

# UNWRAPPED

GOD'S GREATEST GIFT REVEALED

Sunday, November 27, 2022

## Unwrapped: God's Greatest Gift Revealed

### "Hope"

Speaker: Dr. Brian Bennett

#### Notes:

##### Unwrapped: "Hope"

[Romans 15:1-13]

Hope grows when I am not the \_\_\_\_\_

[Romans 15:1-3]

- Eyes up, not on self, to see Jesus and what He sees.
- Desiring to make a difference, not amplify our differences.

Hope grows when we spend time \_\_\_\_\_ the Bible

[Romans 15:4]

- What is consistent in life? Generational challenges, victories, and the faithfulness of God.

Hope grows when we press into Jesus' \_\_\_\_\_, not the problem

[Romans 15:5-7; Mark 3:24; 1 Peter 2:9]

- Problems can create a "piranha pit" or "one people" filled with praise

Hope grows when it is \_\_\_\_\_ in the Gospel and \_\_\_\_\_

[Romans 15:8-13]

- Believers are to be \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ with the Holy Spirit's power and hope.

#### Next Step Questions:

- Where is your focus this Christmas season? On "Christ" or the "mas"?
- How could you commit to learning (and living) more of the Bible this next year?
- Will you press into Jesus, and the power of the Holy Spirit, in this season to share the hope of the Gospel with others?

## **Next Step Questions:**

1. How is God at work in and around your life?
2. What are some of your favorite Christmas memories? How does the business of the Christmas season tend to cause us to lose focus?
3. How would you rate your current level of hope (1 to 10)? Why?
4. Read Romans 15:1-7. What stands out to you in these verses about the hope we have and the role of the Bible in that?
5. How do these verses call us to put our faith, and hope, in action?
6. Read Romans 15:8-13. What does the Gospel and Gospel community mean according to these verses? What role does the Holy Spirit play in this and with the hope that we have?
7. How did you answer the next step questions from the message?
8. How can we pray for you and support you this week?

# UNWRAPPED

## GOD'S GREATEST GIFT REVEALED

Sunday, December 4, 2022

### **Unwrapped: God's Greatest Gift Revealed** **"Faith"**

Speaker: Dr. Brian Bennett

#### **Notes:**

##### **Unwrapped: "Faith"**

[John 6:16-21; John 3:1-17]

**The \_\_\_\_\_ of our faith determines our \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_**

[John 6:16-21]

- Faith is not a feeling but does change our feelings.
- Faith cannot be seen but does become known by our actions.

**Faith is strengthened in our \_\_\_\_\_ with Jesus**

[John 3:1-15]

##### **Nicodemus' faith grew through defining moments:**

- By \_\_\_\_\_ to Jesus (John 3:1-15)
- By \_\_\_\_\_ up for Jesus (John 7:50-52)
- By \_\_\_\_\_ on behalf of Jesus (John 19:38-40)

##### **What did Jesus' define for us that is meant to define us?**

- "Born again" (John 3:3)
- "Kingdom of God" (John 3:3)
- "Eternal life" (John 3:15)

**Faith in Jesus leads to a life \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_**

[John 3:16-21]

#### **Next Step Questions:**

1. How is God at work in and around your life?
2. What is your favorite part of the Christmas season and why?
3. What are some ways we wrap up our life, and feelings, to avoid being real with others?
4. How does the object of our faith change our feelings and outcomes? Read Hebrews 11:1-6. How does this further explain this point?

5. What do you think about the way Nicodemus faith grew (see message notes)? How have you seen your own faith grow?
6. What does it mean to live by faith and bring everything into light? What does this quote mean to you?
  - “At the moment of their call Jesus showed up their sin and made them aware of it. Complete truthfulness is only possible where sin has been uncovered and forgiven by Jesus. Only those who are in a state of truthfulness through the confession of their sin to Jesus are not ashamed to tell the truth wherever it must be told...Nothing is then hidden, everything is brought forth to the light of the day” (Dietrich Bonhoeffer).
7. How did you answer the next step questions from the message?
8. How can we pray for you and support you this week?

