

We should strive to be people who conduct (word and deed) ourselves appropriately towards all people...

...pursuing treating others as people, not as problems

...pursuing treating others the way God would have us, not the way the world would have us

...pursuing treating others the way we would want to be treated, not the way we may be treated by them

...pursuing treating others appropriately even at great cost to ourselves, not at great cost to them

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A Theology of Disagreement
No. 8 | Love and Disagreement

Selected Scriptures

Review

A Theology of Disagreement

We can disagree about what **is** (reality).
We can disagree about what it **means** (interpretation).
We can disagree about what is **right** (righteous).
We can disagree about what is **best** (wisdom).
We can disagree about what we should **care** about (values).
We can disagree about what we should **want** (desires).
We can disagree about what we are **okay** with (submission).

- A disagreement is a situation in which two parties do not have the same opinion.
- A disagreement occurs, most observably, because no two parties are exactly the same and both parties are naturally morally corrupt.
- A disagreement may not initially be morally consequential or result in immoral conduct between two parties.
- A disagreement may also start out immorally by one or both parties, and proceed quickly to conflict or a range of other relationally-charged actions.

Unity and Disagreement

How does love contribute to our understanding and handling of disagreement?

To what degree does love operate in all our (matters of) agreement and disagreement? To what degree *should* love operate in both?

truth
unity
love

What is love?

God is love.

^{ESV} **1 John 4:7** Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.

^{ESV} **1 John 4:9** In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Love is complex.

ESV **Matthew 6:24** "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.

ESV **Matthew 10:37** Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

ESV **Matthew 22:37** And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸ This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰ On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

ESV **Matthew 23:5** They do all their deeds to be seen by others. For they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long, ⁶ and they love the place of honor at feasts and the best seats in the synagogues ⁷ and greetings in the marketplaces and being called rabbi by others.

ESV **John 10:17** For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again.

ESV **Hebrews 12:5** And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. ⁶ For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives."

Love is good-seeking.

ESV **Luke 6:27** "But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.

ESV **Luke 6:31** And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them. ³² "If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them.... ³⁵ But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil.

We are loving beings.

ESV **John 3:19** And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil.

ESV **John 5:42** But I know that you do not have the love of God within you.

ESV **John 8:42** Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and I am here. I came not of my own accord, but he sent me.

ESV **John 14:15** "If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

ESV **2 Timothy 3:2** For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, **3** heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, ⁴ treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of

God, ⁵ having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.

ESV **1 John 2:15** Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world- the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions- is not from the Father but is from the world. ¹⁷ And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

How is love related to disagreement?

We have a responsibility to love others.

ESV **Romans 13:8** Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹ The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁰ Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

We have a responsibility to express love consistent with what love does.

ESV **1 Corinthians 13:1** If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ² And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. ³ If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. ⁴ Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant ⁵ or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶ it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸ Love never ends.

We have a responsibility to grow in love.

ESV **Philippians 1:9** And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰ so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, ¹¹ filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

We have a responsibility to endure in love.

ESV **1 Peter 1:22** Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, ²³ since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; ... **4:8** Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins.

ESV **1 Peter 2:16** Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God. ¹⁷ Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.