**Sermon – Love Moves Love** – 35 minutes (42.5 allowed)

For Sunday, 11/26/17:

1. Series Context: Vision - God is Light (1:5), and God is Love (4:8). God showed us his love by sending his Son, the essence of Christmas. Now because of his great love, we can sacrificially love others, rise above cultural confusion and experience a fearless life because of his love for us. (TO be Revised for the Christmas season)
   1. (11/26) 3:11-18 —Love Moves Love. We love one another in response to the sacrificial love of Christ.
   2. (12/3) 3:18-24 — Confident Love. A life of love (for the fam, 23, and all, 18) brings assurance through the Spirit’s work in our souls.
   3. (12/10) 4:1-6 — Clarity [over Confusion]. … Test the “spirits” and embrace the coming of Jesus for the overcoming life God brought us through him. Relate to the various supreme “ends” of Christmas: presents, receiving, self, family, time off work, movies, songs, parties, etc, etc, etc, Jesus, the Spirit breaking in, the kingdom coming,
   4. (12/17) 4:7-12 — Love Came Down. God defined his love in Jesus, which motivates our love for him and others.
   5. (12/23) 4:13-21 — Fearless Love. Experience the perfect love of God and be free from fear and free to love like never before.
2. Sermon Title: Love Moves Love [part of the series “Radiant Love” (part 2) – followed “Radiant” (part 1)]
3. Text: 1 John 3:11-18
4. Medimemo: 1 John 3:1
5. Main Point: We love one another generously in response to the sacrificial love of Christ.
6. Goal(s):
   1. “Highlight SERVE Medford”?
   2. Generosity?
7. Other Elements: The Lord’s Supper; Thanksgiving Sunday

OUTLINE:

Worship Song & Transition (1.0 Minute)

1. “*You’re Beautiful*” (Dan Villalobos)
2. Children dismissed to Redemption Kids – by Dan V

Introduction (3.0 Minutes)

1. Scripture – 1 John 3:11-18
2. Context of This Message – 1 John 3:11
3. Prayer of Transition

Main Body (25.0 Minutes)

1. Encouragement #1 – Align your heart with love & life - not hate & death. [1 John 3:12-15] (13 m)
   1. Genesis 4:1-16: Cain & Abel
2. Encouragement #2 – Act on professed love and cultivate Gospel generosity. [1 John 3:16-18] (12 m)

Conclusion (4.0 Minutes)

1. Final Exhortation – “Share Your Coat” (Ray Van Der Laan teaching)

Prayer & Transition (2.0 Minutes)

1. Prayer - *Don’t aim for the tasks of giving and sharing; rather, aim for the attitude!*
2. Lead to Song of Response “How Great is Our God” – Dan Villalobos

Next Element (x.0 Minutes)

1. ?The Lord’s Supper

Value-Added Options:

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**Sermon – Love Moves Love [1 John 3:11-18]** – 35 minutes (42.5 allowed)

###### TRANSITION & INTRODUCTION – 4.0 minute

1. Children are dismissed to the care of our Redemption Kids team – by Dan as I enter

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Greeting & Scripture Reading:

1. Good morning! Please open your Bibles to this morning’s Scripture found in the first letter of the Apostle John, Chapter 3, verses 11-18. [Pew Bible, p\_\_\_\_]
   1. ***11****For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.*

* 1. ***12****We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous.****13****Do not be surprised, brothers,[*[*c*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+John+3&version=ESV#fen-ESV-30576c)*] that the world hates you.****14****We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death.****15****Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.*
  2. ***16****By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.****17****But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?****18****Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.*

Context:

