

LITTLE LOVE FOR OTHERS

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"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, against such there is no law" Gal 5:22-23.

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" Rom 13:9.

The fruits of the teaching of evolution are coming to the forefront of our social structure on every side. It has even slithered its way into the mainstream of Christianity. Somehow most seem to have forgotten the admonition that "compassion makes a difference" Jude 22. Certainly there is no compassion among those that advocate and carry out the murderous acts of abortion. There is no concern for the soul of these unborn infants as they are ripped from the protective womb of their mothers. Real compassion is further not being shown to those in their old age as "Dr. Death" practices will soon be a threat to us "oldsters". Thousands are being slaughtered by the greedy war mongers of the world. Nations churn out volumes of hollow words and avoid genuine, loving actions of relief. Most confusing is the fact that the same indifference to the sufferings of others has found its way into the ranks of Christianity. We believers need to take an honest look as to why we are failing to show real love to others. In this sermon I desire to show why real love seems so scarce in the lives of present day Christians..

Let me first point out that we are **TOO BUSY.**

We cram our lives with work , work, work, which has made us the busiest generation ever to live in this nation. Often several jobs for each family fill every moment with self serving activity, focused on me and my family;

while the needs and problems of others fade from view. The bills must be paid and most have taken on far more responsibility than time allows. In the rush of employed activity it is easy to lose the view of our relationship to others. Most of us run from place to place, locked in our own private world. Parents seem to be so busy we do not even teach our children to care about others. Personal sacrifice to help others is not even taught in many churches. Luke 10 tells the story of the Good Samaritan and those who were so very busy "doing their own thing" they refused to take time to help. He would have been hopeless if there had not finally been someone who cared and helped him in his time of need. Deut. 10:19 instructs, *"love ye therefore the stranger"*. We need to correct our frantic busy image and find ways to slow up enough to notice and help others in need.

Another fair observation would be that many of us are **UNSEEING.** How often have we heard the statement, "Am I my brothers keeper"? The idea has been warped to almost say he will have to face his own problems and we are too busy to respond to his needs. It is simply not true. If God is a God of love, then we which are His children must evidence the same. Most suffer from tunnel vision, a tragic form of short-sightedness which causes the focus to be on self and not on others. We all need to pause and take time to evidence love toward others. *"Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works"* Heb. 10:24. It is high time to refocus and take time to assist others through love and good deeds. Again, *"The stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself"* Lev. 19:34. There is a whole world of lost and dying people that are looking for someone that cares. We must adjust our actions toward them or we will be guilty of the "bloody hands" mentioned in Ezekiel.

I wonder further if **SELFISHNESS** is not a problem. I think this is the age of selfishness. We see the world around us as it descends deeper with anti-God mentality. We literally do not march to their drum, nor share in their mad dash to moral ruination. We are revolted by their bad language, drinking, and immorality. It is scripturally correct not to participate in the evil they do. The believer is not to sin with them in the things the Bible forbids. We are to live lives of separation but not isolation from the unsaved around us. The Bible commends caring for others. *"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends"* John 15:13. It is easier to say, "I worked for mine, let them scratch for themselves." It is easy to shut out others from our thinking and be totally self directed. I wonder if we often do not suffer with bouts of "I" disease. It is perfectly right to care for our personal lives and those of our families, but not to be so self- focused that the rest of the world is a blur which does not interest us. The dear Lord has been very good to us and we need to work to demonstrate our love toward others.

Perhaps there is also **IGNORANCE** as to our responsibility as believers. We need to *"finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous. Not rending evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing"* I Peter 3:8-10. The Bible clearly encourages us to have a part in the needs of others. Where would we be if many others had not cared enough to sacrifice for us. Our nation with all the freedoms is a result of the sacrifice of the soldiers of the past. Countless professional people have contributed to every facet of our personal lives. We have what we have and are what we are because of others.. We cannot sit

in our shell and fail to work for the blessing of others without being ungrateful for the help we have received. Compassion for our fellow man is the very heartbeat of Christianity. We are to even carry it so far as to *"love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you"* Matt. 5:44. Failure to care for others and to show a Christian love toward them is indeed a mark of ignorance and failure to demonstrate Christian love.

It seems to me **DISOBEDIENCE** also figures into the mystery of why often we do not love in word and deed. We need to remember *"to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin"* James 4:17. There may be some who have not been so taught, but most believers know we should love others. *"Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another"* I John 4:11. Or, *"If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen"* I John 4:20? A true mark of real Christianity is the measure of love we show others. Disobedience in this denies the very nature of Jesus, which is love itself. God is love and we to be obedient must manifest that same quality. It will speak louder than words in this dog eat dog world. We will stand without excuse if we do not love others. *"Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of The demonstration of love takes time and work on the part of the one who seeks to love. There is a price to be paid in loving sometimes the unlovely. I often marvel at dedicated bus workers who give many hours and hard work to reach the kids on their route. Visitation requires the curtailing of personal plans to bring the gospel to others. It is not easy to get out of the easy chair and show our concern for folks around us. It is easier to relax in front of*

the TV than to get involved in the busy church ministry of reaching those who await our attention and affection. *"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth"* I John 3:18. The world has heard enough talk and promises. We simply must change a rocking chair Christianity to one that impresses others that we really care. The Christian life is not a bed of ease but the commission of a mission. *"Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God"* I Cor. 10:31. We seem to have such stamina for the things that really interest us and so little desire to put ourselves out for others. This will be a source of embarrassment when lazy believers stand in the presence of the one who gave His all for others..

Certainly a lack of love mirrors the tragedy of **UNCHRISTLIKENESS**. The song writer has written, "My desire, to be like Jesus". Certainly this is a privilege to be sought. What could be greater than to be motivated by a desire to be like Christ?. Remember, *"when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd"* Matt. 9:36. Certainly His great heart beat with a constant love for others. His healing touch and His kind words were always a salve to the weary. He longingly wept, looking over the Jerusalem wall, wishing they would come to Him. Each miracle not only showed His Lordship but provided a visual means to demonstrate His love for mankind. We would do well to emulate this wonderful ability to show love to others. All believers are given the choice to be disciples of the Master. He is the pattern for us to follow. We must therefore practice the same principle of love that characterized His whole ministry. A lack of personal love for others will prevent us from being like Christ.

Lastly, the question can be raised that without love, **DO WE REALLY LOVE HIM?** We are urged to *"walk in love, as Christ has also loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour"* Eph. 5:2. If we cannot bring ourselves to love others then where is the evidence that we really love Him. I John 4:12 states, *"If we love one another, God dwelleth compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him"* I John 3:17? To obey God we must learn to love those He loves.

It is evident that **LAZINESS** is involved *in us, and His love is perfected in us*". Our growth as His children must include a love for others. In doing so we give evidence of being one of His own. As a child we all learned to please our parents. This simple act caused a love to grow between us. Often an outsider would observe and remark how much we loved a father or mother. We proved our love by obeying them. Jesus himself said, *"If you love me keep my commandments"* John 14:15. Certainly our testimony would be enhanced among the lost if we really loved our Saviour. It would then lead to a warm relationship as we seek in everything to please Him.

It will not be long before I believe we will join Him in the clouds above. There are so many counterfeit loves around. The choice is ours. We can love a myriad of things which will fade and pass away. Or we can choose a genuine love for Christ and a desire to love others in His name. heavens above until we leap into the presence of the Saviour. Please go tuck your knees down before God and ask Him to give you a real love for others. Then get up and involve yourself in truly loving. *"Let brotherly love continue"* Heb. 13:1.