

August 20th, 2023

LOVE IS THE BRAND

Love is the Brand – Week #3 “Passing the test: Loving those we don’t want to hug.”

A brand is a product, service or concept that is publicly distinguished from other products, services or concepts so that it can be easily communicated and usually marketed.

So as followers of Jesus, LOVE is this concept and action that is the brand of our faith that points others to Christ.

Our vertical love for God shows up in our horizontal love for others.

1 See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!

“Adults that were unloved as children have a difficult time forming attachments, they develop and display more mental health issues, they have lower self-esteem than their counterparts, and they significantly struggle with trust and boundary issues within their relationships with others.”

Lavished characterized by great abundance, luxury, or extravagance

1b The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

⁴ Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness.

2 Corinthians 5:21: God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

⁶ No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him.

1 Corinthians 6:9-10 ⁹ Or do you not know that the unrighteous^[a] will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

We pass the test of loving those we don't want to hug by first foundationally being connected to Christ

⁷ Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. The one who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous.

⁸ The one who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work. ⁹ No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in them; they cannot go on sinning, because they have been born of God.

¹⁰ This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not God's child, nor is anyone who does not love their brother and sister.

We pass the test of loving those we don't want to hug by walking in the light so we can abide in HIM

¹¹ For this is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another.

"The proof of our vertical love for God is our horizontal love for our neighbor" -**Tony Evans**

Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brothers were righteous. ¹³ Do not be surprised, my brothers and sisters, if the world hates you. ¹⁴ We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love each other. Anyone who does not love remains in death. ¹⁵ Anyone who hates a brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him. This is how

we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.

¹⁷ If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? ¹⁸ Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

We pass the test of loving those we don't want to hug when what our lips proclaim is supported in our life

¹⁹ This is how we know that we belong to the truth and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence: ²⁰ If our hearts condemn us, we know that God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. ²¹ Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God ²² and receive from him anything we ask, because we keep his commands and do what pleases him. ²³ And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. ²⁴ The one who keeps God's commands lives in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit, he gave us.

19-24 (MSG) And friends, once that's taken care of and we're no longer accusing or condemning ourselves, we're bold and free before God! We're able to stretch out our hands, and receive what we ask for because we're doing what he said, doing, what pleases him.

Again, this is God's commandment, to believe in his son, Jesus Christ. He told us to love each other, in line with the original command. As we keep his commands, we live deeply, and surely in him, he lives in us. And this is how we can experience His deep and abiding presence in us, by the spirit that he gave us.

Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.