1. ***11****For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning…*
2. This morning, our series of teachings from 1 John officially transitions from “Radiant” to “Radiant Love”; from the first half of John’s first letter to the second half of John’s first letter…
3. In our exploration so far, we’ve discovered that:
   1. It is possible to experience abundant friendship with God.
   2. God is light; and in Him is no darkness.
   3. It’s possible to not love God, but love the world, + thus be in direct opposition to Him.
   4. All truth is discerned through Him; and falsehood is found apart from Him.
   5. When we live in “falsehood” – or “sin” - Jesus provided for our Substitute Punishment for our confessed sin and serves as our Advocate before a throne of Grace.
   6. And, once we submit to His authority and are adopted by God the Father, we can be confident of His abiding love.
   7. Even as the Spirit of the Living God exhorts us and empowers us to practice right living as a reflection of that right relationship.
4. Phew! All that truth in just a few short weeks!
5. And, it is from those essential patterns and truths about God that John transitions to looking at essential practices of God’s people – those truths applied.
6. ***11****For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another*
7. For the Apostle John does not speak in politically correct terms. He makes it clear that:
   1. You are either loving God and living for Him OR
   2. You are not living for God and, therefore, are setup against Him because you don’t really love Him.
   3. There is no safe middle ground; no “neutral zone”. [PAUSE]

Prayer of Transition:

1. There are a lot of directions that I can take this teaching this morning… a lot of truths to unpack… with the conviction of the Holy Spirit, I may humbly share some nuggets that have to potential to make us uncomfortable… yet, the weight of the truth of the Word is a heavy weight… and so I genuinely ask you to pray with me as we bow our heads and speak to Our God – who has his ear inclined to hear us even as He gets ready to speak…
2. Would you simply repeat after me while I pray?
   1. *“Heavenly Father… Speak to our hearts… and change our lives”. Amen.”*

**MAIN BODY – Encouragement #1: Align our hearts with love & life – not hate and death. [1 John 3:12-15] (13m):**

1. My first encouragement for us this morning is that we should “Align our hearts with love & life – not hate & death”.
2. In verse 12, the Apostle John uses an approach to teaching that might resonate with some of the lawyers and MBAs in our congregation today. In his attempt to help us understand what it is like to “love one another”, he offers us a case study on what it is NOT like.
3. *“We should not be like Cain…”*
4. Because Cain, he says through vs 15, is the exact opposite of how we should demonstrate “love”.
5. Time will not allow me to fully read the original account found in Genesis, chapter 4, but you may find it helpful to turn there while I offer a brief synopsis of this familiar story:
   1. After the Fall in Genesis 3, we are told that **Adam and Eve** became parents of several children, including **Cain,** the firstborn, and **Abel**, speculated to be his twin brother.
   2. **Both** were industrious – Cain worked the ground; Abel managed livestock.
   3. Having heard the stories of the Garden of Eden, **both** acknowledged God and responded by bringing an offering from the first results of their labors – Cain from his fields; Abel from his flocks.
   4. The Scriptures do not fully and specifically declare “why” but God apparently “received” Abel’s offering yet was **displeased with Cain’s**.
   5. In response, Cain became **angry** with God – to the point that God saw the condition of Cain’s heart and warned him that sin was **“crouching at the door”.**
   6. The story continues and in his **rage**, Cain **murders** his brother Abel in the fields by slitting his throat – like you might slit the throat of an offered animal sacrifice.
   7. God, who knows everything, **curiously asks** Cain about Abel’s whereabouts.
   8. It is here that Cain answers with the deceitful and now famous words,
      1. “*I do not know; Am I my brother’s keeper*?”.
   9. The **implication** for any hearer of the story is
      1. “Yes. Yes, you are… Yes, you are your brother’s keeper”.
   10. As a just **consequence** for his violent act of death, God **expels** Cain and sets him on the path of a **lifetime of wandering**.
   11. Yet, even as He **pronounces judgment**, God tempers his pronouncement with **mercy** and somehow marks Cain with some sign of protection that no one else should attack him – even as he leaves and settles in Nod, east of Eden.

