

connecting carnality

1 CORINTHIANS

Sermon Series Notes



"The Love Chapter" (I Corinthians 13)

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Intro: I Cor. 13 seems on the surface to be out of place. Right in the middle of Paul's teaching on spiritual gifts, he interjects this section on love. It's kind of like an Oreo cookie. The cream is the center, and the center is love.

I. THE TEXT

12:31b The most excellent way is the way of love. Even though all the gifts of the Spirit were flowing in the church at Corinth, love was sorely lacking.

* Note: There are three words in Greek to describe love. Phileo is brotherly love; Eros is physical love; Agape is God's love. Agape is what was lacking in the lives of these Corinthian Christians. And it is lacking in the lives of many Christians in our day.

* II Tim. 3:1 But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days.

2 People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy,

3 *without love*

* Eph.3: And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love,

18 may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ,

19 and to know this love that surpasses knowledge--that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

* We get our English word "agony" from the Greek agape. It means the absorption of every part of a person's being in one great passion (John 3:16). The word has little to do with emotion; it indicates love which deliberately, by an act of will, chooses its object, and through thick or thin, regardless of the attractiveness of the object concerned, goes on loving continually, eternally. It is not affected by the worthiness or unworthiness of the one it loves.

vv.1-3 The supremacy of love (agape)

* Clang on a cymbal loudly; This is someone who has the supernatural gift of tongues, and exercises it publicly and regularly, yet because they lack love, all they accomplish is making a lot of noise.

* If I wow people with prophecy, impress people with my spiritual insight & knowledge, move mountains by faith, but lack love, in God's sight, I am nothing.

* v.3 is startling - it is possible to give all my possessions to the poor, even become a martyr for God, and yet miss the most excellent way. How can this be possible? Because this love involves more than sacrifice. It involves character. Not my character, but God's character.

* Character: 1828 Noah Webster Dictionary - The peculiar qualities, impressed by nature or habit on a person, which distinguish him from others; Oxford Dictionary - The collective qualities or characteristics, esp. mental and moral, that distinguish a person or thing.

* I John 4: 8 Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

vv.4-8a The characteristics of love

vv.9-11 Paul is not saying that the gifts are for children. He is once again stating the supremacy and permanence of love over the temporary purpose of the gifts of the Spirit.

v.12 This no doubt referring to the second coming of Christ (not the completion of the Scriptures).

* Prior to the 20th century, the common view among Bible scholars was that "perfection" refers to the second coming of Jesus Christ.

* I John 3: 2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

v.13 Faith, hope, & love remain

* Faith, hope, & love remain forever. The essence of faith is not the absence of the person trusted, but the emotion of trust which goes out to the person, present or absent. It is same with hope.

* " in the Bible eternity is presented to us as a continual communication of God whose beauty and glory and majesty are inexhaustible. The resurrected body, united with a redeemed spirit, is brought to live in the very presence of God with a progressive, increasing capacity to receive more and more of His glory. Every new height of glory scaled will reveal more wonderful heights beyond." (Redpath, p.179)

II. LESSONS IN THE TEXT

A. The Supremacy Of Love

* Agape is the GREATEST thing a person can possess!

B. The Character Of Love (Love's personality)

1. Is patient (long suffering)

- What tests your patience the most? Golf? Other drivers? Disney World with small children July 4th weekend?

- **Who** tests your patience the most? (Caereful on saying this one out loud!). Husband/Wife? Kids? Boss? Brother/Sister? Pastor?

2. Is kind

- Patience is passive endurance while kindness is active service.

- This is not kindness to those kind to you, but rather kindness to the unkind (Jesus to Judas, etc.)

3. Does not envy (sister is jealousy)

- Prov.14: 30 A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones.

- Prov.23: 17 Do not let your heart envy sinners, but always be zealous for the fear of the LORD.

4. Does not boast

- Roy Jones Jr.: I m pond for pound the best boxer in the world

- Muhammed Ali, etc.

- Note: Can you imagine Jesus, after raising Lazarus from the dead, strutting about saying, Who s da man, Who s da man?

- Ps.12: 3 May the LORD cut off all flattering lips and every boastful tongue

- Prov.27: 2 Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; someone else, and not your own lips.

- Prov.30: 32 "If you have played the fool and exalted yourself, or if you have planned evil, clap your hand over your mouth!

5. Is not proud

- Prov.6: 16 These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him:

17 A proud look

6. Is not rude

- Well mannered

7. Is not self-seeking

8. Is not easily angered

- Eccl.7: 9 Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, for anger resides in the lap of fools.

9. Keeps no record of wrongs

- Heb.10: 17 Then he adds: "Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more."

- Matt.18:21-22 (70x7)

10. Does not delight in evil

11. Rejoices with the truth

12. Always protects
13. Always trusts
 - I trust my wife
14. Always hopes
 - There is always hope with this love
 - Never says "There's no hope for you!"
15. Always perseveres
 - Endures all things
16. Never Fails
 - Marriages with this love as the foundation will never fail!

C. The Essence Of Love: GOD

- * I John 1:8 God is love.
- * His patience (II Peter 3:9, 15a; Gen.6:5)

D. Character Highlights

- * Patience/Longsuffering
 - Stumpy and Martha
- * Kindness
 - A little girl asked her mother, "How did the human race appear?" The mother answered, "God made Adam and Eve and they had children and so we now have mankind." Two days later the girl asked her father the same question. The father answered, "Many years ago there were these monkeys from which the human race evolved." The confused girl returned to her mother and said, "Mom, how is it possible that you told me the human race was created by God, and dad said it developed from monkeys. The mother answered, "Well dear, its very simple. I told you about my side of the family and your father told you about his."
- * Not easily angered/provoked
 - How to stay married
 - And that's how the fight started
 - Counseling, Minnesota style
- * Keeps no record of wrongs (Forgives, again and again)/Always protects.
 - 80 yr old couple

E. How To Possess This Personality

1. Receive

* I John 1: 8 Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

* I John 1:16 God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.

* John 1: 12 Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God--
13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

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

2. Remain

* John 15: 9 "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.

10 If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love.

11 I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

12 My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.

3. Repent