

LOVE IS ESSENTIAL

When Love Breaks Through, Part 1

1 Corinthians 13:1-3

- I. Without Love, Everything I Say Is Pointless (1)

- II. Without Love, Everything I Am Is Useless (2)

- III. Without Love, Everything I Do Is Unprofitable (3)

How To Love Our Church

1. **Our Love For The Church Stems From Our Love For Christ (2 Cor 5:14; Jn 21:15-19)**
If we don't love the Shepherd, how can we love the sheep?

2. **Our Love For The Church Is Enabled By The Holy Spirit (Rom 5:5; Gal 5:22-23)**
If sacrificial love isn't natural to us, how can we love like Christ?
 - **The Fruit Of The Holy Spirit (Gal 5:22-23)**
 - God's Fruit Basket Has One Fruit, Many Flavors
 - God's Fruit Basket Is Only For Those With A Special Relationship To The Management
 - God's Fruit Basket Is Reflective Of His Character
 - God's Fruit Basket Is Supernatural In Dimension

3. **Our Love For The Church Is Our Motivation And Our Empathy For Speaking The Truth (Eph 4:15)**
Do we care more about dispensing of truth than seeing the effect of truth?

Conclusion:

LOVE IS ESSENTIAL

When Love Breaks Through, Part 1

1 Corinthians 13:1-3

Introduction:

1 Corinthians 13:1-3 *1 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.*

1. The Ministry Of Love

- IE/ Sermon by St. Augustine of Hippo – 4th century theologian in North Africa
 - “The Weight of Love” – 1 John series
 - the Heavenly Father gave Christ up to the enemies, so did Judas
 - **Q:** What’s the difference?
 - if Judas is a traitor, is the Heavenly Father? God forbid!
 - **Q:** “What is it that distinguishes the Father delivering up the Son, and Son delivering up Himself, from Judas the disciple delivering up his Master?”
 - **The difference:** the Father & Son did it in love, Judas in betrayal
 - **The point:** Though the actions look the same, the true measure is in the motivation.
 - Many of us serve and do a lot of the same things – but the real measure of what we do is love.
 - **Augustine:** “Our actions must be judged by whether they are rooted in love. For many actions appear to be good, but they are not rooted in love. Some actions truly seem rough, even savage; yet they are done for the sake of discipline at the bidding of love.”
- **Why do we do what we do at church?** Is it love?

2. Distracted In Ministry With Tasks & Issues Over People

Task Oriented: Tasks become bigger than people’s needs

- **Overwhelmed Organizer** – ministry is centered around a clipboard, not people
 - we need clipboard people
 - the gift of administration is necessary in the church, and many of these gifted servants are great with clipboards or PDA’s
 - but we can get so distracted with organizing, we forget ministry is about people
- **Melancholy Musician** – perform for people when the light shines, then hides backstage when the show is over

- some of our musicians go right to the piano and guitar right after fellowship to jam or rehearse, meanwhile newcomers, the lonely and the hurting are wandering around wondering why they came to this church
- **Distracted Doer** – will fix, clean, or build around the building to avoid others
 - we need our fix it guys, but don't hide from people behind your tool belt
 - More Martha (busy is next to godliness) than Mary (sitting at Jesus' feet is worship)

Issue Oriented: Issues become bigger than people's needs

- **Thin-skinned Theologian** – prefers to debate the Word than apply the Word for the growth of others
 - theology is great - but when Christianity becomes purely academic and application is lost - great danger
 - knowledge puffs up
 - ie/ young people argue theology instead of ministering to new comers
- **People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.**
- **Cold Confronter**
 - Feels like they have a prophet-like ministry to confront
 - Speak the truth without love
 - Cold-hearted doctor without bedside manner
- **Progressive Pushover** - pushes trends for the sake of being contemporary rather than adapting to needs
- **Loveless Legalist** – resists change because traditions and personal opinions are elevated over personal growth

I. Without Love, Everything I Say Is Pointless (1)

1 If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

- **Love – agape**
- Our ability to love God is Spirit empowered
- Our ability to love others for the glory of God is Spirit empowered

