



## SERMON BASED STUDY GUIDE

Pastor Charlie

Understanding Love: Foundations for Healthy Relationships

### OPENING & PRAYER:

In today's message, you explore the profound and multifaceted nature of love, particularly within the context of marriage and relationships. We began by acknowledging that many of us may not have grown up with a clear or healthy model of what love and marriage should look like. Instead, we often turn to cultural depictions, which can be misleading. The Bible, however, offers a more reliable guide, particularly in passages like 1 Corinthians 7, which provides insights into the dynamics of love and marriage.

*"Father, guide us through this study as we learn about relationships. I pray that the relationships in our life are strengthened and honor you. I take ownership over my relationships by putting you first in everything we do. In Jesus' name I pray, amen."*

## SCRIPTURE:

*"Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband." 1 Corinthians 7:1-3*

*"The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control." 1 Corinthians 7:4-5*

*"But I say this as a concession, not as a commandment. For I wish that all men were even as I myself. But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that." 1 Corinthians 7:6-7*

*"But I say to the unmarried and to the widows: It is good for them if they remain even as I am; but if they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion." 1 Corinthians 7:8-9*

*"But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another;" 1 Thessalonians 4:9*

## GO DEEPER:

We heard the world's approach to love, which often involves finding the right person, falling in love, and placing all hopes and dreams on that person for fulfillment. This approach, however, is flawed and often leads to repeated cycles of disappointment. Instead, we should focus on becoming the right person, walking in love, and fixing our hopes on God, allowing Him to lead your relationships.

There are different types of love described in the Bible: Eros (erotic love), Phileo (brotherly love), and Agape (unconditional love). Each type of love plays a crucial role in a healthy relationship. Eros is the passionate, physical attraction; Phileo is the friendship and companionship; and Agape is the selfless, giving love that mirrors God's love for us. A balanced relationship requires all three types of love working together.

We also examined common misconceptions about marriage, such as the belief that marriage will solve all personal problems or that a spouse will make one whole. These are lies that can lead to unrealistic expectations and disappointment. Instead, we all should strive for a balanced love that includes passion, intimacy, and commitment.

Finally, we viewed the stages of love in a relationship, from the initial romance to the power struggle, cooperation, mutuality, and ultimately co-creativity. Each stage requires understanding and effort to navigate successfully. For singles, it's important to keep emotional and physical involvement in check, allowing God's leading to guide the relationship. For those in relationships, nourishing all three types of love is essential for a thriving partnership.

## LEARNING AND GROWING:

1. What are the three types of love mentioned in the sermon, and how are they defined? How do these types of love relate to the biblical understanding of love? [\[17:08\]](#)
2. How can understanding the stages of love in a relationship help couples navigate challenges and grow together? What biblical insights support this understanding? [\[40:11\]](#)
3. The sermon suggests that intentional love can be an act of worship. How does this perspective change the way one might approach their relationship with their spouse? [\[36:11\]](#)
4. Identify which stage of love your relationship is currently in. What challenges are you facing, and how can you apply the sermon's insights to navigate these challenges effectively? [\[40:11\]](#)
5. Reflect on the sermon's discussion about commitment. How can you strengthen your commitment to your partner or future partner, and what practical steps can you take to demonstrate this commitment? [\[31:55\]](#)

## CLOSING PRAYER:

Father, thank you for being the example of what our relationships should aspire to be. I pray for strength as we start to break those negative cycles that try to ruin our families. We know by putting you first, our relationship is stronger. So please bring the right people into our lives and remove the wrong ones. Help me be the example you wish me to be in leading my family, friends, and co-workers. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.