

Fil-Am Community Church

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Key verse: Matthew 22:35-38 NIV

### **“Would You Do Anything for Love?”**

It's Valentine's Day this week and love is in the air. As for me and my wife, our love will literally be in the air on Thursday when we fly to the Philippines. As you know, we'll be joining our medical mission's team who already left last week.

We are taking a break from our message series “Foundations” in order to celebrate Valentine's Day. Many of our couples are out today, some are in the Philippines, some are in a marriage conference but that shouldn't stop us from celebrating. So today, I'm going to talk about love.

As I was preparing this message, I was thinking about some of the crazy things we do for love. Perhaps you have seen the Dr. Pepper commercial; it shows a young man going to great lengths for love. It shows him buying or shopping... well let's just say something men aren't comfortable shopping. You see him in an aerobics class, then walking in the rain holding an umbrella over his special lady as he is getting soaked. Then you see them sitting on a couch watching a movie, he has a Dr. Pepper in his hand, she begins to reach over to take his Dr. Pepper and he gets a look in his eyes that says “Now that's going too far. I did the female shopping, the aerobics, I held your umbrella while I got soaked, but you are not getting my

Dr. Pepper. That's going too far!" Next thing you see is her standing on the porch and him running down the street with the Dr. Pepper still in his hands.

You know, I think this is also true with a lot of believers. I know it has been true in my life at times. Many times we say, "God, I'm yours, I'll do anything for you, my life belongs to you." But in reality there are things we won't do, there are things we won't let go of. "God, I love you but I am not going to give up this habit or addiction. I love you but you can't be number #1.

That place belongs to my **family**, my **career**, my **own desires**. God, I will give you Sunday morning but the rest of the week **belongs to me**. God I give you my all but not my tithe, that's **too much.**"

You see, God wants our all. Are you ready to give it? Let's look at Matthew 22:35-38 and read together these verses about loving God, "*One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment.*"

I believe it is the greatest commandment because if we love him with all our hearts we will want to serve him; our love will drive us and push us to live our lives to please him.

In John 14:15, Jesus says, *“If you love me, you will obey what I command.”* Do you really love Jesus? Are you ready to obey him? Whatever his command is? Would you do anything for your love for Jesus?

It’s easy to say we love somebody, but it’s the doing part where we always stumble. Our actions don’t follow our words. If we truly love somebody we would be willing to do anything for them.

This morning, I want to look at this thing called love. What it does to us and what we do for someone because we love them.

### **I. When You Love Someone You Want To Be With Them.**

One of the most mysterious things about love is that you always want the company of the other person. You want to see them, you want to talk to them, you want to do things together with them. They’re like a magnet that you get attracted to. You cannot afford to be away from them even for a second. We will do anything just to be with that person who is the object of our affection.

Some couples are like that and they are so lovey-dovey it almost makes you sick. They are always together; you almost think they are Siamese twins joined at the hip. She’s got a t-shirt that says “I love Billy Bob”; he’s got a matching shirt that says “I love Mary Ann”. They can’t afford to go to a fancy restaurant all they can afford is to share a French fries at McDonalds, but they don’t care cause they’ve got love and they’ve got each other.

That’s the kind of feeling one must have toward God. Because I love God, I can’t wait to spend time with him. Because I love God, I’m looking forward to talking to

him. How do we talk to God? In prayer. Paul says to the Christians in 1 Thess. 5:17 (KJV) “*Pray without ceasing*”.

If we are praying without ceasing we are communicating with God all day long. Now, it doesn't mean that you spend your day inside your room praying. It just means you are so conscious of God's presence that you believe he is listening to you at all times and so you talk to him whatever your circumstance is. It can be a long prayer or a quick prayer. For example, as you wake up in the morning, you bring the day's concerns to God, asking him for grace and guidance. Then, as you're driving or commuting, you remember about your sick aunt and you talk to God about her. You can talk to God about anything. And although you don't hear an audible voice, God is talking to you and communicating to you. He answers your prayers. It can either be yes, no, or wait.

**Remember prayer is a conversation with God.** That means you and God talking together all day. If you are doing this, then you are in love with God. Because you spend time with the one you love.