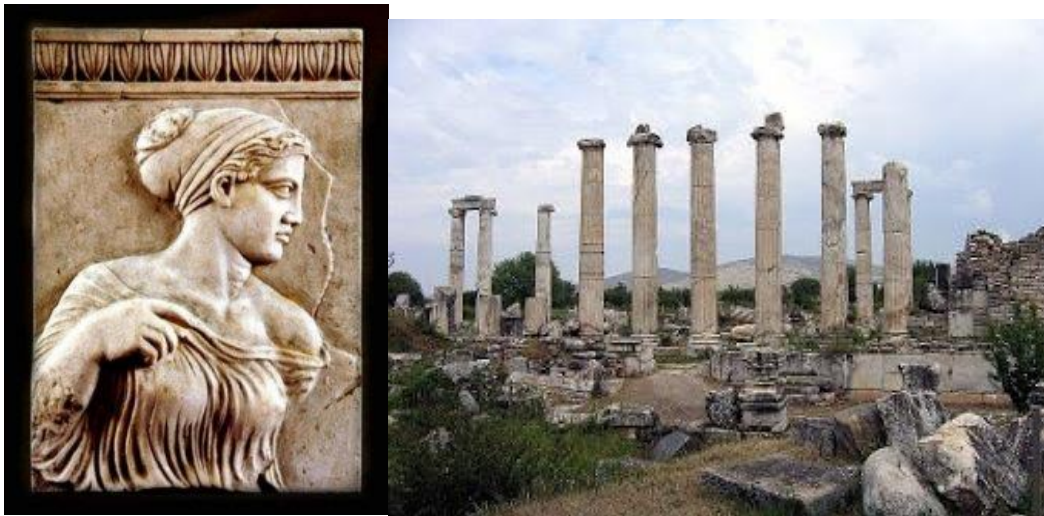
Four Words for Love:

- **Agape** – sacrificial love
 - 117x in NT as verb, 109x in NT as noun (*The New Englishman's Greek Concordance and Lexicon*)
 - most common biblical word for love
 - God's love for man (Jn 3:16; Rom 5:8)
 - Man's love for God (Mt 22:37; 1 Jn 2:5)
 - People loving people (Mt 22:39; Rom 13:10)

- Ken Sande: "*Agapao* (ag-ap-ah'-oh, noun: *agape*) has little to do with feelings; it is a sacrificial, giving, active type of love" ("Love and Respect In Marriage," <http://www.cbmw.org/article.php?id=83>)
- **Phileo** – friendship love
 - 24x in NT as verb, 28x in NT as a noun meaning "friend"
 - love for people (Mt 10:37; Tit 3:15)
 - God the Father's love for Son (Jn 5:20)
 - God's love for disciples (Jn 16:27)
 - Jesus rebuking in love (Rev 3:19)
 - *Phileo* (love) + *Adelphos* (brother) = *Philadelphia*
 - Audiophile – one who loves sound
- **Stergo** – family love
 - Not found in NT, but in other literature contemporary to NT
 - Natural affection
 - Husband's love for wife
 - Love for your family
 - It's antonym is found in NT (*astorgos*) – Rom 1:31 ("heartless"); 2 Tim 3:3 ("heartless")
- **Eros** – sensual love
 - Not used in NT, but found in LXX (Septuagint – Greek version of Hebrew OT) in Prov 7:18 & 30:16
 - love of passion or desire, physical aspect of love
 - origin of "erotic"
- Swindoll's def. of love: "**Love is taking the initiative and acting sacrificially to meet the needs of others.**"
- **3 Kinds Of Love** (Josh McDowell – *Givers, Takers & Other Kinds Of Lovers*)
 1. I love you if...(you exceed my expectations, you do what I want, etc.)
 2. I love you because...(of your beauty, personality, wealth, you make me secure, etc.)
 3. I love you, period.
- "Love...is seeking the glory of God in the object loved....Love and knowledge are vitally related, for the deepest kind of love is based on the fullest knowledge." (Charles Ryrie, *The Holy Spirit*, p. 101)

