



**Sermon-based reflections connect the week to the weekend!**

*Dig deeper into the talk each week, in a small group or independently. Challenge yourself to see how the message actually makes sense and applies to your everyday life.*

**Message Info:** People Problems - Don't Be A Gong, 10/22/23 - It's easier to think about loving the people close to you better. We could get on board with that. But we are called to love *everyone*. And if it were just a feeling, we'd be in trouble, but actual love goes way deeper than feels. Love is an action and a choice. Understanding that love is so much bigger, completely transforms relationships and lives. (*Passages: Matthew 22:34-40, 1 Corinthians 13, 1 John 4:7-12, John 13:34, Romans 12:9-21*)

**Discussion Questions:** Take your time and dig into these questions.

Do we overuse the word "love"? How does that affect our understanding of it? Does it matter if we check every other box, but don't truly love? How are we perceived without love?

Read Matthew 22:34-40. What stands out to you in this passage. Why?

Out of over 600 laws, Jesus easily names the most important commandments. The Pharisees request one but receive two, because *everything* hinges on them both. Love is a driving force that speaks through words and actions. Look at Paul's examples in 1 Corinthians 13:2-3. Let's think of a few of our own. What have we done without love? Do you think there are any exclusions? Do certain people or circumstances not merit love?

Love isn't fleeting, and it shouldn't be earned. It is a deep, enduring connection. 1 John 4:8 tells us that without knowing God's heart, we cannot love others. It may hurt to think of the love we show as insufficient or incomplete. But God *is* love; we cannot master it without him. Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. Which is hardest for you? Do you practice these with your family? Coworkers? Bad drivers?

So if we can't do this alone, if we can't love without first knowing the love of God, what can we do? We need to get to know his heart for us. Set time aside to read his Word, particularly the Gospel. And to pray and be still before him. Getting closer to God, developing relationship with him, will impact all other relationships.

**Weekly Challenge:** Look for opportunities to be bold in your faith: share hope with someone who is hurting, serve, sing at church, etc.