

Walking in Love Part 2 Loving others.

Ephesians 5 : 1-2. 1. Therefore be followers of God as dear children. 2. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.

Summary of last message.

Love. Agape love. Unconditional love not based upon feelings or emotion but on an act of the will. Christ's love for us was born out of His relationship with His heavenly Father.

Christ offered Himself.

As an act of Christ's will He presented Himself, Body, soul and Spirit to God, for God to do with Him as He pleased.

Christ sacrificed Himself.

As an act of His will He placed all of Himself on the altar of selfless living as a willing subject to go through the pain of being bruised, beaten, rejected, despised, humiliated, hated, misunderstood, misrepresented and finally killed, so that others may live through His death.

We are then instructed by Paul to imitate Christ in the way in which He loved us, and love each other in that same way. To love with an unconditional love not based upon feelings or emotion.

1/. Looking at Agape Love.

1 Corinthians 13 : 1-13. If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing. 4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5 It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. 8 Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part, 10 but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. 11 When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. 12 Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. 13 And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

Things to note.

1 a/. Agape Love is the highest level of Christian living that any human can attain too.



Paul makes a contrast between the use of the gifts and walking in love and highlights the correct place of Spiritual Gifts.

From 1 Corinthians 12 through to the end of 1 Corinthians 14 there is a great deal of information about the gifts of the Spirit, their uses within the body, their place within the body, our attitude towards them in the body and their importance within the body. In order for the body of Christ to function properly it must be using the gifts that God has placed at its disposal.

2 b/. We are to eagerly desire Spiritual gifts.

vs 31a. But eagerly desire the greater gifts. We are encouraged by God to desire the gifts. It is not wrong to want to be used by God in a supernatural way.

3 c/. Love is the greatest way.

Sandwiched between chapter 12 and chapter 13 is verse 31b. "Now I will show you a more excellent way". Paul goes on to compare the ability to operate in the Spiritual gifts, functioning in the supernatural power of The Almighty God, which is something that we are to eagerly desire to do, to the MOST EXCELLENT WAY. The life of LOVE. Love is the greatest of all the attributes of the christian life. When compared to all the other great attributes of the christian life, such as mountain moving faith, hope, spiritual knowledge, spiritual gifting and supernatural ability, love puts all other spiritual qualities in the box marked insignificant. To walk in the love of God is to fulfil the commandments of God.

Matthew 22 : 36-40. Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"
37Jesus replied: " `Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. 38This is the first and greatest commandment. 39And the second is like it: `Love your neighbour as yourself.' 40All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

2/. The source of this love can only be found God.

Romans 5 : 5b. , because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

1 John 4 : 19-21. We love because he first loved us. 20If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. 21And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.

2 a/. God has poured out HIS LOVE in our hearts. God's love is already in our hearts. It is not from ourselves. We can not manufacture it or hype it up. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God. God is love. We cannot get any more love than that which we already have within us.



2 b/. We are able to love because!

Never fall into the trap of thinking you are a good person because you are nice to people. "We love because he first loved us" Our ability to love the unlovable, is purely because of the presence of the Holy Spirit within us. (He can, and does love everyone)

The success of our whole Christian life style is dependant upon this love of God within us.

Romans 13 : 7-11. 7Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honour, then honour. 8Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. 9The commandments, "Do not commit adultery," "Do not murder," "Do not steal," "Do not covet," and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbour as yourself." 10Love does no harm to its neighbour. Therefore love is the fulfilment of the law.

We owe a dept.

Every one of us is in dept. Jesus has freed us from the dept that we owed brought about by our sin. We broke God's law. Now we owe a dept to love one another. This is God's new command for those who are His children. If we owe any other kind of dept to anyone, we must pay the price ourselves by putting it right.

Question: What depts do you have outstanding? Do you owe anyone an apology? Respect, honour, money, gratitude?

If we have an outstanding dept to someone other than that of love, then it is because we have been walking in the flesh.