Love and Aphrodite in Corinth

- Paul is addressing the Corinthian church on love
- Corinth's patron deity was Aphrodite – the goddess of love
- Her temple was on the Akrocorinth
- There was temple prostitution going on to excite Aphrodite to prosper them with more love
- Julius Caesar was said to be a descendent of the goddess Aphrodite
- His son, Augustus (adopted by Julius), was also connected to Aphrodite
- The Corinthians thought they knew love
- Paul would instruct them on one of the greatest chapters of love telling them exactly what it is



Aphrodite and the Ruins of Aphrodite's temple in Corinth

- **The Gift Of Tongues Is Meaningless Without Love**

- Paul is using superfluous imagery by making the gift of tongues greater than any man can possess
- "men and of angels" – a way of inflating the gift beyond any man – but of all men and even angels
- Paul was saying that even if his gift of tongues was so great that it embraced all language capabilities and would surpass angelic abilities, without love he's just a bunch of noise

- **The Noisy Gong and Clanging Cymbal**



Relief of Cybele holding a gong with Attis
 Statue from 1st or 2nd century AD with Cybele holding a gong
<http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/22.139.24>

- Cybele (pronounced *sibili*)

- goddess of war and victory
- From word "to hiss"
- great mother (*magna mater*) goddess from Asia Minor
- protector of Imperial Rome (205 BC) – after adopting her from Asia Minor, she's credited from saving Rome from Hannibal's invasion
- Attis – handsome, young son-lover – his mother forbade him from loving anyone else but her, when he gets seduced by a river nymph, Cybele gets mad and makes

- him insane, Attis inflicts upon himself a mortal wound (castration) and he bleeds to death under a pine tree (might be the pagan origin of the Christmas tree), Attis resurrects as a feminized, androgynous symbol
- Cybele held a cymbal
 - Worshippers used cymbals in monotonous clanging worship
- *If we don't love the people at church, is what we do truly ministry?*
 - Or is our ministry on the level of meaningless pagan noise – which the sounding brass or clanging cymbal refer to
 - Ie/ Buddhist funeral – clanging is meaningless
 - Do we get so wrapped up in our spiritual gifts – yours being “Pastor-Teacher” – that we can execute our ministry on “Auto-Pilot” without praying for the needs of the people you serve
- If we become “Professional Ministers,” we’ll crank out excellent expository sermons but the congregation becomes clients
 - It can be easy to immerse ourselves in our sermons and not the lives of those we serve.
 - It is easy to get into a board meeting or planning meeting and merely talk about logistics rather than the needs of those attending your finely planned meetings
 - We should not consider it a successful day if we merely defined “sanctification” without helping a person achieve it in Christ

II. Without Love, Everything I Am Is Useless (2)

2 And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

- Paul is referencing the gifts of prophecy, wisdom, knowledge and faith
- Special Gifts: *The revelatory gifts gave God’s revelation to serve as the foundation of the early church prior to the completion of the New Testament canon.*
- Prophecy
 - Definition: Those with the gift of prophecy were channels or conduits of direct revelation of God. They were used by God to speak forth God’s mind and counsel about present and future events.
- Wisdom (*Sophia*, 1 Cor 12:8)
 - Definition: The spiritual ability to understand the mysteries of God and to perceive truth and situations from God’s perspective.
- Knowledge (*gnosis*, 1 Cor 12:8)
 - Definition: “A special ability to grasp objective data that results from special revelation connected with the word of wisdom to systematize it and extend its implications to new situations.” (Thomas)
 - “One having the spiritual gift of the word of knowledge has a motivation for knowing the content of Scripture in detail. He understands and arranges truth carefully. The Holy Spirit enables him to have the proper balance and emphasis in viewing Scripture as a whole.” (Blanchard, p. 22)

- Faith (1 Cor 12:9)
 - Definition: The spiritual enablement to trust God to overcome certain situations.

