

## Love: Form or Content

3/4/2007

Last week we started looking at Gods “Most Excellent Way”, which is His love in us and His love through us to others.

Love is the core of life.

God who is love created us out of love, to be loved and to love.

You can't take God's love out of life and live.

- It's like taking color of the rainbow
- Sweetness out of sugar
- Words out of a book/Letter out of the alphabet
- Sauce out of Joe Senior's spaghetti

God says without love we have nothing.

In our love for God and our love for one another God wants us to understand the difference between Form and Content.

### Form is:

- Outer appearance
- The packaging/Hype/Advertising
- What we look like on the outside/How we act/What we say

### Content is:

- What's on the inside
- The real value
- The heart of the issue
- Without the content the form is worthless

Demo- Example: Cereal Box

- One has hype
- One is transparent
- Which could you take
- Is there anything wrong/immoral about the form = no

As long as what's inside matches what was told to you outside. Otherwise the form was deceptive.

Is the form necessary: yes: to hold the content.

But the content must be true to form!

Example: Plastic Fruit

Counterfeit money

Not real food

No value as money

All form and no content

We have been created by God who is a relationship  
Father, Son, Holy Spirit  
The three in one

And the content of this relationship is Love.

We have been created by a God of relationship who is love, to be in a relationship of love with him and in relationship of love with others.

Our relationships have form with God- example: our prayer/devotional time

There is a time frame = form

Word-read and spoken = form

There is worship-music has notes=form

Form is needed, but God is looking for Content=our hearts.

Receiving love from-returning love to him, using the form as a vehicle of expression.

So I can give Him the form: time, words, music but without the content –  
Love from my heart:

- It is empty
- No value
- Even deceptive

The bigness or amount of the form doesn't impress a relationship looking for love

How much time

Better to spend 10 minutes in a love exchange with God then 2 hours reciting rote prayers  
with no heart/no love.

Our church family is a multiplication/magnification of our individual love relationship with God.

Our church family has form- time, routines, rituals, traditions.

We meet in cells, discovery classes, Sundays, Tenderhearted, prayer.

If we triple the amount of time and things we did God would not-by itself, be impressed.

The core/content is what He is looking for: relationships of love – toward Him 1<sup>st</sup> and then to one another.

At CFFI the form is intended to promote relationships and grow us up in love.

- *Ephesians 4:15-16*

Without relationships of love we are just practicing dead religion.

We are warned of their end time characteristic:

- *2 Timothy 3:1-5*
- A perversion of “love” turned inward to self instead of outward toward God and others.
  - But here is the deception- they will have a form.
  - But without the content = love, there will be no power
- Without love there is no power in religion to save, heal, deliver
  - Without love in our relationship with one another there is no power to be the people of God. God will protect, provide for and use to fill the earth with His glory.
  - Without love our prayers are powerless
  - Without love our worship is worthless

Our society is out of control with form and desperately void of content

It emphasizes packaging and outer appearances more than character and morals.

As Christ followers we are to not to follow the way of the world.

Spending more time, money and energy on fashion/clothes, cosmetics, hairstyles than on developing our content in Christ - more time in the mall than in the word maturing. Maturing in a love for God and a love for one another.

Our homes/families have form but must be filled with content of relationships of love.

Father and Mother need not increase the outer forms of family, but the inner content of love for one another.

If you spend priority time fixing up the house, buying stuff, being busy rather than making spending time together your priority, connecting hearts and developing your love for one another then you're into form not content.

Watch out!

- *1 Corinthians 16:13-14*

Forms are dangerous to rely in because forms change but love never changes.

If you're into form your liable to be fickle-unfaithful in your love.

In marriage/dating-man/woman relationships

- Attraction to form without content most often spells certain failure.
- Attraction to looks can be fatal
- Looks change dramatically with age.
  - Without content we stoop to all sorts of devices to keep the form attractive, look young, attractive, fit out of fear of rejection or getting thrown away.
  - As my wife and I get older our form is changing but our content is solid – our love for one another

- ⊃ Men get bureau disease: hair on their head doesn't stop growing it just goes underground and comes out there ears and nose.
- ⊃ Women get softer.

If you're into form you liable to throw away the old dented one you've got for a new shiny/solid model.

When form without content becomes the priority then sex loses its significance as an expression of true love.

Without love people have sex with the form not the person. (body)

Without love there is no respect for other people or God.

Sex becomes self love, self gratification - using other peoples forms/bodies at their expense for my benefit.

It happens in marriage. Connecting forms without connecting hearts.

Without love in the equation it's easy now to change forms to continue self gratification.

So it's easy to move to:

- Masturbation
- Pornography
- Other partners of the opposite sex
- Even other partners of the same sex

It's just another form.

Love has nothing to do with it.

Self gratification is the standard.

We however are not to be people of form but people of content.

We are called to love! Love God love others!

- Love is not about me, it's about you.
- Love isn't about what I can get but what I can give.
- Love isn't built on fickle frail changing forms but on the character of God that never changes!

One of the greatest promises in the Word of God is of His faithful love!

- *Joshua 1:5*

And so God who is a relationship, who is love calls us into relationships with others to love them with His love.

- *John 13:34-35*

All men will know.

The content will come through the form – transparent.

And others will know by experience the love of God.  
They'll see it, feel it and be impacted by it.

There's a world of people who don't know this love yet, but are dying for His love.  
Their outer appearance/their forms are:

- Repulsive, deceitful, ugly, and angry.
- They appear hard, cold, disinterested, and distrustful.
- They have a show of wealth and knowledge. Are arrogant, self confident, prideful, strong, impenetratable, and religious.
- They may be dripping in diamonds or covered in dirt.
- They may be wearing vomit or velour, robes or rags
- They may be the picture of health or reek of disease
- Mr. discipline or Mr. Drug addiction
- Miss universe or Miss used
- After their name they may have a PHD or ADD

But inside/their content, their heart is:

- Empty and scared.
- In darkness and bondage.
- In hurt and pain.
- Weak and vulnerable.

And they are waiting/ desperately longing for someone with the real deal.

To not come with a different form to change their form but really love them, past their form/outer form.

In spite of what they see: deep into their heart.

Someone who will wrap their arms around them and let them know "I really love you", "I love you just the way you are" and deposit in their heart an experience of Gods powerful love in Christ.