

PAUL'S FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS

LEARNING HOW TO BE A HEAVENLY CHURCH IN A GODLESS WORLD

1 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER 13:1-3

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THE TITLE OF THE MESSAGE:

LIVING THE LOVE OF GOD – PART 2

WHAT MAKES YOU A TRUE BELIEVER

SUBJECT TOPICALLY REFERENCED UNDER:

Love, Church, Gifts, Unity, Growth, Witness, God

Introduction to the Text

1st Corinthians 13:1-3

In a recent campus debate at Washington State, Apologist Ravi Zechariah was asked a question about the “Apparent decline of Christianity on the world scene”. Ravi’s answer was a good one - “It is true that - in the court of public opinion, Christianity has all but lost its appeal and is in a state of decline. This is due to the fact that believers have abandoned their posts whereas Christianity once stood in opposition against almost all of our modern day trends deemed acceptable. This however is an incorrect perception. It is not Christianity that is declining, it is what’s called the church today. It is the church that is associated with Jesus Christ and if the church no longer looks and acts and sounds like Jesus Christ - Then it must lose its influence - Death by apathy!

1 John 4:17

Love has been **perfected** among us in this: that we may have **boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.**

He Is – Current - Forever

John 13:34-35

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. :35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

And We're to be Reproductions of The Original

LIVING FOR THE LOVE OF GOD

The Preeminence of Love = Value

1 Corinthians 13:1-3

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. :2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

The Prerogative of Love = Virtue

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

:4 Love suffers long *and* is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; :5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; :6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; :7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

The Permanency of Love = Victory

1 Corinthians 13:8-13

:13 Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. :9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part. :10 But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away. :11 When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. :12 For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known. :13 And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

LIVING FOR THE LOVE OF GOD

WHAT MAKES A CHRISTIAN A DESPERATE PILGRIM IN THIS WORLD?

1.) Has His love awakened you?

v.1a

HAS HIS LOVE AWAKENED YOU?

1a.) Awakened you to the spiritual realm

1b.) Awakened you to the need for life

1c.) Awakened you to the love of Christ

**There's no greater motivation in the heart of man
and in reality - than Love.**

A. W. Tozer Writes:

“If something less than the agape (love) of God in Jesus Christ is the “animating” power behind our lives, then the Bible says that we are nothing.”

That is our total **Logos** (word), **Pathos** (passion) = **Ethos** (lifestyle)

LIVING FOR THE LOVE OF GOD

WHAT MAKES A CHRISTIAN A DESPERATE PILGRIM IN THIS WORLD?

2.) Have you responded to His love?

v.1b-2

LIVING FOR THE LOVE OF GOD

WOULD ASK US THIS QUESTION

HAVE YOU RESPONDED TO HIS LOVE?

2a.) By yielding to God's love willingly

:1b-2 ...but have not love, I have become **sounding brass** or a **clanging cymbal**.

:2 And **though I have** the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and **though I have** all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but **have not love, I am nothing**.

God is a Person. He is Personality and Relational.

In much of a degree, we are like Him – we love. We create. We desire. We feel. We know. We express.

We have been created by God to interface with God.

(The Eyewitness Accounts of Jesus' Earthly Ministry All Testify That When People Encountered Him – They Desired to Follow Him.

I Agree with what Ravi Zechariah has said about Apathy.
Apathy comes from a Jesus-Less Church.

Colossians 1:18

Jesus Christ is the head of the body, the church.

Love Burns Away Apathy if - Apathy Can be Shocked
into Looking at Love.

Yielding to God's love willingly presupposes that we see the need for Him

Mark 10:13-15

And they were bringing their children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. :14 But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, **“Let the children come to me; do not hinder them**, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. :15 Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.”

Our Response to this **Prevenient grace** or **Preceding Grace**
is all Rooted in His love for us.