Mark 11:23 Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him.
- Knowledge
 - Gromacki: "A full head with an empty heart is worth nothing." (*Called To Be Saints*, p. 160)
- ie/ Scottish preacher – Andrew Bonar – listened to a well-known preacher speak
 - afterwards asked: "You love to preach, don't you?"
 - man responded "Yes I do"
 - Bonar: "Do you love the men to whom you preach?"
- We can love to do the preparation, the delivery, the set up, even the clean up – but is our main motive love
- Ie/ We can punch out flannelgraphs and teach Bible stories with efficient preparation and enthusiasm. But without love, it's nothing.
 - Do we really love those kids? Or do we just put up with them.
 - Do we really care that they repent of their sin and trust in Christ as Savior?
- Ie/ Taking pictures is both a blessing and a curse

III. Without Love, Everything I Do Is Unprofitable (3)

3 If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. (1 Corinthians 13:1-3, ESV)

- Paul is referencing the gift of giving
- To the extreme of giving up his body in sacrifice
- Paul may be referring to Daniel's friends in the fiery furnace (Dan 3)
- The Romans would later burn Christians – Nero did in the 60's – making human torches

Matthew 19:21 Jesus said to him, "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me."

- **Without love, ministry becomes a job!**

"Job vs. Ministry" (I don't know who originally wrote it):

- *Some people have a JOB in the church, others involve themselves in a MINISTRY. What's the difference?*
- *If you are doing it just because no one else will, it's a JOB. If you are doing it to serve the Lord, it's a MINISTRY.*
- *If you quit because somebody criticized you, it was a JOB. If you keep on serving, it's a MINISTRY.*

- *If you'll do it only as long as it does not interfere with your other activities, it's a JOB. If you are committed to staying with it even when it means letting go of other things, it's a MINISTRY.*
- *If you quit because no one praised you or thanked you, it was a JOB. If you stay with it even though nobody recognizes your efforts, it is a MINISTRY.*
- *It's hard to get excited about a JOB. It's almost impossible not to be excited about a MINISTRY.*
- *If our concern is success, it's a JOB. If our concern is faithfulness, it's a MINISTRY.*
- *An average church is filled with people doing JOBS. A great and growing church is filled with people involved in MINISTRY.*

How To Love Our Church

1. Our Love For The Church Stems From Our Love For Christ (2 Cor 5:14; Jn 21:15-19)

If we don't love the Shepherd, how can we love the sheep?

2 Corinthians 5:14 - "For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died"

- Love that constrains us / compels us
- "constrain/compel" = a pressure that causes someone to act

ie/ hunger compels us to eat
thirst compels us to drink
tragedy compels us to pray

Christ's love compels Paul to give his heart and life and love to the Corinthian church

- because so moved by the mercies of God and sacrifice of Christ – Paul gave his body a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God because it was a reasonable service (Rom 12:1)
- 2 tests for loving Christ (obey & love)
 - love Me? – **John 14:15,21,23** keep my commandments

John 14:15 If you love Me, keep My commandments.

John 14:21 He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.

John 14:23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him."

- Love Me? – feed my sheep
- Peter asked 3x by Christ – Do you love me? Feed my sheep.

John 21:15-19 [15] When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs." [16] He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep." [17] He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. [18] Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go." [19] (This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, "Follow me."

- **Wife:** How much do you love me?
Husband: Darling, I love you much I would do anything for you. If you are about to be knocked down by a car, I would dash forward and push you away and suffer the injury myself. If you are sick I would donate my liver, my kidney, my heart... so that you could get well.
Wife: Ok, why don't you go and wash up the dishes first?
- **Girl:** Do you love me?
Boy: Yes Dear.
Girl: Would you die for me?
Boy: No, mine is undying love

v. 15	v. 16	v. 17
Jesus asked: <i>agape</i>	Jesus asked: <i>agape</i>	Jesus asked: <i>phileo</i>
Peter answered: <i>phileo</i>	Peter answered: <i>phileo</i>	Peter answered: <i>phileo</i>
Peter's "know": <i>oida</i>	Peter's "know": <i>oida</i>	Peter's "know": <i>ginosko</i>
Jesus' expectation: feed lambs	Jesus' expectation: tend sheep	Jesus' expectation: feed lambs

