I can be perfectly patient as I tarry on a beachside lounge chair in sublime weather.

I can amaze you with my patience as I eat a generously provided Saltgrass porterhouse steak.

It is easy to be patient in positive conditions. Yet God teaches us how to love by being patient in affliction.

Continue to love in pain, in heartache, in persecution, in hardship.

The people of Ukraine are in affliction right now... but for love of country and brotherhood they are patient.

- They patiently fight for each other. Even if they are armed with only cardboard guns...
- They patiently pray with each other.
- They patiently care for one another.

With no sign of help on the way they remain patient in affliction. Ukraine is showing us how to love.

We live in a culture where the advice is that you are “too patient,” “you need to quit,” “You need to find someone better.” Yet God teaches us to love patiently in affliction.

The world has another lesson we need to be untaught.

The World: Be faithful to

[redacted]

There are 2 versions of this lesson. Here is the first one.

The World: Be faithful to

yourself

The world often teaches us to be self-centered. It used to be a pillar in our

culture to only separate in extreme situations of harm and abuse, but today you are encouraged to separate simply because you feel tired.

“Feel tired!?” It is a wonder anyone stays married. If you have a kid you are probably tired right now.

“We’ve grown apart...” is another thing people say. It makes me want to scream “have you tried growing back together!?”

“People change...” You know what doesn’t change? Faithfulness... Hope... and Patience. All the love qualities we have studied today.

“I just want something different...” Are we talking about what fast food place where we are going to eat or a holy

covenantal relationship before God Almighty!?

Being “faithful to yourself” is often code for being faithless to your commitment.

We may have reached the point where we are more faithful to our entertainment fantasy worlds than we are to our real lives. I know people who stick with a show even though they now hate it... You can check the stats on the show “Game of Thrones.” The last seasons the viewer satisfaction stats on the show plummeted. The internet was filled with people complaining about every little plot decision. ..Yet the viewership remained faithful and stuck it out all the way to the series’ dissatisfactory end.

We may have reached the point where we are more willing to faithfully stand by fictional characters than our own flesh and blood relationships.

Be faithful to your self is one of the lessons the world teaches... the other one you can probably guess.

The World: Be faithful to your partner

This one seems good on the cover, but it falls short.

Just take the words of this prophetess (joke!) ...

***ALEX ASK ME ABOUT THIS PART (AND DELETE THIS RED LINE AFTER YA DONE)**

"Sometimes it's hard to be a woman

Givin' all your love to just one man

You'll have bad times

And he'll have good times

Doin' things that you don't understand

But if you love him you'll forgive him

Even though he's hard to understand

And if you love him

Oh, be proud of him

'Cause, after all, he's just a man

Can anyone name the artist? Tammy Wynette. ...and here is the part everyone has heard.

Stand by your man

Give him two arms to cling to

And something warm to come to

When nights are cold and lonely

So, the world teaches one extreme of faithlessness and then teaches standing by those who have no intention of being faithful to you. Neither extreme is God's plan.

Divorce is not God's plan... But neither is abuse and infidelity. God's plan is a covenant. If your marriage lacks covenant then you have some work to do.

Let's look back at the Word to see what God teaches us.

12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

God: Faithful in prayer

Instead of being faithful to self... be faithful in prayer. Prayer sacrifices selfishness.

Instead of being faithful to a faithless and abusive marriage... be faithful in prayer. Prayer can change your heart and the heart of your spouse.

If you are faithful in prayer you will be more faithful to God.

As we have seen our culture crash and burn... as we have seen suicides, divorce, and medication abuse rise... we have seen prayer plummet. The easy one to point out is prayer in schools, which has been a political talking point. While I strongly

believe this issue... what really ought to be talked about is this... PRAYER IN HOMES.

Don't yell about prayer in schools if you don't participate in prayer in your home.

Christians are we faithful in prayer?

We had a 1st Tuesday Worship & prayer meeting this last week. We have far less attendance than we do at our connect groups. Are we faithful in prayer?

We advertise that we will talk to God at the end of every service, yet I know as a pastor that although we offer this time, not all members of this church are faithful to it. Some people walk into this church with their problems and walk right back out without ever coming for prayer. That is not being faithful.

You want to know how to love? Be faithful in prayer.

Prayer is one of the most loving things you can do for someone.

Prayer changes your stony unforgiving heart to a life-giving spring well of forgiveness.

Prayer for your enemies blesses them... rescues them... and even changes them.

Prayer for your enemies blesses you... rescues you... and always changes you!

Having marriage problems? Pray.

Thinking about divorce? Pray.

Have problems with your kids? Pray.

Have problems with your friends? Pray.

Scripture says to pray continually. Make sure you are faithful in prayer.

Have you been unfaithful?

This is a lesson on “how to love,” but God gives us more than a lesson plan in a dry textbook. God demonstrates His love for us.

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

How to Love

The greatest demonstration of love is Jesus on the cross. If you want to know how to love, then look at the cross. Let's compare our lessons to the light of the cross.

The world: Never content

Was the love of Jesus content? Did we see Jesus avoid the path that would lead him to the cross?

Did Jesus chase “one more dollar,” or was he content to be numbered among the transgressors and hung by thieves on the cross?

God: Ever Joyful in Hope

We see a joyful Jesus in the Gospels. He wasn't joyful because of the pain he would endure. Jesus was joyful because of the hope that was on the other side of that pain.

Jesus did not place His joy in his own achievement, but in the joy of hope.

*Hebrews 12:2 For the **joy** set before him he endured the cross, scorning its

shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

You were a sinner... but Jesus hoped you would seek His forgiveness and be with him in paradise. This is HOW TO LOVE.

The world: Never patient

Was Jesus impatient? Did Jesus have patient love?

God: Ever Patient in Affliction

Was Jesus patient in affliction. No one has ever been more patient in the worst affliction.

He was patient as the spikes were driven through his peaceful hands and feet.
He was patient as the crown of thorns was

crammed down on his head.

He was patient as hateful people screamed taunts at him.

He was patient as he drew his last breath.

Don't you know He is patiently waiting for you now? He loves you. He shows us how to love.

Can you be patient in affliction today?

The World: Be faithful to yourself

Was Jesus faithful to his self...? No.

The World: Be faithful to your partner

Was Jesus faithful to his closest earthly relations on the cross? Jesus was not actually faithful... Jesus staying on that cross is what all his friends and family DID NOT want Jesus to do.

Jesus did not stand by and watch us go to hell... He went to cross, and there he showed us this lesson...

God: Faithful in prayer

Jesus prayed in that garden.

Jesus prayed on that cross.

Jesus was faithful in prayer.

He prayed for His enemies.

He prayed for those He loved.

Even though His actions where not what his family and friends wished... the actions

of Jesus were faithful. All because He was faithful in prayer.

How to Love

Lord teach us how to love.

I am 100% certain that you feel inadequate in at least one of the three areas we spoke about today. Will you pray about it?

12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

I want you to take some time and ask God to help you today. Help us to love like you loved Jesus.

Have you been joyless? Be joyful in hope. Hope in God. Hope in heaven. Hope in

another day with the ones you love.

Change your mindset.

Have you been impatient in affliction?

Have you been wanting to check out and avoid pain? In love can you come today and ask for strength?

Have you been faithful in prayer? If you have been, I bet I'll see you praying. If you have not been faithful in prayer, there is only one way to change that. Come pray.

In love, I want to pray with you today. I want to see you move your heart towards God today.