

Lesson # 7 -- The Biblical Exhortations Regarding Love.

Introduction

- A. God, in His mercy, so that we may understand the meaning of love, has written out its basic characteristics.

This love of which I speak is slow to lose patience -- it looks for a way to be constructive. It is not possessive: it is neither anxious to impress nor does it cherish inflated ideas of its own importance. Love has good manners and does not pursue selfish advantage. It is not touchy. It does not keep account of evil or gloat over the wickedness of other people. On the contrary, it is glad with all good men when truth prevails. Love knows no limit to its endurance, no end to its trust, no fading of its hope; it can outlast anything. It is, in fact, the one thing that still stands when all else has fallen.

(I Cor. 13:4-8, The New Testament in Modern English, J. B. Phillips)

- B. Love, we have found, finds its origin in the very character of God Himself. We know the meaning and the experience of love due to the character of our creation and the grace of God in redemption. Our love is a response to His.
1. Love is to recognize another as a person, to give that person rightful place in your life and take your rightful place in his, and to give yourself unreservedly to him in the context of truth and holiness.
  2. Love is a decision which manifests itself in action.
  3. Love is exceedingly practical and inseparably related to trust and personal involvement.
- C. It was one of the great concerns of our Lord Jesus Christ that His people would understand the reality and the meaning of the love of God.

And I have declared unto them Thy Name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith Thou hast love Me may be in them, and I in them. John 17:26

- D. While not a part of this lesson, which in itself is only a sample of the Biblical material, we must remember that God exhorts us to love our non-Christian neighbor and even our enemies. Luke 10:25-37; Matthew 5:44
- E. It is vitally important that we understand that love is more than an idea -- it is a relationship which has been initiated by God. This relationship is displayed in the Person and work of Jesus Christ, it is explained in the Bible and is the basis for every spiritual experience which has been provided by God. There is no substitute for love.

I. Biblical Exhortations Regarding Loving God.

A. The Exhortations:

Deuteronomy 30:6,16,20 --

Joshua 22:5; 23:11 --

Matthew 22:34-40 --

I Timothy 1:5 --

I John 2:5 --

B. The Warnings:

Revelation 2:4 --

I John 4:20,21 --

C. The Instruction:

Matthew 22:37 -- Love without reservation.

I John 2:5 -- Love is an action which implements the Bible.

Revelation -- Love is regained by repentance and doing the works of love.

D. The Explanation:

Matthew 22:40 -- Love enables one to obey all of Scripture.

John 14:21-23 -- Love establishes the basis of divine fellowship.

Romans 8:28 -- Love qualifies one for God's providential protection.

James 1:12 -- Love assures one of the gift of the Crown of Life.

James 2:5 -- Love assures one of God's choice and the promised Kingdom.

I John 2:5 -- Love is one basis for the assurance of salvation.

I John 4:17,18 -- Love enables one to have boldness regarding future judgment -- and to live without fear.

II. Biblical Exhortations Regarding Loving Fellow Saints.

A. The Exhortations:

Matthew 22:34-40 --

John 13:34,35 --

Colossians 3:12-14 --

I Thessalonians 3:12 --

I John 3:16-18 --

B. The Warnings:

I Peter 1:22 (Rom. 12:9; II Cor. 6:6) --

I John 3:17 --

C. The Instruction:

John 13:34,35 -- We are to love one another as He loves us.

Ephesians 5:2 -- We are to love sacrificially.

I Peter 1:22 -- We are to love fervently.

I John 3:18 -- We are to love in deeds.

D. The Explanation:

Galatians 5:13 -- Love will enable us to serve one another.

Ephesians 4:15 -- Love will enable us to speak the truth.

Colossians 2:2 -- Love will enable us to be united and comforted.

Colossians 3:14 -- Love will enable us to be assured of maturity.

I Thessalonians 3:12,13 -- Love will enable us to grow in holiness.

I Peter 4:8 -- Love will enable us to cover a multitude of sins.