The law of the Spirit produces life and peace. He enables us to walk in love. If we are disturbed by our emotions, feeling annoyed, resentful, bitter, rejected etc. because of something that someone has said or done, then we must be careful not to act upon them, but seek the answer from God as how to deal with the situation.

As we obey the leading of the Holy Spirit in us on how to speak and how to behave, we are at that moment, as Christ in this world. Perfect. (not that anyone can ever achieve life long perfection while on earth) For it is not I who live but Christ who lives in me.

2 c/. Our love for people reflects our level of Love for God.

1 John 4 : 7-8. Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. 8Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.



God loves people. The closer we get to God and the deeper our relationship is with Him will be evident by a sincere love for people.

Question : Do we want to Love people like Jesus loved us?

3/. How is this agape love for others developed in our lives?

John 15 : 12. "This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. 13. "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life (psuche) for his friends. 14. "You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.

As Christ loved us, so we must love each other. The Love of God that is already in our hearts can only be worked out in one way. Through our relationships with others. It is by presenting ourselves to God for His use and being willing to become a living sacrifice that we are then ready to learn how to love as Christ loves. There is no easy way to justify it. If we are not walking in love towards someone, it is because we are not dying to ourselves and living for God. For God is love.

Question : Spiritual warfare. What do we think it means to be "Spiritual"?

Praying, worship, bible study, fasting, giving to charity? You not going to be able to bring down kings until you can learn to defeat the pawns. Rarely does satan attack directly without any human involvement. 9 times out of 10 Satan will use people to attack you. By influencing people to do his will, to say or do something with or without their awareness of being used, he will seek to test your spiritual armour and exploit your weaknesses. That person you can't get on with, the one who makes you angry, the one who is rude to you, the one who speaks badly to you, the one who tells lies about you, the one who ignores you, the one who intimidates you , who criticises you, who ridicules you, the one who physically or mentally abuses you. This person is the one whom God has allowed into your life to bring out the Jesus in you.

Our measuring Stick.

1 Corinthians 13 : 4-8. 4Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 6Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. 8Love never fails.

Love is Patient. Long suffering. Is able to endure evil and provocation.

Question : Has anyone tried to deliberately get up your nose lately? Do you find yourself unable to love certain people because of the way they talk and behave?

love is kind. The greek word is a doing word. It refers to performing an act of good will towards someone. The act of being kind. It is talking about living the lifestyle of doing things to benefit others. This kindness seeks opportunity to do good and does not wait to be pressured into doing something by guilt, manipulation or sense of duty.



It does not envy, Is not jealous. Of others receiving undeserved blessings, jealous of their gifting, of their popularity, of their prosperity and possessions.

It does not boast, To display ones own greatness above another's. To try to impress others with your own experience or knowledge.

It is not proud. Self opinionated. Arrogant , Conceited. To think of oneself more highly than another.

It is not rude, does not act not unseemly, does not treat others badly, is not impolite, ignorant or bad mannered.

It is not self-seeking, It is not selfish. Thinks of others well being even at the expense of their own. Does not seek to enforce their own rights or own way but seeks only that which is in line with the will of God for others.

It is not easily angered, Is not irritable, touchy, fretful or resentful.

It keeps no record of wrongs. Makes no records of evil done to them, does not bear a grudge, does not bring up past misdemeanours in order to strengthen your case or make a point. Pays no attention to a suffered wrong. (not to be confused with the legitimate use of past experience to teach and encourage others)

Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It does not enjoy injustice or ungodly behaviour but delights when right prevails and truth is magnified.

It always protects, It believes the best of everyone, seeks to cover others faults and failings rather than expose them to others. Though we are free to tell others of their faults in private, we are not meant to put them on public display.

Always trusts. It is always willing to trust, though godly wisdom also allows for caution to be exercised when someones character has been proven to be dodgy.

Always hopes. If trust is brought into question then hope comes into play. Love always hopes for the best for others, knowing that we serve a miracle making God.

Always perseveres. Love will keep hoping, keep protecting, keep doing good, love will just keep on loving when all others have fallen away.