Being with someone also means knowing who they are, their thoughts, their dreams, their desires. Remember when you first fell in love with your wife? You dated and dated and talked and talked on the phone because you just wanted to get to know her more and more.

There was this girl who wrote a lot of letters to her boyfriend who was studying in another college. She never got a reply and decided to ask him on the phone. And

he says, “Sweetheart, I love you so much. When school is done, I’m going to read your letters.” Well, I don’t think he really loved her.

God has given you his love letter, the **Bible**. God has given you his Word to let you know how much he loves you. If you love God, you will want to know his thoughts, his desires, and his plans for you. Everything is in his Word. The problem is, we never devote time to read it on a regular basis. There is always something that gets in the way. How many Bibles do we have at home? We have one in the bedroom, we have one in the living room, and we have one in the car and so on. Are they for display only? America may be a country with the most number of Bibles printed but it is the least read of all books. And we say, “But I **can’t find time** to read.” Listen, you don’t find time. You’ll never find time.

**Make time**. You have to squeeze it in your busy schedule. You have to squeeze out those things that don’t make eternal significance, and squeeze in God. It doesn’t sound good to squeeze in God but if that’s what it takes to get closer to God, then do it. And in time, reading his Word becomes a natural part of your life. If you are doing this, then you are in love with God. Because you spend time with the one you love. Amen?

Now, let’s look at another thing we do because of love.

## **II. When You Are In Love You Will Be Completely Committed To That Person.**

When you love someone and you marry that person, you pledge, “till death do us part.” Marriage is designed by God to be a lifetime commitment. It’s not “I do” in the beginning and then “I don’t” afterwards.

A young man was very excited because he just won a ticket to the Super Bowl. His excitement lessened as he realized his seat was in the back of the stadium. As he searched the rows ahead of him for a better seat, he found an empty one right next to the field.

He approached the man sitting next to the empty seat and asked if it was taken.

The man replied, "No."

Amazed the young man asked, "How could someone pass up a seat like this?"

The older gentleman responded, "That's my wife's seat. We've been to every Super Bowl together since the day we were married but she has passed away."

"Oh, how sad," the man said. "I'm sorry to hear that, but couldn't you find a friend or relative to come with you?"

"No," the man said, "**They're all at the funeral.**"

That’s commitment. Well, of course, a wrong kind of commitment.

The point is, if we say we love God, we must be committed to him all the way.

There are no ifs and buts. We don’t try God, we don’t give him a test drive, and we commit our lives to him for the long haul. We are committed to love even if we don’t feel like it. Love is not just a feeling, it is a decision. When the newness wears off, when the honeymoon period is over, when the wrinkles come, and the

figure changes, that should not change our love. When you are in love you will be completely committed and faithful to that person.

Let me quote this often-quoted passage on love. 1 Cor 13:4-8a, *“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.”*

As a Christian I enjoy it when I feel like I’m on the mountaintop because of the blessings of God; I love it when worship is taking place and I feel the joy of the Lord. However, when I have had a bad day I should still love him.

When he doesn’t answer my prayers in the way I think he should, I should still be committed to my relationship with him. You see, when I am weary from the battles, the tests, and the trials he is still God, he is still the love of my life.

The Bible tells us that Joseph was the favorite son of his father Jacob. His father even gave him a gift of a colorful wardrobe. God also gave him the gift of dreams and interpretation of dreams. Because of this Joseph felt special. His brothers, however, were jealous of him. They plotted to kill him but in the end decided to just sell him to merchants who were on their way to Egypt. These merchants then sold him to an Egyptian official. The official loved him and gave him a high position in his household. Then, the official’s wife seduced Joseph but he rejected her advances. The wife then falsely accused Joseph of raping her and he was put in prison. For many years he was in prison. He was released only when he was able to interpret the dream of pharaoh about the coming famine in Egypt. Because of this,

Pharaoh made him second in command in Egypt. In the end, he reconciled with his brothers and the whole clan of Jacob settled in Egypt and received God's blessings.

Do you see what happened here? Joseph's life was full of ups and downs. One moment, he is on top of the mountain, another moment he is in the deepest valley.