# UNWRAPPED

GOD'S GREATEST GIFT REVEALED

Sunday, December 18, 2022

## Unwrapped: God's Greatest Gift Revealed "Peace"

Speaker: Dr. Brian Bennett

### Notes:

#### Unwrapped: "Peace"

[Isaiah 9:1-7; Luke 2:13-14; Colossians 1:15-20]

#### The light of Jesus reveals what is \_\_\_\_\_ and brings peace (Shalom)

[Isaiah 9:1-7]

- Jesus isn't a peacekeeper; He is a \_\_\_\_\_.
- Jesus is the "prince of peace" and His "reign" is \_\_\_\_\_.

#### Jesus' birth was peace (Shalom/Eirene) breaking through to make our \_\_\_\_\_ possible

[Luke 2:13-14]

- Praise precedes breakthrough and isn't \_\_\_\_\_.
- Peace is a gift for those Jesus \_\_\_\_\_.

#### Jesus offers us peace (Shalom/Eirene): with God, with \_\_\_\_\_, and with \_\_\_\_\_

[Colossians 1:15-23]

- Jesus' peace isn't just the absence of \_\_\_\_\_ it is the presence of \_\_\_\_\_.

### Next Step Questions:

Have you received Jesus the "prince of peace"?

What area of your life is broken and needs His peace (Shalom/Eirene)?

Who do you need to be a peacemaker with this week?

### Next Step Questions:

1. How is God at work in and around your life?

2. What are some of the ways you are tempted to avoid opening the deeper gifts God has for you? (See example from giftboxes and whiteboard in message).

3. When you hear the word "peace" what comes to mind? How is "Shalom" and "Eirene" deeper and broader in its meaning?

- Discuss this quote: “In the Bible, shalom means universal flourishing, wholeness, and delight—a rich state of affairs in which natural needs are satisfied and natural gifts fruitfully employed, a state of affairs that inspires joyful wonder as its Creator and Savior opens doors and welcomes the creatures in whom he delights. Shalom, in other words, is the way things ought to be” (Cornelius Plantinga)

4. Read Isaiah 9:6-7. How does this speak to the gift of peace that Jesus’ brings into our world? Explain.

5. Read Colossians 1:15-23. How does Jesus offer us peace with God, with ourselves, and with others? Where do you need peace today?

6. How does the example of kintsugi and this quote speak to Jesus’ peace?

- “Seeing the redemptive act of God, the ultimate act of Christ’s sacrifice on the cross of Calvary, through the lens of Creation and the Holy Spirit’s work awakens in us the potential of the New Creation. The example of Kintsugi captures, and enlarges, the promise. The Christian gospel, of the Good News, begins with the awareness of our brokenness” (Makoto Fujimora)

7. How did you answer the next step questions from the message?

8. How can we pray for you and support you this week?

# UNWRAPPED

GOD'S GREATEST GIFT REVEALED

Sunday, December 25, 2022

## **Unwrapped: God's Greatest Gift Revealed "Joy"**

Speaker: Dr. Brian Bennett

### **Notes:**

#### **Unwrapping: Joy**

[Luke 2:10-12; John 15:7-11]

Luke 2:10-12

**Jesus is the \_\_\_\_\_ gift that brings \_\_\_\_\_ for all people**

**Jesus is our \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_**

John 15:7-11

**\_\_\_\_\_ in Jesus fills us with joy**

- A daily personal relationship with Jesus is our greatest gift
- Joy comes as we "abide" by trusting, praying, and obeying

### **Next Step Questions:**

Are you abiding in Jesus and letting Him fill you with joy?

Will you share the joy of a relationship with Jesus someone this Christmas?

Have you unwrapped the gift of Jesus as your Savior and Lord?

### **LifeGroup Discussion Questions:**

1. How is God at work in and around your life?
2. Read Luke 2:10-12. How has Jesus been your savior and Lord?
3. Have you ever considered Jesus as someone joyful? How does this change your perception of Jesus?
4. Read John 15:9-11. What does it mean to "abide" in Jesus according to these verses?
5. Look back at how you lived in 2022. Were you abiding in Jesus or something/someone else? How was your joy level in 2022?
6. Who could you pray for today that needs the good news of Jesus' and the joy He gives us? When will you share it with them?