## As this classic story is recounted, I think that the potency of sin… the viciousness of a heart that rages… is plain to see…

## In the face of violence and terrorism and trajedy today, I often hear the question,

## “What’s wrong with everyone? Why can’t we all just get along?”.

## Since the Fall of Man and the brokenness that followed, the answer pointed out in this story and throughout God’s revealed Word is simple – it’s SIN – a rebelliousness against God and His original intentions.

## As Cain’s heart condition swelled with jealousy and rage, God warned him of the power of sin left unchecked – it is “crouching at your door” like a predator animal waits to spring on its prey.

## It can abide.

## It has a shadowy presence.

## It stays with you.

## If affects you.

## If fed, it becomes easier and easier to release it to manifestation with the ultimate manifestation of “death” – for we know that we reap what we sow.

## I like what Pastor Tim Keller says,

## “You start by doing sin, then sin does you.” [Pause]

## In one of his sermons of his that I read recently, he reminded me that “crouching” is a means of keeping down and getting out of sight. If you don’t see something dangerous, you’re dead, right? If you are not aware… If you don’t see where you’re vulnerable… you are easy prey, right?

## Tim Keller puts it this way: “What that means is the worst things in your life, the character flaws and the sins in your life that are most going to ruin you or are ruining you or are going to make the people around you miserable are the things, the character flaws, you will least admit. They’re the ones you’re in denial about, you rationalize, and you minimize. Whatever consequences that happen to you, when someone brings them up, you rationalize them.” OUCH!

## What is “crouching” in your life? [Pause]

## Sometimes, it super obvious to everyone – even you.

## Sometimes, it can be a bit more subtle.

* 1. Maybe even easy to deny…

## The story of Cain + Abel certainly is brutal; yet there is some subtleties here to see also.

## Both brothers appear to be hard-working – one as a farmer; one as a shepherd.

## Both brothers are religiously active – even to the point of bringing an offering to God.

## In fact, both brothers apparently bring the first fruits of their particular labors.

## And, yet somehow, these similarities result in different outcomes – God favors Abel; but rejects Cain’s offering.

## Let’s look at the subtlety: Genesis 4:3 tells us that “in the course of time, Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground, and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions.”

## For a keeper of livestock, your income, your wealth, your earning potential over time is based on what?.... producing more livestock, right? One lamb can lead to more lambs; one calf can lead to more calves… and so on… A flock is developed from the loins of few few over time, right?

## So, what might be the safest path of offering and generosity? To wait a while after the firstborns of your flock is born and see how many offspring are produced. Wouldn’t that make sense? Wouldn’t that be good business decision-making? After all, it wouldn’t be good forecasting and planning if I sacrifice my firstborn livestock. What if my flock only produces two or three offspring in the course of the year? The sacrifice of the firstborn could have a really negative effect on more overall income that year… Unless….

## Unless, my confidence in the production of what I need to live is not in my ability to produce income but in the one who is my Ultimate Benefactor. The One who gives all that I need – even the insight, strength, and resources to shepherd my flock wisely.

## Therefore, to offer my firstfruit livestock may seem like a bad business decision but it definitely testifies to my faith in the One Who Provides – namely, God our Father.

## This type of giver, this type of worshipper… is one who is open-hearted… full of joy… demonstrating trust… living by faith… which pleases God.

## This type of giver is not calculating; like I suspect Cain was. For Cain, the farmer could see the harvest that had come in and determine “his fair share”. Despite disobeying God’s clear command that an animal be sacrificed as an offering, Cain took it upon himself to determine what would be his offering and then give it from a place of calculated abundance and self-sufficiency; not faith. The form of the offering was there but… not the spirit of the offering as God intended.

## And so the Bible tells us: “…the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, but for Cain and his offering he had no regard.

