

## That's Amore

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 13: 1 – 8 & 13

Fifth Sunday of Lent - 3/26/23

Let me start with a story: A minister afforded a class for newly marriage couples or for couples who are thinking of getting married soon. Antonio showed up and he had been married for 50 years. The minister thanked Antonio for coming but he said this class is for young couples or those couples thinking about getting married soon. Antonio said he knew that but he wished to stay. He said he could add to the discussion. During the class, the minister saw the opportunity to involve Antonio so he asked Antonio what was the secret to his 50 year marriage.

Antonio shared this – For their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary he took his wife back to Italy to see her family. It was a wonderful trip! Now he said he was going to go back and pick her up!

In your bulletin is a list of six types of different 'Love'. Let me give you a moment to define each type of 'Love'. Please do not take out your phones and Goggle them, I want to know how many different kinds of love you knew. Let me give you three minutes to do this.

If you are watching virtually, a list of these six different types of 'Love' will appear on the screen so that you can do the same thing.

Your three minutes starts now!

Here are the answers:

- \*Agape – unconditional love;
- \*Eros – romantic love;
- \*Philia – affectionate love or friendly love or brotherly love;
- \*Philautia (Phil-low-tia) – self-love;
- \*mania – obsessive love;
- \*and storge – empathy love.

How many did you know?

The highest form of LOVE is agape love; unconditional love and that is the type of love God has for us. Agape love is God's love.

A second story: On our bus trip through Europe some years ago we had a couple who was celebrating their 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. Our tour guide while riding on the bus from Florence Italy to Paris France, our tour guide, Kevin, introduced the couple and gave them a gift from the rest of us on the bus. The husband took the mic from our tour guide and spoke about how beautiful his life has been with his honey. He spoke about how their sixty years had passed by so fast with his dear wife. And how he was still so in love with his sweetheart. We all clapped!

At our next stop at a rest stop, I got off the bus to stretch my legs and so did this man. While walking around outside, I happened to speak with this man. I told him how wonderful his words were calling his wife 'honey', 'dear, and 'sweetheart'. The man looked around and then shared with me – 'I forgot her name 20 years ago!'

On that same trip in Venice Italy, I fulfilled one thing on my bucket list – I sang to my wife in a gondola ride. The song I sang to Sherri was originally sung by Dean Martin in 1953. Dean Martin sang it in the movie he did with Jerry Lewis. The movie was ‘The Caddy’. The song was nominated for an Academy Award but it lost. They put the song on the ‘B’ side of a 45 record. The ‘B’ side is the side of a 45 that you put a song that you think will not be a hit. On the ‘A’ side was ‘You’re the Right One’. They thought this song would be a hit but it was the ‘B’ side that became a hit. This song reached #2 on the Billboard Charts. The song is ‘That’s Amore’. I have asked Josh Fisher to sing the song for me – Josh ....

Thank you Josh! I hope you enjoy that fun song?

Our scripture reading today is the ‘Love Passage’. I have never done a wedding service without this being read. Let us look closely at this passage.

Here is a list of what love does not do: Love does not envy or boast. Love is not proud or rude or self-seeking. Love is not easily angered. Love does not keep a record of wrongs. And love does not delight in evil.

That is a pretty extensive list of things love does not do, but in my time in ministry, I have seen many of these ‘do not’ turn into things a couple would do to each other. The nation average in America is that slightly over 50% of all weddings end in divorce. What is going on here?

Think of that list of ‘do nots’. And one can see how hard it is to stay marriage.

Here are the things that LOVE is – love is patient and kind. Love rejoices in the truth and love always protects. Love always trust, hopes, and perseveres. Love never fails!

And in the end, these three things remain – faith, hope, and love; but the greatest of these is love! I printed these words in your bulletin so that we could read it together, let us do that - *And in the end, these three things remain – faith, hope, and love; but the greatest of these is love!*

Your fifth and final challenge of Lent is for you to find time to share with someone your love for them. I shared that I sang in a gondola in Venice my love for my wife by singing ‘That’s Amore’. You may not want to do something that ridiculous, but find a time of your choosing to tells someone you love them.

Let us pray:

O God, we thank you for your unconditional love. We thank you for your son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. His love for us took him to the cross to sacrifice his life for us, now that is agape love!

May we share this love with everyone we meet. May we become a beacon of hope and love for others to follow. AMEN.