7. How did you answer the next step questions from the message?

8. How can we pray for you and support you this week?

# NEXT STEPS FOR GROWING



Practical Application Insights and Exercises



*series: october 2 - november 27*

## passionate: winning at love



song of solomon



**RATED PG-13**



**PATHWAY**  
CHURCH



# Welcome and Table of Contents

Welcome to our "Passionate" series and Next Steps for Growth booklet. Marriage is one of the most beautiful and challenging aspects of life. Someone once said that marriage is not about our "happiness", but our "holiness". God no doubt has designed marriage to be something that blesses us with a greater intimacy not just with our spouse, but with Him. As we work through our brokenness in life we find new healing and freedom. The contents of this packet are designed to follow-up the Sunday messages at Pathway during this series with practical insights and exercises to help us grow into new levels of freedom in our relationships.

A note to those that are single. The "Passionate" series is such an important series for you too. Jesus design for marriage is ultimately modeled after His design for His bride, the Church (Ephesians 5). As you learn what it means to love and live in surrendered and servant relationships you too will experience growth in your walk with Jesus and others.

We are praying for breakthroughs and blessings through this series and packet. May God bless us with passionate love in our marriages!

Better Together,  
Pastor Brian

## Weekly Next Steps for Growth: Practical Application Insights and Exercises

|                                   |                              |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| "The Circle of Love" (p. 3)       | noted in message on 10/2/22  |
| "The 5 Love Languages" (p. 4)     | noted in message on 10/9/22  |
| "The Types of Love" (p. 5)        | noted in message on 10/16/22 |
| "2 Chairs" (p. 6)                 | noted in message on 10/23/22 |
| "Top 5 Love and Sex Needs" (p. 7) | noted in message on 11/6/22  |
| "Fighting Fair" (p. 8)            | noted in message on 11/13/22 |
| "Servant Hearted Lovers" (p. 9)   | noted in message on 11/20/22 |
| "Who is in Control?" (p. 10)      | noted in message on 11/27/22 |

## Next Steps in Your Journey:

*"The Circle of Love" by H. Dale Burke (Different by Design)*

Take a moment with your spouse to consider what 1-2 items on this list your spouse is doing well. Encourage them. What one item could they work on the next few weeks? Pray together over this next step.

If single, what about this diagram encourages you the most and what challenges you most? Who can you share this insight with. Take time to pray over how God wants to grow you in how you relate to others.

### *He Feels Loved*

She respects

She trusts

She supports

She accepts

She admires

She gives more respect



He gives more care

He sacrifices

He nourishes

He cherishes

He honors

He understands

### *She Feels Loved*

## Next Steps in Your Journey:

*"The Five Love Languages" by Gary Chapman*

Take a moment to rate yourself 1 to 5 on each item below. What sounds like most you? Share your top two with your spouse. How can you encourage them and work on this together? Pray together over this next step.

If single, what are your top two love languages? Who can you share this insight with and how can God use it to work in your current relationships? Pray over this today.

### **Rate 1 to 5**

- |                         |                                      |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Words of Affirmation | [Not really] 1 2 3 4 5 [That is Me!] |
| 2. Quality Time         | [Not really] 1 2 3 4 5 [That is Me!] |
| 3. Receiving Gifts      | [Not really] 1 2 3 4 5 [That is Me!] |
| 4. Acts of Service      | [Not really] 1 2 3 4 5 [That is Me!] |
| 5. Physical Touch       | [Not really] 1 2 3 4 5 [That is Me!] |

## Next Steps in Your Journey:

### *"The Types of Love"*

Take a moment with your spouse to consider which type of love has been the strongest in your relationship? Encourage them and then discuss what you would like to see grow in this next season. Be sure to focus on the foundation friendly love and spiritual love build for physical love (don't just jump too physical love). Where would you place yourself on the triangle? What could you do to move closer to God and each other? Pray together over this next step.