1. Even then, God – in His mercy – gave Cain (history’s first murderer) a choice for God is not in the business of dictating our decisions. Even though Cain was “against” God (because you are either “all in” for God; or therefore, “against” God), he was in a bit of denial.
2. How do we know? He practiced religion.
3. Still, in that self-deception, Cain chose to be a slave to his darkened heart. And as that slave, the Apostle John says that Cain was “of the evil one” who BTW is the Master of Deceipt.
4. The first evidence we see is an offering in direct disobedience to God’s instructions.
5. The second evidence? The jealous, bitter, angry murder of his brother Abel.
6. Despite the religious externalities performed, the hidden root and true condition of his own heart was revealed.
   1. Darkened Heart – Disobedience – Evil – Hate – Murder – Death all stand in solid alignment with “the world” – all people, institutions, and systems that operate “opposed” to God.
   2. Grace-filled Heart – Obedience – Goodness - Love – Generosity – Life - all stand in solid alignment with Who-God-Is…
7. And, therefore, the Apostle John in 1 John 3:13 says… Christians shouldn’t be surprised when “the world” opposes the life, patterns, + attitudes that mark the lives of Christ-followers. Rather, we should expect it + then counter the hate with godly choices made.
8. And so, the Word of God seems to say, each of us has a choice to make.
   1. Where does our heart align?
   2. What we do with that choice is up to us.
   3. It has consequential impact – eternal as well as “on this side of eternity”.
9. For each of us, the movement from the heart of Cain to the heart of Abel (whom God called “righteous”) starts with the recognition of the true condition of our sinful heart… our inability to overcome “crouching sin” on our own… and a submission to God’s love, Christ’s sacrifice, and the Spirit’s transforming power in our lives.

**[Pause]**

1. My prayer for us this morning is that each of us will take an honest look at our own hearts and then align our hearts with God’s love and rich life, certainly not sinful hate that leads to death.

**MAIN BODY – Encouragement #2: Act on professed love & cultivate Gospel generosity. [1 John 3:16-18] (12m):**

1. My second encouragement is “Act on professed love & cultivate Gospel generosity”
2. Beginning in verse 16, John puts it this way:
   1. ***16****By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.****17****But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?*
   2. ***18****Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.*
3. We are to “put our money where our mouth is”. Walk the Talk. Not speak empty words. In short, develop a level of generosity that indicates a heart that full of God’s love. To fail to act is to simply “be religious”.
4. The premium emphasis here is on ACTION, not verbal piety.
5. Reading this Scripture got me thinking… How could I help us this morning “take action”? What next steps might I recommend to someone who hears this message and wants to move towards acting on the love that they’ve experienced from God? How can we actively cultivate vitality in greater generosity?
6. So, this being the year 2017, I’m going to offer you 17 specific, actionable ideas for cultivating a spirit of generosity and then taking a step towards releasing His love motivated by His love. Some may be little steps forward; some may be giant steps forward. None are intended to produce guilt or conflict or pressure. Rather, I hope, they will be practical examples that you can leave here today and possibly follow – even as you grow in the grace of Gospel generosity.

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17 ways to cultivate Gospel Generosity:

1. You should first start by cultivating Gospel Generosity with God.
   1. In verse 17, the Apostle John says that the only way that we can really understand love to begin with is through the life-giving, love-sending sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary offered for us as a sacrifice for our deserved punishment. We love because he loves; we give because He gives. Gospel generosity starts with the Gospel. And so, if you really desire to cultivate a generous heart, you must surrender your “heart of Cain” and receive the “heart of Abel” first. This is God’s generosity in action!
   2. Keep in mind, that John’s reading audience was a Christian audience. His exhortation for generosity, while useful to any hearer, is specifically targeted to followers of Jesus who are filled with the living Spirit of God and thus empowered to live an authentically giving life.
   3. Everything else that I share with you from list is a distant second step if you haven’t taken this first most crucial step of faith.
2. Then, you could begin cultivating Gospel generosity personally with some attitude development.
   1. Prayerfully answer the question: “How much is enough?”
      1. This question is one of the most powerful questions that I’ve ever asked myself and been able to equip young people with. It has life altering impact once answered in consultation with God in prayer.
      2. Consider the fact that not everything that has been placed in your hands is for you.
      3. As I’ve gotten older, my answer to this question has actually gotten smaller…
   2. Consider frugality.
      1. This isn’t to say that God’s people should be cheap but…
      2. We are to be stewards or managers of what God entrusts to us.
      3. Exercising care with spending and choosing wisely can be a way of preserving funds in order to share them with someone else.
      4. Is there anyone here who has ever woken up in January and regretted their spending for Christmas? Yeah… me too. Hey, let’s fully embrace Advent but let’s not go “crazy” this Christmas.
   3. Choose simplicity.
      1. There is a relationship between simplicity and generosity.
      2. Oftentimes, the things that we own – the “stuff” – has a kind of weight or heaviness on us.
      3. I remember hearing a man on the radio years ago who lamented buying a complicated swing set for his children. After reading the instructions, he discovered that the manufacturer recommended a maintenance schedule of tightening nuts and screws after every few months of usage because they would loosen. He was an engineer so he calculated how many minutes per year he would spend tightening nuts and screws. I forget the exact calculation but it was quite a lot. And, in his mind, the swing at the local park became a simpler and more attractive alternative. His time became freer and his funds become more available for another choice.
      4. BTW – there are a number of gospel traditions that celebrate the spiritual discipline of simplicity with as much fervor as we celebrate other common spiritual habits (like prayer).
   4. Released what’s stored.
      1. As we consider simplicity, we may encounter “stuff” that we own. A lot of what we store has lost its utility to us and yet we hold it tight.
      2. Last year, Teresa and I sold our home of 25+ years to move to Medford.
      3. It took us months to clean out our attic! I had to hire 2 teenagers to help me.
      4. I don’t see myself as a “hoarder” but the evidence was there that I do “hold”.
      5. Memories? Sure. Junk? Some. Valuable to Others? For sure. Moths? Wasted.
3. After examining some underlying personal attitudes, you could begin cultivating Gospel generosity within the local church - “brotherhood” is defined as those “adopted by God”.
   1. Gather & Seek opportunity.
      1. Simply put, if you are not present when the church of Jesus Christ comes together for worship, then you are not able to “see” when your brother is in need.
      2. On the most simple level, come with greater consistency so that you can know what opportunities to bless another brother or sister exist.
      3. If you come regularly, great! But come early, leaving enough time to fully engage others rather than rush into the theater out-of-breath after the service has started. Plan on lingering afterwards too.
      4. So often, our willingness to be generous with others is frustrated by our lack of time invested to develop that relationship. Sunday mornings are a great and convenient time to engage each other as the Body of Christ.
   2. Connect with a Group:
      1. You hear us say that the opportunity for a different level of community is discovered by those who join a Group that meets regularly.
      2. Listen to this story about my dear friend Elizabeth who was part of a Group at my last church.
         1. Tough times – emotionally, spiritually, financially
