

IT'S SIMPLE

- * Sometimes we look and life and think..."Man, things sure are complicated these days!"
- * In some ways modern life has become much more difficult to navigate!
 - Technology
 - Social Media
 - 24-hour News Cycles
- * All of these modern issues have to some degree complicated life and relationships!
- * BUT, for the most part, the "human condition" has stayed the same!
 - We want to be accepted
 - We want to be loved
 - We want to be valued

I. Magnolia's mission statement is pretty simple: **Love God and Love People!**

A. After being asked multiple questions by the Pharisees and Sadducees, Jesus described things in pretty simple terms!

1. After discussions about acceptance
2. The governments relationship to our faith
3. Paying taxes
4. Interpersonal relationships and theology

B. Jesus responds with a simple life principle for all Believers!

Matthew 22:34-39 (NIV)

34 Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. **35** One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: **36** "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" **37** Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'" **38** This is the first and greatest

commandment. **39** And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.

1. Loving God with everything in you!
2. Loving others the way you love yourself!

II. What does this “loving God with everything in you” look like?

A. According to the “rules of language” scholars agree that Jesus was saying, “Love God with everything you got!”

Psalm 103:1-4 (NIV)

Praise the Lord, my soul;
all my inmost being, praise his holy name.
Praise the Lord, my soul,
and forget not all his benefits—
who forgives all your sins
and heals all your diseases,
who redeems your life from the pit
and crowns you with love and compassion.

1. As we read the Genesis account of creation, it seems that God created us for fellowship with Him!

Psalm 139:1-7, 13-16 (NIV)

You have searched me, Lord,
and you know me.
You know when I sit and when I rise;
you perceive my thoughts from afar.
You discern my going out and my lying down;
you are familiar with all my ways.
Before a word is on my tongue
you, Lord, know it completely.
You hem me in behind and before,
and you lay your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,

too lofty for me to attain.
Where can I go from your Spirit?
Where can I flee from your presence?
For you created my inmost being;
you knit me together in my mother's womb.
I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
your works are wonderful,
I know that full well.
My frame was not hidden from you
when I was made in the secret place,
when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.
Your eyes saw my unformed body;
all the days ordained for me were written in your book
before one of them came to be.

2. Jesus put a "face on God" and revealed to us His thoughts about us and His dealings with us! The life of Christ explains God to us!!!

Hebrews 1:3 (NIV)

The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

3. That is why we should join with Paul as he expressed to us the **goal of life!**

Philippians 3:10 (NIV)

I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.

- B. This is why we should love God with everything in us!! Because He first loved us!!!!

III. From this place of loving God is where we express our love for others!

Romans 13:8-10 (NIV)

Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others 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 whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” **10** Love does no harm to a neighbor.

A. I have noticed over the years that as believers we simply do not trust the ability of the Holy Spirit of God!

1. Are we the “spiritual police” or are we “Ambassadors for Christ”?
2. Are we sent to “straighten people out” or to love, serve and minister to people?
3. Ask yourself this question: “Who loves people more? You or God?”
4. Obviously, God loves people with a perfect love! So we are extensions of His love and of Who He is to people!

Colossians 3:12 (NIV)

Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

Ephesians 4:2-3 (NIV)

2 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. **3** Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

B. As we attempt to love those around us, let’s remember what Paul said to the Corinthian Church.

1 Corinthians 3:10 (NIV)

By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should build with care.

1. Many of you have **laid the foundation** of ministry at Magnolia!
2. Please know.....today, you are honored and appreciated!!
3. Presentation of "Generational Covenant".

C. An incredible expression of the Gospel by a loving Savior has been laid at Magnolia!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

1. Love and acceptance
2. A refusal to be judgmental and legalistic
3. A safe place for all who seek to live a life of faith as a disciple!

D. As we love God with everything in us and then respond in love toward others from our commitment to Christ.....

the future of Magnolia is BRIGHT!

This is our identity:

John 13:35 (NIV)

By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."