If single, what about this diagram helps you to consider how God grows and builds a relationship? Who (using the triangle below) in your life could serve the same purpose (maybe through a connect group or mentor)?

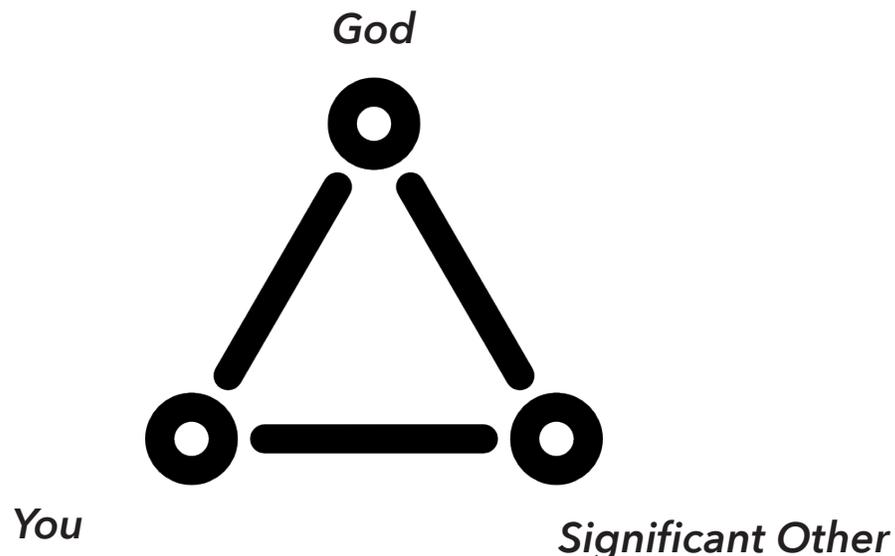
### ***Types of Love:***

Physical  
Friendly  
Spiritual

### ***Biblical Love (Greek words):***

Eros  
Philo  
Agape

### ***Triangle Diagram:***



## Next Steps in Your Journey:

### *“Two Chairs: Communicating Un-spokens”*

*One way for couples to move past this roadblock in their marriage is to get into the habit of regularly sharing what authors, Drs. Les and Leslie Parrott, call “withholds” (“Un-Spokens”). Withholds (“Un-Spokens”) are thoughts and feelings, both positive and negative, that spouses either intentionally or unintentionally keep to themselves rather than sharing with their partners.*

*When done in a safe, appropriate manner, sharing withholds can be a healthy and effective means of resolving conflict and improving communication. The Parrotts suggest the following ten-minute exercise for couples to use when sharing withholds (“Un-Spokens”):*

1. Ask your spouse at an appropriate time, “Would you like to share withholds (“Un-Spokens”)?”
2. Each spouse writes down two positive withholds (“Un-Spokens”) and one negative withhold (“Un-Spoken”).
3. One spouse begins by sharing one of their positive withholds (“Un-Spokens”) (e.g. “I really appreciated how you took the time to help me clean the kitchen last night.”)
4. The same spouse shares their negative withhold (“Un-Spokens”) (e.g. “I was really hurt when you teased me about my sleeping habits in front of our friends on Saturday.”) Each spouse should focus on using “I” statements and avoid accusatory “you” statements.
5. That spouse finishes by sharing their second positive withhold (“Un-Spokens”).
6. The receiving spouse can only respond with “thank you” to each withhold (“Un-Spokens”) shared.
7. The other spouse then shares their three withholds (“Un-Spokens”).

**Note:** *It is also a good practice to alternate from one spouse to another sharing a positive, negative, positive as well. Couples can determine what works best for them as an approach.*

8. After both spouses have taken their turn, the couple can discuss the positive withholds (“Un-Spokens”) that were shared but not the negative ones. Negative withholds (“Un-Spokens”) can be discussed only after thirty minutes have passed since they were originally shared (this protects couples from “reacting” to the negative withholds (“Un-Spokens”) and instead thoughtfully responding).