What else do we see? We see that despite the ups and downs in his life, **he never wavered** in his faith in God. He was completely committed to God. He realized that God had a purpose in everything that was taking place in his life. He didn't understand it but he knew that God was in control. Because he waited and remained steadfast in his faith, God blessed him and his family.

When you are committed to someone you are faithful to that person. Your focus is only on that person. And you wouldn't dare entertain thoughts of having a relationship with another person. In fact, the person you love expects faithfulness from you.

In the same way, God expects faithfulness from us. The Bible says he is a jealous God.

In Exodus 20:5 we read, *"You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me."*

I love my wife, and I am committed to my wife therefore I am a "One woman man". I love God and I am committed to him therefore there will be no other gods

in my life. God is a jealous God and he wants us to be faithful, but many times we are cheating on the love of our lives. We must make sure to keep the love alive.

When you're in love, you want to be with the person you love. You also want to be committed to the person you love. And also,

### **III. When You Are In Love You Do Crazy Things**

Sometimes, you act in unusual ways when you're in love. You do things you normally wouldn't do. This is because you want to please the person you're in love with.

When Anabel and I were dating, I put a lot of mileage in my car. It's because I lived in New Jersey at the time and she lived in upstate New York, a distance of more than 50 miles. I think I would see her about four times a week. Do the math and you'd realize the pounding my car got from this. Plus the beating on my body. And I was just leasing a car. So, after one year, I decided to marry her. To save on gas. It was crazy. I love her and there was no point continuing with the insanity.

Love pushed me to do things I had never done. Love made me give of myself, make sacrifices, and put Anabel's desires above my own. Love makes you do some things that seem crazy.

If you're in love with God, you'd do crazy things for him likewise. David looked like a fool when the ark of God returned to Israel dancing with all his might. Mary Magdalene looked crazy when she broke open her alabaster box worth a year's

wages, and washed Jesus feet with her tears. The early Christians certainly appeared insane preaching the good news of Jesus despite persecution and threats to their own lives. Missionaries look crazy when they sell all they have and follow God's plan to a foreign land.

I read about this lady who said to another lady whose daughter went to a remote village in Africa as a missionary, "You know, your daughter is in great danger going to that uncivilized village in Africa. You shouldn't have let her. I think it's crazy for her to go." To which the other lady responded, "**The safest place to be is in the center of God's will.**" So, folks, remember, if you're doing God's will, if you're obeying him because you love him, and you appear like a fool to people, don't mind them. We're pleasing God, not men.

Now, I don't know about you but when I was in school there were times I was in love with someone and they didn't love me back and I must tell you it was difficult not to receive love in return. Today I want you to know that God loves you and will always love you. You don't need to be afraid of being rejected. He will accept you just the way you are. In fact, He loved you before you loved him. 1John 4:19 says, "*We love because he first loved us.*" And in Romans 5:8 it says, "*But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*" So, he wants the love to be a mutual love between you and him.

So, what are the three things we will do for love?

i. When you love someone you **want to be with them.**

- ii. When you are in love you will be **completely committed** to that person.
- iii. When you are in love you do **crazy things**.

These are the three things that Jesus himself demonstrates. Jesus loves you, he wants to spend time with you. Jesus loves you, he is completely committed to you. You may have had relationships and the other person wasn't faithful but God is always faithful. God says in Heb 13:5 (ESV) tells us, "*I will never leave you nor forsake you.*" And Jesus loves you so much, he did some things we would consider crazy. He left the splendors of heaven, to come to this earth full of pain and suffering. He willingly allowed himself to be beaten, mocked and crucified. Why would he do something that crazy? Because he loves you. He wants to forgive your sins and give you eternal life. John 3:16 says, "*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*"

The title of this message is "Would you do anything for love?" But the most important thing is what Jesus did for love. He gave his life. Now it's our turn. He gave everything for love. Have you given him your love and your life? I'm not talking about going to church, or giving him an offering, or doing some type of ministry. I'm talking about your whole life, your heart, soul, mind and strength. Some of us say, "God, I love you, I'll serve you, but I won't do that."

Today, Jesus is asking you to cross the line. You can either stay where you are, not making a commitment, not doing anything for love. Or you can step over the line, go all out for him and say, "Lord Jesus, I'll do anything for you. I'm all in." The choice is yours.

**Let us pray...**