



1. What makes the way God loves people different from the way humans typically love each other? Have you ever loved someone the way God loves us?
2. In what three ways did Pastor Rick say we should show love to our family? Read 1 Timothy 5:8. What does God say about Christians who don't take care of the needs of their family members?
3. Pastor Rick said that we should treat other believers as family. Read Galatians 6:2 and 1 John 3:16-18. How are we to treat believers as family according to these passages? Where would be the most obvious place to do this? How could we do this as a group for people outside of our group?
4. What could be the benefit to you personally if you focus on helping other people who are in pain when you are in pain yourself?
5. What was the fourth key to loving like Jesus loved? Read Philippians 2:3-8. How did Jesus exemplify this key? If we do this, do you think we need to worry that our needs will be unmet? Read Mark 10:28-30. How does Jesus answer Peter's concern that they had given up everything to follow Jesus? Read Matthew 6:25-33. How does what Jesus says here free us up to put the needs of others before our own? What does Jesus say we need in order to live this way? How do you build this kind of faith?

Answers

1. *Most humans operate on the level of reciprocal love: I love you because you love me, I do things for you because you do things for me. It is based primarily on emotions, how we feel toward another person. God's love is unconditional, in other words, it does not matter how we act or if we respond to him with love, he has made the decision to love us. It is not based on feeling, but on his decision to love us. This is how we as believers are to love people and when we are controlled by the Holy Spirit, this is the type of love we have for others. This is what enables us to love our enemies and those who might treat us in an unloving way, why we can love the unlovable.*
2. *The three ways we are to love our family is by a. Giving them our attention; b. Meet their practical needs; and c. Give them emotional support. 1 Timothy 5:8 says that if we do not take care of our own family members, this is acting worse than unbelievers because they take care of their families. In Bible times, extended family actually lived together, so you might see 3 generations of a family living together.*
3. *Galatians 6:2 says that as believers, we are to help other believers to carry what is a burden in their lives, we are to help them with their needs and problems. 1 John 3:16-18 says we are to love our brothers and sisters we are to lay down our lives for them as Christ sacrificed everything for us. Specifically it talks about meeting their material needs. The most obvious place to do this is within your own small group. The people in your group should be the first responders to each other's needs. Think of ways that as a group you could help other believers who need it.*
4. *One of the main ways that helping someone else benefits you in your pain is that it gets your mind off of your own problems by helping others. This also benefits us because God says as we serve others and help them, then he will meet our needs and heal our pain.*
5. *The fourth key was to meet other people's needs even when my needs are not being met. Philippians 2 says we are to put the needs of other people before our own needs. Jesus exemplified this by putting our need for salvation above his own needs. As God, he had every right to be worshipped by humanity when he came and for all humans to serve him, but instead he took the position of a servant and gave up everything he deserved, even to the point of allowing those who should have worshipped him to crucify him and put him to death. Jesus responded to Peter by telling him there would be no one who sacrificed anything for Him that would not be repaid 100 times as much in this world and in the next. When Jesus promises in Matthew 6 to meet our material needs when we serve him, this frees us up to not have to worry about having our needs met so we can concentrate on carrying out the will of God as our highest priority. Jesus says that what we need to do this is faith in him that he will meet our needs. The only way faith grows is by making a decision to trust God and do what he says and then see how he keeps his promises to take care of us. When we see him take care of us as we serve him and put his desires first in our life, our faith grows because we see he is reliable and can be trusted to keep his word.*