         2. Despite being hardworking – she had major issues with transportation and no real foreseeable solution on the horizon.
         3. One night, on her birthday, she dragged herself to her Group’s gathering where her Group presented her with the SUV shown in the picture above.
         4. It appears that this group of young families, with mortgages, and tons of kids had heard her heart-ache and decided to not only pray for her but to act. For months, they pooled their money (money “they didn’t have”) and shopped for a car. On this night, they gave her the keys to a pre-owned Ford Explorer. Wow!
         5. [Later, as she got back on her feet, she was able to give away this vehicle to someone else in need, so the Group’s generosity was multiplied]
      3. This matches the vision that we have for living together in community here at RHC.
      4. Truth is, we spend very little money for benevolence in member care from our church budget; not because we are stingy but because our Groups form a place for mutual care. Now, we don’t guarantee a car if you go but… we do have a vision of caring for one another.
      5. BTW - Maybe the biggest reason that you need to be in a CG is not to be the recipient but to be in a place where you can hear need and identify opportunities for your generosity to be expressed? (Just saying)
   3. Serve with a Team:
      1. You could consider accountable commitment to generous acts of service that benefit other attenders in the life of this church.
      2. For example, if you like generosity that feels anonymous, you could decide to join our Venue Team. These individuals serve once-per-month, arrive either at 7am before the service to setup or stay at 12pm after the service to Tear Down.
      3. And, everyone listening to me this morning has received the benefit of their quiet labor. [Ask them to stand; applaud them]
      4. [If you want to learn more, see \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ after the service]
   4. Give with increasing maturity:
      1. I’m going to be direct and challenge each of us to give generously back to the church so that more people would come to know Jesus and so that the church can grow in greater health.
         1. If you’ve never given, then give a first gift.
         2. If you’re an inconsistent giver, then make giving a more regular practice.
         3. If you’re a casual giver, then decide to give a percentage of your income.
         4. If you’re a left-over giver, then make choices about your lifestyle to give more.
         5. If you’re an unfocused giver, then set goals based on “how much should I keep?”, not “how much should I give”.
4. Once we have developed generosity towards our brothers in the church, you could begin cultivating Gospel generosity outside the church - “brotherhood” is defined as those “made in the image of God”. Here’s 8 rapid fire ideas to get your juices flowing…
   1. Map your neighborhood.
      1. Find out who you live near; first and last name; learn their stories; meet their needs.
   2. Join a SERVE Medford effort.
      1. We just finished purchasing and delivering 110+ Turkey meals – personally delivered.
      2. 2018 will have lots of opportunities to meet very specific needs within our community – done as an identifiable Body of Christ.
   3. Support the efforts of another community organization.
      1. Our dream in SERVE Medford is to not just physically do every good deed imaginable ourselves but to “model” and “catalyze” service to others.
      2. Identify + work alongside someone doing good work, worthy of your time & money.
   4. Go on a Short-Term Mission Trip.
      1. So often, some activity is to give and serve others directly or through the local church.
      2. In Montreal, our team of 5 represented Jesus, RHC, and Renaissance Church, when we went to a Men’s Homeless shelter and helped to do a Canadian Thanksgiving dinner. [BTW – we’ll reveal a full range of opportunities for STMs in 2018 soon]
   5. Support a general cause of mercy.
      1. Alleviate hunger; advocate adoption; engage poverty; distribute water.
   6. Sponsor a specific child.
      1. Jemima – love her; love Haiti - 6 yrs – education – committed for life – now in will
   7. Pursue mercy in specific crisis:
      1. SBC Cooperative Program – Disaster Relief – I’m proud!
   8. Earn More; Give More
      1. Earn to Give - Tanner’s Quote: 11/05/17 – *“If anyone is going to have money, why not followers of Jesus who can do something positive in the kingdom with it?”*
      2. Release your spiritual gift; run your business or profession but with a goal of giving.
5. True love is manifested in sacrifice personally and generosity to others…
6. How did John put it? ***17****But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?*
7. Right Heart + Right Generosity = Worship God!
   1. Converse: Wrong Heart – Right Generosity DOES NOTE EQUAL Worship God!

