**GOD-CENTERED MARRIAGE: WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS AND WHY IT MATTERS SO MUCH**

**Session 1: Love, Love, Love**

**CHRIST-LIKE LOVE IS THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN ANY RELATIONSHIP (Ministry).**

* **Deuteronomy 7:1-11; John 3:16-21; Romans 5:6-8; 1 John 4:7-12 -** The love spoken of in 1 Cor. 13 is based on the love God has demonstrated to us in the sacrifice of his Son on the cross for our sin. Only those who know the love of God through faith in Christ can truly love in this way. *We are talking about a very specific kind of love: God’s Love.*
* **John 15:9-17; Mark 10:21 (Rich Young Man 10:17-31); Romans 8:31-39; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 3:14-21 –** God sent his Son to die for us, but it is also true that the Son came willingly because of his great love for us. We are called to love as Jesus loves. *We are talking about a very specific kind of love: Christ-like love.*
* **1 John 4:13; Romans 5:5-8; Galatians 5:16-26 (especially vv. 22-23) -** Every Christian is enabled to have Christ-love because of the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. *We are talking about a very specific kind of love: Spirit-empowered love.*

***Introduction to 1 Corinthians 13***

***Christlike love is:***

1. **Patient (v.4)**: Spirit-empowered ability to wait for God to work without becoming restless, resentful, or fighting back.
2. **Kind (v.4)**: Spirit-empowered ability to graciously do good to others even if they treat you badly.
3. **Does not envy (v. 4)**: Spirit-empowered ability to refrain from becoming jealous of what God has given to others. (“does not burn with envy”)
4. **Does not…boast (v. 4)**: Spirit-empowered ability to refrain from bragging about ourselves.
5. **Is not arrogant (v. 4)**: Spirit-empowered ability to refrain from thinking too highly of ourselves (having inflated ideas of our own importance).
6. **Is not…rude (v. 5)**: Spirit-empowered ability to refrain from treating others disrespectfully or shamefully (not “ill-mannered”).
7. **Does not insist on its own way (v. 5)**: Spirit-empowered ability to refrain from giving in to self-centered desires (“not preoccupied with the interests of self” - Anthony Thiselton)
8. **Is not irritable (v.5)**: Spirit-empowered ability to refrain from becoming easily irritated (being touchy or easily provoked).
9. **Is not resentful (“keeps no record of wrongs” – v.5):** Spirit-empowered ability to refrain from keeping a list of personal grievances.
10. **Does not rejoice at wrongdoing (“unrighteousness” – v.6):** Spirit-empowered ability to refrain from enjoying sin and its effects.
11. **But rejoices with the truth**: Spirit-empowered ability to take great delight in what is right in God’s eyes (a joyful celebration of truth!).
12. **Bears all things (endures – v.7)**: Spirit-empowered ability to consistently bear with others (to never give up, NLT). *NIV translates it as “protects”*
13. **Believes all things**: Spirit-empowered ability to consistently trust God (never loses faith).
14. **Hopes all things**: Spirit-empowered ability to remain confident in God even when repeatedly disappointed (never runs out of hope).
15. **Always perseveres:** Spirit-empowered ability to persist even when facing strong opposition (to never give up).

**LOVE NEVER ENDS! (v.8)**