



LOVE

By Johnny Caruso on February 1, 2024

TODAY'S READING: 1 Corinthians 13

Most of us know this chapter as the "Love Chapter." It has been read and recited in many marriage ceremonies. So, I thought I would give a little perspective on love.

Love is about *action*—how a person lives for the Lord and obeys him and how a person lives for others and serves them. Love is also about *being*. This is because its foundation is in God who is love, and in Christ who shows that love.

The sense that this is about more than simply how people behave is evident in passages like Paul's prayer of Ephesians 3:14-19, particularly as he prays that Christians will be "rooted and grounded in love." To "know the love of Christ" is to experience His presence, "through faith" in their "hearts." God's people are to look and become more and more like Christ, and it is this for which Paul prays here.

Firstly, *being* and *action* are closely tied together in God and in Christ. But then, also in His people. Paul calls love a "more excellent way" (12:31b). It is the way of the new age that has been ushered in with the appearance of the Messiah, who has shown it in His life, passion, and death.

In my opinion, love is countercultural.

In today's society, so much is presented in terms of "self"—self-awareness, self-esteem, self-acceptance, self-image, self-realization, etc., presenting a way of existence in which a person lives for others in a life of loving self-sacrifice strongly set apart.

Love is not always soft.

Many see love as little more than an attitude of “niceness” to everyone. This means any dispute, talking over important matters, and any firm spiritual discipling or disciplining of another is regarded as unloving. In some churches this has even led to a watered-down Christian faith being preached with little emphasis on holiness, lest some should feel condemned or unloved.

Love is Christ-like.

Love is a way of being as a person—a way of thinking, acting, and living. It is, in fact, being Christ-like. Paul, the author of this letter to the Corinthians, has shown us what this looks like in his own life in chapter 9.

The love of God poured out by the Holy Spirit.

In 1 Corinthians 8:3, Paul tells us that God is the object of love. Paul regards love for God, rather than wisdom or knowledge, evidence of having “not received the spirit of the world; rather we have received the Spirit of God” (1 Corinthians 2).

We imitate Christ’s love.

A further explanation of why love functions as the example of the true believer lies in the imitation of Christ. Christ stands as the supreme example of love through the whole of his life, but specially in his death. “Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God” (Ephesians 5:2).

In chapter 13 Paul describes the depth of intimacy of the love relationship, “Then I shall know fully even as I have been fully known” (v. 12).

Sorry for the wordiness of today’s devotion. It is a very important subject, LOVE!

PRAYER: Lord, thank You, for the example You have given us to love—the unbelievable example of Your Son’s love—from His birth, leaving His throne, putting on flesh, and making the ultimate sacrifice so we can love.

TOMORROW’S READING: 1 Corinthians 15

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