Mark 7:31-37

Then he returned from the region of Tyre and went through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, in **the region of the Decapolis**. :**32** *And **they** brought to **Him** a man* who was deaf and had a **speech impediment**, and **they** begged him to lay his hand on him. :**33** And taking him aside from the crowd privately, Jesus put his fingers into his ears, and after spitting touched his tongue. :**34** And looking up to heaven, Jesus sighed and said to him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.” :**35** And his ears were opened, his tongue was **released**, and he spoke plainly. :**36** And Jesus charged them to tell no one. But the more he charged **them**, the more zealously **they** proclaimed it. :**37** And **they** were astonished beyond measure, saying, “He has done all things well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.”

32 And they brought to Him a man

John 6:44

No **one** can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise **him** up at the last day.

After 20 years of ministry I have come to conclude that

It doesn't matter how effective or well known a persons is, **without a personal experience of the love of God in their own private life** – there is not much real peace in their lives or even a lasting ministry.

Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, :**23** gentleness, self-control.

Jack 5:22-23

But where there is no love there will be no fruit of the Spirit - no love, no joy, no peace, no longsuffering, no kindness, no goodness, no faithfulness, :**23** no gentleness, no self-control.

Romans 5:5b

...God's love **has been poured** into our hearts **through the Holy Spirit** who **has been given** to us.



poured grk ejkce÷w ekcheo, ek-kheh'-o,
to gush out and flow over; a crescendo; to spill over with violence.

God has made a divine deposit into our hearts and lives.

John 7:37-39

On the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. :38 He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” :39 But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive;

HAVE YOU RESPONDED TO HIS LOVE?

2b.) By accepting God’s love personally

Manmade Religion Creates Obstacles to God

By the time the Roman Empire had Invaded Israel, Judaism had so removed the “**Person of the Messiah**” from the Scriptures and had replaced Him with traditions, human deeds and efforts – ***God saves those who save themselves!***

Hebrews 9:1-9, 19-22

Now the first covenant had regulations for worship and also an earthly sanctuary. :2 A tabernacle was set up. In its first room were the lampstand, the table and the consecrated bread; this was called the Holy Place. :3 Behind the second curtain was a room called the Most Holy Place, :4 which had the golden altar of incense and the gold-covered ark of the covenant. This ark contained the gold jar of manna, Aaron’s staff that had budded, and the stone tablets of the covenant. :5 Above the ark were the cherubim of the Glory, overshadowing the atonement cover. But we cannot discuss these things in detail now. :6 When everything had been arranged like this, the priests entered regularly into the outer room to carry on their ministry. :7 But only the high priest entered the inner room, and that only once a year, and never without blood, which he offered for himself and for the sins the people had committed in ignorance. :8 The Holy Spirit was showing by this that the way into the Most Holy Place had not yet been disclosed as long as the first tabernacle was still standing. :9 This is an illustration for the present time, indicating that the gifts and sacrifices being offered were not able to clear the conscience of the worshiper. :19 Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, :20 by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, **through the veil, that is, His flesh,** :21 and *having* a High Priest over the house of God, :22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

“With the veil removed by the rending of Jesus' flesh, with nothing on God's side to prevent us from entering, why do we tarry without? Why do we consent to abide all our days just outside the Holy of Holies and never enter at all to look upon God? We hear the Bridegroom say, "Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice and thy countenance is comely." We sense that the call is for us, but still we fail to draw near, and the years pass and we grow old and tired in the outer courts of His tabernacle. What doth hinder us?

The answer usually given, simply that we are "cold," will not explain all the facts. There is something more serious than coldness of heart, something that may be back of that coldness and be the cause of its existence. What is it? What but the presence of a veil in our hearts? a veil not taken away as the first veil was, but which remains there still shutting out the light and hiding the face of God from us. It is the veil of our fleshly fallen nature still living on, **unjudged** within us, **uncrucified** and **unrepudiated**. It is the closely woven veil of the **self-life** which we have never truly acknowledged, of which we have been secretly ashamed, and which for these reasons we have never brought to the judgment of the cross. It is not too mysterious, this opaque veil, nor is it hard to identify. We have but to look in our own hearts and we shall see it there, sewn and patched and repaired it may be, but there nevertheless, an enemy to our lives and an effective block to our spiritual progress.

HAVE YOU RESPONDED TO HIS LOVE?

2c.) By allowing God's love publically

It's not humanly possible to love others with real agape love without loving **God first**.