- **15a Remembering Our Old Identity**
 - "Simon, son of John" or "Simon Bar Jonah"
 - This is the name Peter went by before he was a disciple of Christ
 - Jesus changed Simon's name to *Cephas* when he first met Jesus (Jn 1:42)
 - *Cephas* = Aramaic for "stone"; *Petros* = Greek for "stone"
 - After Peter's confession of Christ as Lord, Jesus responded "You are Peter" (Mt 16:17-18)
 - So for Peter to be called his old name was pierce his conscience
- **15b He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you."**
- **When Our Mind Betrays Him: Talking Theologically, Walking Dispassionately**
 - "Yes, Lord; you know ..."
 - Peter disguises his lack of passion by throwing out a theological fact
 - Peter refers to Jesus omniscience – how Christ knows all
 - I can easily get trapped in knowing more about God than loving Him as I should
 - Intellectual knowledge doesn't equal deep passion

- Ie/ Some of you know your profession well, but you don't have a passion for your job
- We've somehow compartmentalized our mind from our heart
- The more know Him theologically should give us more reason to love Him passionately

- **When Our Words Betray Him: Talking Lovingly, Walking Disproportionately**

- Words for love in Greek
 - *Agape* = sacrificial love
 - *Phileo* = brotherly love
 - *Eros* = physical love
- Jesus asked Peter if he *agape* loved Him
- Peter responds with "you know that I love (*phileo*) you" – brotherly love, friendly affection

Reevaluating Our Other Loves

- Jesus asked if Peter loves (*agapao*) Him more than "these"
- "these" = not specified, 3 strongest possibilities:
 - Perhaps loving Jesus more than **fish, fishing gear (incl. boat) and/or fishing**
 - Perhaps loving Jesus more than the **disciples** as Peter's close friends
 - Perhaps loving Jesus more than the **disciples love Jesus**
- If Jesus asked us what we love more than Christ, what would be our category of challenge?
 - Success, safety, sports, shopping
 - Family, friends, feelings
 - Our car, castle, clothes
 - Money, might, mate

- For whatever reason, Peter led the other disciples back to fishing for their livelihood
- Yet it was Jesus who told him where to catch 153 fish
- It was Jesus whom Peter impulsively swam 100 yds towards
- It was Jesus who had a meal prepared for the disciples when they reached the shore
- Jesus was teaching them that He directs where to Cast and identifies what to Catch
- Was Peter ready to fully trust Jesus for the next stage of his life without leaning on his old occupation?

- **Loving Christ Means Feeding: If We Love The Shepherd, We'll Love His Lambs**
15c He said to him, "Feed my lambs."

- "feed my sheep" – the last command in the Gospel of John
- Jesus transitions from fishing to herding
- Sheep – followers (need to be led), not very bright, fearful ("sheepish")
- Lambs – even more helpless than the adult sheep

- Do you love the people in the church?
- Do you love people who are underprivileged?
- Do you love widows and orphans?
- Are we in church to be fed? Or are we here to feed lambs.
- Are we in church to be served? Or are we here to serve lambs.
- Are we anxious to get out of church without investing in an encouraging conversation? Or are we here to encourage lambs.
- Are we in church to prove to others we're faithful? Or are we in church to be faithful to Christ and His flock?

- **Loving Christ Means Personal Sacrifice: *Agape* Transcends Our Comfort Zone**

16a He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you."

- Are we afraid of faith?
- Do we love Christ enough to trust Him beyond our comfort zone.
- Ie/ Today I'm marrying a couple who will move to Asia a few days after their wedding – that's a lot of transition and a lot of trust – it takes a lot of love to uproot, but we do it because we love
- Ie/ When our spouse uproots for another job, it's tough, but we go through with the transition because of love
- Christ calls us to transition beyond our comfort zone

- **Loving Christ Means Leading Spiritually: Feed Lambs, Lead Sheep**

16b He said to him, "Tend my sheep."

