



DATE January 17, 2016

SPEAKER David Smith

TITLE Inspire Courage

SERIES No one can live without it. If you have everything, but this, you're left with nothing! There is no replacement for it as it's at the heart of humankind's existence. It can be the most difficult word to define, and yet it's essential for emotional health. No relationship can survive without it, and every person can live because of it. Love! So, how do we intentionally love?

"...the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith." (1 Tim. 1:5 NASB)

1. Discuss the Five Love Languages Pastor David referred to in this series: words of affirmation; quality time; gifts; acts of service; physical touch. Do you know your love language(s)? (Most people are fluent in only one or two love languages.) Consider an interaction you had last week: did you recognize how the other person was speaking his/her love? Can you learn to speak other love languages? Cite some examples from the Bible where God shows His love in these different languages?
2. This weekend commemorates two great national sins. Dr. Martin Luther King Day, January 18th, remembers a leader in the fight against racism. January 17th, Sanctity of Life Sunday, mourns a legal case that resulted in the abortion of millions of unborn babies. Greed, sexual sin, impurity, addictions, and violence add to the growing list of violations that continue to harden our national conscience. Discuss some challenges you expect to encounter as you pursue the counter-cultural goal of the love that comes from a pure heart, good conscience and real faith?
3. Pastor David asked, "How can you be intentional and ruthless about love this year?" What ideas do you have?
4. "Let all that you do be done in love." (1 Cor. 16:14 NASB) The Greek word used for love here is agape, which Pastor David defined as "to intentionally will someone good." Agape is also described as God-powered love. How can you go about tomorrow's activities with agape love?
5. The Apostle Paul says in 1 Timothy 1:5 that "the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart, a good conscience and a sincere faith." "Pure" pertains to being ritually clear of responsibility; "good" pertains to moral qualities in general; and "sincere" literally means "without play-acting." How is Paul's goal different from the goals of the teachers he criticizes in I Timothy 1:3, 4. How is this kind of love possible?
6. Consider how words can be used to affirm others. Read Ephesians 4:29. Pastor David said that "the right words at the right time in the right tone, speak incredible love." Which part of this is most difficult for you? Is there anything that needs to change in our hearts in order to implement this command?
7. Read James 3:1-12. What one thing can you do to become more intentional with your words? What will you do to intentionally tame the power of your words this week? What will you avoid doing or saying?
8. How can we use words to enable us as a church to fulfill our 2016 resolution, to be a people who will be intentional and ruthless about love?