**CONCLUDING THOUGHTS & PRAYER (4.0 minutes):**

1. Recently, I heard an illustration taught by Ray Van Der Laan (That the World May Know)[[1]](#footnote-1).
   1. Jewish man – dusty road – on way to village
   2. long distance – end of day – tired – heavy pack
   3. Saw – coming towards him – 2 Roman soldiers
   4. He knew the law; that he could be told to carry any pack being carried by a Roman soldier for up to 1 mile in any direction
   5. He was going to have to carry their packs – and in the wrong direction to make it worse – no place to hide – acted old and tired – but to no avail.
   6. *“Jew”* – one of the soldiers cried – *“Carry my pack”.*
   7. So, he laid aside his pack trying to hide it and hoping that his pack would be there when he returned.
   8. Shouldered one pack; then the other; Headed out in the opposite direction.
   9. As they walked, they laughed at him – his dress; strange customs; humiliation.
   10. *“Hey Jew… If I wanted your house, would you give it to me?”*
       1. Wearily, he said, *“Yes, I’d give it to you.”*
   11. *“Hey Jew… If I wanted your money, would you give it to me?”*
       1. Nodding immediately, he said, *“Yes, I’d give you my money.”*
   12. *“Hey Jew… If I wanted your coat, would you give it to me?”*
       1. The Jewish man stopped and he looked at the soldiers…
       2. *“No… I wouldn’t give my coat”*
   13. Surprised, the Roman soldier said, *“You’d give me your house… and your money… but you wouldn’t give me your coat?”*
   14. *“A coat”,* said the Jewish man, *“… I have!”* [Pause]
   15. I think that most of us really do go through life with good intentions.
       1. We like to think of ourselves as generous, good-hearted people.
       2. Full of care and compassion; willing – at least in our own minds – to provide for those who are less fortunate.
       3. And yet, despite the good intentions, when it comes to the “Coat I Have”, there are often reasons that we quickly cite as to why we can’t…
   16. My prayer for us this morning, is that we love one another, not as Cain postured his act of love, but love erupting from a heart that has been transformed… one that chooses love & life over hate and death… and puts into action and deed those intentions – with abundance and joy and sacrifice.
   17. In other words, “May we love one another generously in response to the sacrificial love of Christ”.

[Let us pray]

**PRAYER & TRANSITION (2.0 minutes):**

Prayer & Transition (1 Minute)

1. Transition – Let’s Us Pray: *Heavenly Father, …*
   1. Heavenly Father,
      1. We thank you for your love… a love so generous that you gave us your best… even when our hearts were stingy in reverence back…
   2. Lord Jesus,
      1. We thank you for your love… a love so courageous that you laid down your life… even when our minds chased after so many other substitute gods…
   3. Spirit of the Living God,
      1. We thank you for your love… a love so deep that you are able to fill the hearts of every person… even when our attention gets so easily distracted.
   4. This morning, we bow and ask that you would help each one of us in our weakness.
      1. Help us to not aim for the tasks of giving and sharing…
      2. Help us to not be owned by money or “stuff” in our lives
      3. Help us to trust your provision.
      4. Help us to hold with an Open Hand.
      5. Help us to love our Brothers & Sisters beyond mere words.
      6. Because they are family and made in your image.
      7. And, I pray that this very week, You will bring many opportunities into our lives for generosity to others as acts of faith and worship.
      8. Help us to respond with the kind of love that our Jesus so often demonstrated.
2. Lead to Song of Response “*How Great is Our God*” – Dan Villalobos
   1. Let us stand and sing together….

1. “Share Your Coat” video devotional by Ray Van Der Laan - Click [here](https://mandrillapp.com/track/click/30581597/www.thattheworldmayknow.com?p=eyJzIjoiNmJjejFQVFJTdzdnSlhNRDN3OXJ3SFBpd3prIiwidiI6MSwicCI6IntcInVcIjozMDU4MTU5NyxcInZcIjoxLFwidXJsXCI6XCJodHRwczpcXFwvXFxcL3d3dy50aGF0dGhld29ybGRtYXlrbm93LmNvbVxcXC9kZXZvX3NtYXJ0X2xpbmtcIixcImlkXCI6XCIwY2Q3NTZkNjI0NzM0NWRiYWUzNzk3OWIzNDUzMjQ2NFwiLFwidXJsX2lkc1wiOltcIjIzNTNlYTBhOWQ4NDJjNDUxODY2YzU1Mzg0ZjNlNmRhYjM1NzMzZWZcIl19In0) to watch it now. [PastorJohnReddy@gmail.com](mailto:PastorJohnReddy@gmail.com) – Sputum77 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)