

Love - Part 2

1 Corinthians 13:6-7

Introduction

1. In the last lesson we discussed several things from 1 Corinthians 13 that love will NOT do.
2. In that same chapter Paul also shows us many things that love will do and which make love what it is.
3. Consider the following points and see if you have of love in the things that you do.

Discussion

I. Positive Characteristics of Love (1 Corinthians 13:6-7)

A. Love rejoices in the truth:

1. Part of the reason that love is so important to the Christian is because God is love (John 4:16).
2. Every action of God toward man stems from love His love for us.
3. At the same time, nothing that He does contradicts truth.
 - a. God cannot lie (Titus 1:2).
 - b. When God makes a covenant He will never break it (Palm 89:34). He upholds truth.
 - c. All of God's work is done in truth (Psalm 33:4).
4. Therefore, since God is the epitome of true love, when we have that same love we will rejoice in the truth because it is from God; it is His word (John 17:17).
5. One preacher noted, "Love never violates scripture, love never argues for 'extenuating circumstances, situation ethics, or the ends justifies the means.' Love always sides with the truth." (Dunagan)
6. When it comes to choosing between the emotionalism of men and the word of God, true love will rejoice in the truth of God's word.
7. Not matter how hard it may be, if we have love we will always speak the truth (Eph. 4:15).

B. Love bears all things:

1. There is nothing love cannot face. "When love is in my life I can handle, and I can deal with properly and effectively the sins which fellow Christians happen to find themselves enslaved to." (Dunagan)
2. If a person truly has love for others then they will be able to bear all things for the sake of those people:
 - a. When sinned against love forgives (Matt. 6:12, 14-15; Prov. 10:12).
 - b. When mistreated, love still desires the best (Matt. 5:43-48).
 - c. Love bears (without giving into) temptation; it is obedient (John 14:15).
 - d. Mature Christians must bare some of the "scruples" of weaker Christians for conscience sake (Rom. 15:1-3).
 - e. Love bears the burdens of its neighbors (Gal. 6:2).
 - f. Just as Jesus bore the cross so we must bear our cross daily in these things thereby proving our love for God and for all mankind (Luke 9:23).

3. Remember, love puts the other person first! When we have love we can bear all things because our own ego is not our concern (Phil. 2:3).

C. Love believes all things:

1. Always eager to believe the best; believes what is good.
2. First and foremost love believes the word of God!
3. Also, “When love has no evidence to the contrary, it believes the best about its fellow man, it refuses to yield to unfolded suspicions and doubts” (Willis. Pg. 459).
4. This means when we think someone has done something wrong we get all the facts before making accusations or handing out judgment (no matter what a person may have done in the past).
5. If love does not believe all things then it would be impossible for us to forgive our brother “*seventy times seven times*” (Matt. 18:21-22); God would not be able to forgive us in this way either.
6. We have patience after the first or even the second time, but beyond that only love can believe all things in the absence of evidence.

D. Love hopes all things:

1. To hope all means that we will not despair when times are hard, or uncertain. It is a hope centered in God. Because I believe the Bible I know people can change, I know people can repent, I know that unity is possible; I know that marriage can work.
2. “Because hope loves all things the Christian is not allowed to despair, become cynical or pessimistic.” (Dunagan)

E. Love endures all things:

1. This is similar to “bearing all things”, but it adds a sense of longevity to that; It is patient while bearing all things.
2. Notice the progression made here:
 - a. Love bears all things,
 - b. But when combined with believing all things as well as hoping all things,
 - c. Love will be able to endure while patiently waiting for the best.
3. It means that we are able to work through all things without giving up. “*And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart*” (Gal. 6:9).
4. True love continues to do good while it is enduring. Love is not lazy; otherwise it would not be able to accomplish all these things.
5. Such is a necessary element in any brother to brother, parent to child, teacher to student relationship.
6. Only when we have this love will we be able to be patient with the shortcomings of others as we all strive to come to the unity of the faith (Rom. 14:19).

II. “Love Never Fails”

A. In the previous lesson we learned that with out love anything we do is useless therefore love is essential to our spiritual lives.

1. Remember, we are not talking about the “mushy” love or that warm feeling you get about a person.
2. The love that we are talking about is what makes us do what is best for other people, even when we do not feel like it, or do not want to.

- B. When a house is built it will stand for several years, but over a long period that house will eventually crumble and fall.
1. Even so, a love that is based solely upon feelings will only last for a short while.
 2. But *agape* love is one that “never fails.”
 3. When we love a person like God loves us then that love will never crumble and fall like an old house. Even when we are not as happy as we could be, we will still other people.
 4. True love is everlasting. It is necessary because even when everything around us fails, love is what keeps us going; it will be with us in eternity.

Conclusion

1. No quest or adventure imaginable in this life is more noble, more worthy, more rewarding than our efforts to understand and to practice the love of Christ.
2. “For in time or in eternity there will be nothing greater, nothing better, nothing more glorious than love” (Erdman).
3. Read Ephesians 3:14-19: Many people seek to understand the Bible, to understand God and Christ. But only when we strive to put on the love of Christ will be able to understand these things. Only when we strive to empty ourselves and seek these things will we be able to comprehend the true nature of God.
4. This is only possible in Christ. If you desire these things they can be yours if you put your faith in Him and obey His truth on love. Will you come?

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