**I’m with You**

**(Matthew 5:13-16)**

**Yearly Theme: *“Love Does…”***

**Series Title: *Love Does***

**September 29th, 2019**

***Something to think about:***

Over the past 9 months we’ve been in a process of discovering what love does and what love doesn’t do by looking at Paul’s definition of love in 1 Corinthians 13, and though we’ve scratched the surface of what love is we’ve not really talked about who love is and what love does. So, starting today, and over the next several weeks, we will be exploring the nature of love in its essence and in its actions.

Describing the very nature of God, the Apostle John (one of Jesus’ 12 disciples) writes:

***1 John 4:16 (NLT),***

***We know how much God loves us, and we have put our trust in his love. God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them.***

Now, out of the very essence of that love, God gave of Himself through His Son Jesus…

***Matthew 1:18-25 (NLT),***

***18  This is how Jesus the Messiah was born. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit. 19  Joseph, her fiancé, was a good man and did not want to disgrace her publicly, so he decided to break the engagement quietly.***

***20  As he considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. “Joseph, son of David,” the angel said, “do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. 21  And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”***

***22  All of this occurred to fulfill the Lord’s message through his prophet:***

***23  “Look! The virgin will conceive a child!***

***She will give birth to a son,***

***and they will call him Immanuel,***

***which means ‘God is with us.’”***

***24  When Joseph woke up, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded and took Mary as his wife. 25  But he did not have sexual relations with her until her son was born. And Joseph named him Jesus.***

Now, what does Love/God expect of us?...

***Matthew 5:13-16 (NLT),***

***13  “You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless.***

***14  “You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. 15  No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. 16  In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.***

So, how can we love others? We can love others the way God loved us: We need to be present.

**Key Point: “*Just as God is present with us, we need to be present with others.*”**

How can we be present with others? Well, we can be present with others by…

1. **Being available.**

*Matthew 1:23 (NLT), “Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel, which means ‘God is with us.’”*

1. **Being salt.**

*Matthew 5:13a (NLT),“You are the salt of the earth.*

1. **Being light.**

*Matthew 5:14 (NLT), “You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden.*

***Something to take home:***

So, what’s the final take away? What’s the point to today’s message in practical application? Well, we must *do* love in order for love to be *real* in our daily living. And, the Apostle John gives us the best example of this…

***1 John 3:16-17 (NLT), 16  We know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters. 17  If someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need but shows no compassion—how can God’s love be in that person?***

In addition, John goes on to write…

***1 John 3:18-19 (NLT), 18  Dear children, let’s not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions. 19  Our actions will show that we belong to the truth, so we will be confident when we stand before God.***

So, here’s your homework assignment for this week: *Take one hour between now and next Sunday and be fully present with someone in need. Allow the ministry of presence to be your act of love in someone else’s life. Shut off your phone, computer, and all electronic devises and be fully present with them: heart, soul, mind, and strength. Don’t focus on you, focus on them. Don’t try and fill the air with useless words. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide your conversation, and learn to truly listen.*

**Key Point: “*Just as God is present with us, we need to be present with others.*”**