- V. 15 "feed" = Gr. *bosko* – feeding lambs – milk, showing them pastures with good grass
- V. 16 "tend" = Gr. *poimaino* – shepherd
- V. 15 "lamb" = Gr. *arnion* – little lambs ("Mary had an *arnion*")
- V. 16 "sheep" = *probatia* – sheep, in general

v. 15	v. 16
"Feed" = <i>bosko</i> = provide	"Tend" = <i>poimaino</i> = shepherd
"Lamb" = <i>arnion</i>	"Sheep" = <i>probatia</i>

- If we love Christ, we'll lead our family spiritually
- If we love Christ, we'll obey Christ in discipling someone younger or newer in the faith
- If we love Christ, we'll lead in a ministry at the church
- Leadership doesn't mean being having a position or title, but influence

- **Loving Christ Means Repetitious Obedience: Christ Repeatedly Asks, We Repeatedly Do**

17 He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep."

- Jesus gave commands
- Jesus gave it repetitiously
- 3x Peter failed by denying Christ, 3x Peter challenged to obey Christ
- It's not just a one time deal
- 2x Peter is asked if he *agape* loves Jesus
- 2x Peter switches to the word *phileo* love
- 3rd time: Jesus uses Peter's word for love: *phileo*
- Perhaps Peter thought *agape* was too passionless
- He was hurt that Jesus asked a 3rd time – but responded with a passionate *phileo*
- Peter confesses that he cannot love Jesus the way Jesus loves Him (with *agape*)
- Peter also used *oida* for "know" the first 2x – intellectual knowledge
- 3rd time: Peter uses *ginosko* – knowledge gained through experience

v. 15	v. 16	v. 17
Jesus asked: <i>agape</i>	Jesus asked: <i>agape</i>	Jesus asked: <i>phileo</i>
Peter answered: <i>phileo</i>	Peter answered: <i>phileo</i>	Peter answered: <i>phileo</i>
Peter's "know": <i>oida</i>	Peter's "know": <i>oida</i>	Peter's "know": <i>ginosko</i>
Jesus' expectation: feed lambs	Jesus' expectation: tend sheep	Jesus' expectation: feed lambs

ie/ Archbishop Secker: "God has 3 sorts of servants in the world:

- 1) Some are slaves, and serve Him from fear**
- 2) Others are hirelings, and serve for wages**
- 3) and the last are sons, who serve because they love"**

- we become hirelings if we serve without love
 - but you think "I'm not getting paid money for this"
 - maybe you're trying to pay off your guilt conscience
 - maybe you're trying to pay off the person you're asking to serve so they'll be quiet and stop nagging you to serve

2. Our Love For The Church Is Enabled By The Holy Spirit (Rom 5:5; Gal 5:22-23)

If sacrificial love isn't natural to us, how can we love like Christ?

Romans 5:5 "Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us."

- God gives us the ability to love
- fruit of the Spirit – result of walking with God and the Spirit enabling us to do the unnatural
- natural reaction of a man with sin nature to:
 - seek revenge when harmed
 - return insult with insult
 - take advantage of the weak
 - disobey as long as we don't get caught

- **Works of the Flesh Cause Division**

Galatians 5:19-21 ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, ²¹ envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God."

- **Immorality** (19) – The flesh is dominated by sexual passions that satisfies self, not serves others.
 - Adultery – *moicheia* – only the KJV has this word
 - Fornication – *porneia* – any immoral sexual relationship
 - Uncleanness - *akatharsia* – dirtiness, moral impurity
 - Lewdness – *aselgeia* – debauchery, "open and reckless contempt of propriety" (Lightfoot)

- **Idolatry** (20) – The flesh is proud to find power in a source outside of God.
 - Idolatry – *eidololatria* – worshipping the creature over the Creator
 - Sorcery – *pharmakeia* – enlisting supernatural powers apart from God

- **Ill Will** (20-21) – The flesh is more concerned about the self than others.
 - Hatred – *echtraí* – enmity
 - Contentions – *eris* – discord resulting from hatred
 - Jealousies – *zelos*
 - Outbursts of Wrath - *thumoi*
 - Selfish Ambitions – *eritheiai* – "selfish and self-aggrandizing approach to work" (Boice)
 - Dissensions - *dichostasiai*
 - Envy - *phthonoi*
 - Murder - *phonos*

- **Ideology** – The flesh flaunts intellectualism and philosophy against the Truth of God.
 - Heresies – *haireseis* – the flesh prefers a doctrine that departs from Scriptural teaching
- **Inebriation** (21) – The flesh yields control of the body to anything other than God.
 - Drunkenness - *methai*
 - Revelries – *komoi* – drunken orgies; "used generally of feasts and drinking parties that are protracted till late at night and indulge in revelry" (Thayer's Lexicon); "refer primarily to the drunken orgies at festivals of the pagan gods" (Cole, TNTC)

- **The Fruit Of The Holy Spirit**

Galatians 5:22-23 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law."

