**SGA Message Talkback**

**Learning to Love in the Family – Pastor Matt Gaw, February 7 2016**

Message recording at http://southgatealliance.net/past-messages/

Prepare to watch video on sympathy and empathy <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Evwgu369Jw>

Or youtube, “Brene Brown on Empathy”

Circle of influence – I want to expand this talk to be more than family but also anyone you interact with closely and regularly, including family, school or work. We call this your “circle of influence”.

1. Recognize that relationships are messy
   1. What messy relationships are in your life? Try not to gossip here, but identify (without names) relationships that you feel are complicated, time and energy consuming. Who do you find you lose patience for the most?
   2. Are there people in your life that you have special grace for (or vice versa) because you love them dearly? Describe these relationships.
   3. Who needs more special grace from you?
2. Seeing each other as enemies or allies

We often view people we have conflict with as an enemy. The way we define this relationship affects how you approach the conflict. If you are enemies, you will seek to win, even at their expense. If you are allies, you will work cooperatively to find a win/win solution for both sides.

* 1. Who in your circle of influence as an enemy instead of an ally? Why and how did it get that way? How has it affected your relationship? How do conflicts go? How can you get into being allies with them? How can God redeem this relationship?
  2. Describe a conflict with an ally and how that was different than an enemy.

1. Understanding each other

Watch the video on empathy

* 1. Would others describe you as a good listener? How can you improve?
  2. What happens more in your family? Sympathy, empathy or apathy?

Committing this part of 1 Corinthians 13 to your heart and memory can help put your love from God for others into perspective.

*Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.*