I can't love my wife rightly unless I love God more

I Love God So Much

(but I can't stand my stupid neighbor and my uncle John)

1 John 4:7-11

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. :8 He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. :9 In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. :10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins. :11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

LIVING FOR THE LOVE OF GOD

WHAT MAKES A CHRISTIAN A DESPERATE PILGRIM IN THIS WORLD?

3.) Have you become more like Jesus?

v.3

1 Corinthians 13:3

And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

I Fear that far to many Christians know just enough about Jesus and just enough about the Holy Spirit and just enough about the evidence of the faith – but to say that they've experienced God intimately and personally they cannot say.

They may be in love with the doctrines and teachings of God and the Bible *much like a young woman may be more in the love with the idea of marriage than with the one standing beside her at the altar.*

This is where things like goodness and morality and fairness all break down.

Without going to the source of these things you will only orbit the idea of them and never know and experience the Person from which they emanate.

ARE YOU BECOMING MORE LIKE JESUS?

3a.) You will by coming into His presence

:3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

The cathedrals and temples built to the glory of God are wonderful things.

But without that personal interaction and reality of God - these things are dead.

It's Like Us Circling the Temple / the Sanctuary / the Church

Imagining that there's a God and experiencing that there's a God are polar opposites.

Imagining there's a god allows me to create a god that tolerates me and my self-life. My imaginary god is always approving of how I live my life and what or whatever I do. This god is never saddened or grieved by my actions and is always there for me when I need him but conveniently not there when I don't. He is my beautiful servant-god, my genie in a bottle. I call him forth when I need him and put him away out of sight when I don't. I have created my god in my own image. But to experience the reality of the true and living God is altogether different. God, in-person, steps down into my world and life, and by doing so upsets the whole cart. His invasion awakens all kinds of strange and new thoughts within me. I become keenly aware that I am as helpless and needy as when an earthquake rattles the foundations beneath my feet. I am moved to absolute and total awe of this infinite, invisible, yet truly real presence. He, in one second of thought, exposes me to my need of all that He is and offers - even though I hardly know a stitch of theology. He is the encounterable God - like when Moses discovered Him at the meeting of the burning bush or General Joshua in the field of battle. He is the one who was before anything was. He transcends and evades our earthly limits, even death itself. He is absolute reality. He is God and God is Love.

ARE YOU BECOMING MORE LIKE JESUS?

3b.) You will by bowing your knee before Him

:3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor,
and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

John 12:19-21

The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, "You see that you are accomplishing nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him!" :20 Now there were certain Greeks among those who came up to worship at the feast. :21 Then they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, "**Sir, we wish to see Jesus.**"

I've been asking that the Lord would make us more like prophets and less like scribes. Scribes write about the things that they've learned. Prophets speak about the things that they have seen.

ARE YOU BECOMING MORE LIKE JESUS?

3c.) You will by singling out your hearts desire

:3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor,
and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

Please Allow Me to Challenge You This Morning.

To all of you who have accepted Christ, have become born again and have come to the light of Christ - - don't stop there. Keep coming into His glory.

2 Peter 1:10-11

Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; :11 for so **an entrance will be supplied to you** abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

This Is No Small Entrance "By Faith".

(God has no secret passage ways or back door entrances)

It's Like Us Circling the Temple / the Sanctuary / Church

Notice: The physical entrance became smaller, more narrow, and very simple but at the same time the light became brighter and more brilliant until there, in the midst of the cherubim, above the blood covered mercy seat, was the shekinah glory of God's presences manifested.

Hebrews 10:19-20

Therefore, brethren, having (to have, to be in possession of) **boldness** to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus Christ, :20 by a new and living way which **He consecrated for us**, through the veil, that is, His flesh,

So The Christian – Why Stand Ye Here Gazing Up to Heaven?
Press On Into a Greater walk with Jesus.

All You Need to do is **Come and Be Coming** to Him. **Come and Be Coming** to rest. **Come and Be Coming** to hear, **Come and Be Coming** to see – it's all through the vial of Jesus Christ Himself – That You Get to the other side

End of Study

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