The Characteristics Of The Fruit Of The Spirit

- "The work of the Spirit within the believer that produces good works is metaphorically presented as the *fruit* of the Spirit." (Pettegrew, p. 190)

- “The fruit of the Spirit’ is obviously intended as a contrast to ‘the works of the flesh’; if the latter expression denotes deeds done by the flesh, the former refers to the concrete manifestations of the Spirit’s work in the believer. The phrase directly ascribes the power of fructification not to the believer himself but to the Spirit, and effectively hints that the qualities enumerated are not the result of strenuous observance of an external legal code, but the natural product (‘harvest’) of a life controlled and guided by the Spirit. Thus the two different expressions point to a contrast between the natural acts of the self-centered life and the ethical characteristics produced by the Spirit as the believer’s life-transforming power.” (Ronald Fung, *The Epistle To The Galatians*, NICNT, p. 262)

1. **God’s Fruit Basket Has One Fruit, Many Flavors**

ie/ In the movie *Willie Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*, one of the special candies made in the factory was the “Everlasting Gobstopper” which was one candy which continuously and eternally yielded several flavors. Like the “Everlasting Gobstopper”, the Fruit of the Spirit is one Fruit, but yields several flavors.

a. **Each Aspect Of The Fruit Is Interconnected With One Another**

ie/ One computer contains several components: processor, video card, monitor, hard drive, disk drive, operating system, etc.

- When *loving* the unlovable with agape *love*, we will also need *patience* when things get frustrating. We will also need supernatural *joy* when things go wrong, *gentleness* when we’re prone to scream, and *self control* when we feel like throwing a punch or insult.
- “Many undoubtedly conceive of Christlikeness as a reflection of their own personalities. An introvert will probably think of our Lord as shy and retiring, while an extrovert will see Him as an aggressive Leader. When the nine words that comprise the fruit of the Spirit are fully defined, we will have a well-rounded picture of true Christlikeness.” (Charles Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, p. 377)

b. **When One Part Fails, They Are All Affected**

ie/ When Christmas tree lights are in series, if one goes out, they all go out.

ie/ Like a watch with several parts, if one part fails, the watch fails.

- One desires to love his/her spouse, yet the patience flees quickly and says something in anger. Not only did the love leave at that moment, but so did the self-control, gentleness, peace, kindness and joy.
- Sin causes the whole fruit to rot.

ie/ As one moldy strawberry spreads to the whole basket and as one rotten egg spoils the whole omelet, so does one sin in affecting the Fruit of the Spirit.

Q: What if I am not perfect in exhibiting spiritual fruit? Am I still saved or walking in the Spirit?

- "Of course, the question is not, 'Do I perfectly exemplify all of these characteristics in my life?' but rather, 'Are these things a general characteristic of my life? Do I sense these attitudes in my heart? Do others (especially those closest to me) see these traits exhibited in my life? Have I been growing in them over a period of years?' There is no suggestion in the New Testament that any non-Christian, any unregenerate person, can convincingly fake these character traits, especially for those who know the person most closely." (Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, p. 804)

2. God's Fruit Basket Is Only For Those With A Special Relationship To The Management

ie/ When my father use to work for the Hilton Hotels, he was able to get complimentary rooms at any Hilton Hotel as long as it wasn't sold out. Sometimes, upon arrival in the room, we would receive a Fruit Basket that was a gift from the management to my father. The Fruit of the Spirit is a special gift only for those with a special relationship with The Management (Trinity Associates) – those who are received by the Father, in union with the Son and regenerated by the Spirit.

a. Only Genuine Believers Are Eligible For This Gift

John 1:12-13 "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

James 1:17-18 "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures."

b. Only Spirit-Filled Believers Are Recipients Of This Gift

Galatians 5:18 "Be filled with the Spirit"

3. God's Fruit Basket Is Reflective Of His Character

Romans 8:29 "For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren."