This small exercise allows husbands and wives to improve communication and increase intimacy by talking about conflict in a calm, non-threatening environment. When couples learn to discuss conflict in this setting rather than in the heat of the moment, hurtful words and actions that have the potential to leave long-term scars can be minimized.

***Two Chairs for 10 minutes for a good marriage and two chairs for 20 minutes for a great marriage.***

## Next Steps in Your Journey:

*Take a moment with your spouse to consider what 1-2 items on each list your spouse is doing well. Encourage them. What one item could they work on the next few weeks? Pray together over this next step.*

*If single, what about these lists encourages you the most and what challenges you the most? Who can you share this insight with? Take time to pray over how God wants to grow you in how you relate to others. Reminder: We do believe sex and intimacy is blessed by God in marriage and encourage you to abstain until marriage if single.*

### **\*Men's Top 5 Love Needs**

1. Unconditional Love
2. Intimacy–Sex
3. Companionship
4. Encouragement
5. Spiritual Connection

### **\*Women's Top 5 Love Needs**

1. Unconditional Love
2. Intimacy---Talk
3. Spiritual Intimacy
4. Encouragement
5. Friendship

### **\*Husband's Top 5 Sex Needs**

1. Mutual Satisfaction
2. Connection
3. Responsiveness
4. Initiation
5. Affirmation

### **\*Wives' Top 5 Sex Needs**

1. Affirmation
2. Connection
3. Nonsexual Touch
4. Spiritual Connection
5. Romance

\*By Dr. Gary & Barb Rosberg

## Next Steps in Your Journey:

### *How to have a "fair fight" and resolve conflict\**

Take a moment with your spouse to consider what 1-2 items on this table represents your typical approach to conflict in your relationship. What changes could you make together with your next conflict? What one item could you personally work on the next few weeks? Pray together over this next step.

If single, what about this table encourages you the most and what challenges you most? Who can you share this insight with. Take time to pray over how God wants to grow you in how you handle conflict with others.

#### **Focus on:**

One issue

The problem

Behavior

Specifics

Expression of feelings

"I" statements

Observation of facts

Mutual understanding

#### **Rather than:**

Many issues

The person

Character

Generalizations

Judgment of character

"You" statements

Judgment of motive

Who's winning or losing

*\*Family Life Weekend to Remember Conference Manual*

## Next Steps in Your Journey:

### *"Servant Hearted Lovers"*

*Take a moment with your spouse to consider what 1-2 items on this list your spouse is doing well. Encourage them. What one item could they work on the next few weeks? Pray together over this next step.*

*If single, what about this list encourages you the most and what challenges you most? Who can you share this insight with? Take time to pray over how God wants to grow you in how you relate to others.*

#### **\*As a Servant-Wife, She...**

1. Respects
2. Trusts
3. Supports
4. Accepts
5. Admires

#### **\*As a Servant-Husband, He...**

1. Sacrifices
2. Nourishes
3. Cherishes
4. Honors
5. Understands

*\*By H. Dale Burke (Different by Design)*

## Next Steps in Your Journey:

### *"Who is in Control?"*

*Take a moment with your spouse to consider what 1-2 items on this list your spouse is doing well. Encourage them. What one item could they work on the next few weeks? Pray together over this next step.*

*If single, what about this table encourages you the most and what challenges you most? Who can you share this insight with? Take time to pray over how God wants to grow you in how you relate to others.*

#### **Self**

Seeks to control spouse, not adjust to spouse

Reluctant to lead/honor, help/submit

Is demanding, self-focused, emphasizing "my rights"

Passes or rejects responsibility

Criticizes and accuses

Yields to temptation through moments of immorality and unfaithfulness

Confuses priorities, needs, and wants "impulsive" wants

#### **Holy Spirit**

Guides according to the will of God

Helps one to lead/honor, help/submit

Seeks the best for both husband and wife

Promotes Biblical priorities

Encourages forgiveness and understanding

Brings God's word to mind in crucial

Clarifies priorities and discerns needs & impulsive wants

**Take the inventory. Who is usually in control of your life?**