

Observations Concerning The Biblical Concept of Love

Introduction: The Bible defines love by listing its characteristics - I Cor. 13:4-7.

I. The Importance of Loving God.

- A. It is the first commandment - Matthew 22:37-39.
- B. It is the virtue to be sought above all -- I Cor. 12:31; 13:13; Col. 3:14.
- C. It is a necessary requirement for exercising faith - Gal. 5:6.
- D. It is an evidence of genuine sonship - John 13:34,35; I John 3:16-18.
- E. It is inseparably related to obedience - John 14:15,23,24; I John 5:3.

II. Comments on the Nature or Meaning of Love.

- A. Love to God is a response to His love for us - I John 4:19.
- B. Love has a person as its object - Matthew 22:37-39. (This is true even when we love the world - we are loving ourselves 1)
- C. Love is a decision to recognize another person as a person and to give that person rightful place in one's life - Matthew 5:43,44; I Cor. 13:4-7; Ephesians 5:28,29.
- D. To love God is to recognize Him as the True and Living God and to give Him His rightful place in our lives.

God is Holiness - all irreverence and ungodliness must be rejected.

God is Love - all forms of selfishness must be rejected.

God is Truth - all dishonestly, lying, and hypocrisy must be rejected.

God is our Creator - all spurious goals must be rejected.

God is our Sanctification - all immaturity, unbelief, must be rejected.

God is our Savior - all sins of omission and commission must be rejected.

God is the Head of the Church - all failure to be involved must be rejected.

God is the Lord of the Harvest - all failure to be a witness must be rejected.

God is the Sovereign Lord - all failure to obey must be rejected.

- E. Love is an activity of complete self-surrender - Eph. 5:2; I John 3:16.
- F. Love may or may not be accompanied by personal affection - Matthew 5:44.
- G. Love seeks the good in the other person, it is doing the right - I John 3:16-18.

III. Suggestions for Improving Our Love.

- A. Confess every failure to love as the sin that it is and receive the cleansing from all aspects of selfishness - I John 1:9.
- B. Make the necessary decisions of faith to cooperate with the Holy Spirit in bringing glory to Jesus Christ through the practice of the Scripture - Romans 5:5; John 16:14; Galatians 5:22; I John 5:3.

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