- The goal of the Fruit of the Spirit is to conform us to be like Christ.

a. We Are Living Illustrations Of God's Attributes

- Love = God is love (1 John 4:7-8)
- Peace = Christ is the Prince of Peace (Isa 9:6)
- Faithful = God is faithful (2 Pet 3:9)
- Longsuffering = God is longsuffering (2 Peter 3:9)

- When we manifest the Fruit of the Spirit, we reflect the character of God

b. We Are Usable Instruments Of God's Grace

2 Corinthians 4:6-7 "For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us."

- The earthen vessel has no glory in itself. Our talents, experiences, intellect and abilities are merely earthen. The Fruit of the Spirit is the power of God that shines through plain earthen vessels to bring God all the glory.

4. God's Fruit Basket Is Supernatural In Dimension

a. The Fruit Of The Spirit Gives Us Capacities That Are Beyond Human Nature

- We can not be godly without God's help.

b. The Fruit Of The Spirit Is Dependent Upon Being Filled With The Spirit

1) It Is Not A Product Of Following After The Schemes (Law) Of Man (Gal 5:1-15)

- Legalism forces our way and does not submit to God's way.

2) It Is Not A Product Of Depending On The Powers (Flesh) Of Man (Gal 5:16-23)

- The Fruit of the Spirit is not something that man can strive for. Christlikeness is solely a product of the Holy Spirit.

ie/ Corrie Ten Boom – return to Germany – met by old Nazi guard that tortured her and her sister who died in the concentration camp

- he asked for forgiveness
- not natural
- she prayed "Lord help me"
- realize the mercy she received from her Savior from her sins
- she forgave him

ie/ so much coming out on the Rape of Nanking – how a special, secret unit of the Japanese massacred a helpless village – spare you details

- forgiveness isn't natural if you witnessed it with your own eyes
- how deal with prejudice
- supernatural

- the one who offends you at work or school or home – love them?

3. **Our Love For The Church Is Our Motivation And Our Empathy For Speaking The Truth (Eph 4:15)**

Do we care more about dispensing of truth than seeing the effect of truth?

Ephesians 4:15 "Speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ"

a. **A Change-Oriented Ministry: Love Stimulates Growth**

- What is the formula for church growth:

Love + Truth

- If it's just love – ministry is dependent on sustaining unsustainable emotional highs

- If it's just truth – a rigid legalism develops

- truth becomes a hammer, not a transformer

- when there is both – it creates the right environment for spiritual growth

- Truth is the transforming principle

- Love is the encouragement to obedience

- Truth is the soap that disinfects

- Love is the warm water we bathe in

- Truth is the surgery the surgeon performs

- Love is the pre-op discussion and the months of follow-up appointments

ie/ Dad – cold doctor – dispenses the advise & medicine – but lacking sincerity and bed side manner

- Truth is the spanking a parent gives to the child

- Love is the explanation for it and embrace after it

Q: Is your ministry/fellowship group not growing spiritually?

Diagnosis: Lack of truth or lack of love.

FBC is committed to truth – we have a passion for it – easily demonstrated

Q: Why aren't we growing spiritually as we ought?

LACK OF LOVE

b. A Concerned Ministry: Love Softens Truth

- sometimes we like to cram down the truth
- think after we give our speech or advice that our work is done

ie/ do you know people who just love to confront

ie/ I know a few pastors – all judgmental, confrontational, boasting in their knowledge of Scripture

Always ask myself: Where is the love?

- love is the sugar that helps the medicine go down

- People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.

Conclusion:

1. It has been said that ...
 - The height of the church is worship.
 - The depth of the church is teaching.
 - The breadth of the church is love.

May your ministry be 3-dimensional.

2. **Why do we do what we do at church?** Is it love?

ie/ Scottish preacher – Andrew Bonar – listened to a well-known preacher speak

- afterwards asked: "You love to preach, don't you?"
- man responded "Yes I do"
- Bonar: "Do you love the men to whom you preach?"

- we can love to do the preparation, the delivery, the set up, even the clean up – but is our main motive love