

Love – Is It a Verb or Proper Noun?

Scripture reading: 1 John 4:7 – 12 and 1 Thessalonians 2:1 - 9
Mothers' Day 2023

Good morning and Happy Mothers' Day to all the mothers, grandmothers, and those who are mother like figure in someone's life.

I think parents, both moms and dads, have the hardest job in the world and this world would be in horrible shape without their love and sacrifice and perseverance.

A woman shared this – My kids wanted to know what it was like being a mom so I woke them up at 2am to let them know my sock came off!

Another woman shared this – Parenting is 70% me yelling, 20% asking the kids why they were yelling, and 10% trying to find out where I left my coffee.

And finally here is a recipe for iced coffee – if you have kids ... make coffee ... forget you made coffee ... put it in the microwave ... forget you put it in the microwave ... and finally drink your coffee cold!

After this sharing, we thank you mom for your dedication to raising the next generation.

Parts of this message has been shared at weddings I have done. Let me share about 'LOVE' today. Is love a verb or proper noun?

As a young boy, the only love that mattered to me was the love of my mom. Loving any other female was a bad thing because girls had coodies! My first love was Carol Cunningham. I loved her because she was a good third baseman when we played softball at the playground.

As a teenager, love still did not mean much. If I could not throw it, hit it, bounce it, or shot it, love really was not in the picture.

As a man in his early twenties, I was taught that love was a verb. Love was an action that a boy and girl had. Since I thought of love as a verb, it required something from me.

I have found out since those years and through my marriage to a wonderful woman that we can be inspired to love a spouse. Love has taken on more of a meaning in my life!

Yes, in many ways love is a verb of action but today I want you to remember that the source of love is a noun, a proper noun – God.

God's love must flow into and through you daily. If you try to create love without God, then love becomes more about you and less about the love of Christ. Instead if you reverse that and make love more about the love of Christ and less about you as it should be, you will be blessed because God is love.

Let's talk about a little math here. Let's talk about proper and improper fractions.

A proper fraction is a fraction where the numerator is smaller than the denominator. And an improper fraction is one where the numerator is larger than the denominator.

Let's suppose the numerator is the value of love you put upon yourself. Your numerator is love for self. Your denominator is your value of love for Christ in your heart. Your denominator is love of Christ. Again - your numerator is love for self. Your denominator is love of Christ.

If your love of self is smaller than your love of Christ – your numerator is smaller than your denominator – you are a proper Christian. But if your love of self is greater than your love of Christ – you are an improper Christian. You are out of balance!

So which one are you? Is your life in proper balance where your love of self is less than your love of Christ? Or is your life in an improper balance because your love of self is greater than your love of Christ? Are you a proper or improper Christian?

A mother told her daughter about growing up during ‘the Great Depression’. She was part of a very poor family who had apples to eat and whatever wild game her father could provide. Her mother would say this when her husband shot a squirrel – ‘Give the head to cook and eat! It is the best part!’

Years later her daughter learned that her mother was only pretending that squirrel head was a delicacy. Her mother pretended this because she wanted her children eat the meat that was provided.

As we celebrate Mothers’ Day, may we also recount stories of our mothers’ devotion. Let us thank God for them and strive to love more like them.

Paul served the Thessalonian church like a mother cares for her children. Paul loved them fiercely. Paul fought through opposition to tell the church in Thessalonica about Jesus and his shared his life with them. Paul worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while he preached the Gospel of Christ to them.

Few can resist a mother’s love and Paul modestly said his efforts were not without results. We cannot control how others respond, but we can choose to show up, day after day, to serve them in a sacrificial way.

Let us pray:

God, help us to seek you daily for you are love. Remind us that you are the source of all love. O yes, at times love is a verb of action, but let us remember love is a proper noun – God.

May we keep our life in a proper balance where our love for self is less than our love for Christ. And Father, let us remember that no one could love us more than you.

We pray this in Christ name – AMEN.