

J.J.

SO THAT'S LOVE

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

ANNOUNCEMENTS :

- Birthday celebrants for September
- September 22 is Moving Day (Slaying the Giant : Preparing the field scene)
- Workman's Workshop (start of October)
- Pray for Melanie going to the Philippines
- Share three things about God's goodness : 7 years in Canada, 5 years in our house, 3 years my wife is cancer-free

INTRODUCTION :

For the past few weeks, we've been talking about love. We're still going to continue on this topic

A certain lady wrote to her former fiancé whom she broke up with

"Dear George, for these past few days, you are always in my mind. I thought I'm a fool to have let you go. Now, I always think about you. I made a mistake breaking up our engagement. Please take me back."

Love,

Rachel

P.S. Congratulation on winning the lotto!

1 Corinthians 13 : ⁴ Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; ⁵ does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; ⁶ does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; ⁷ bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Background :

- We have already discussed that the Corinthians were spiritually gifted and have knowledge but there were divisions among them, immorality and pride. Obviously, there was a lack of love for God and for others
- Review :

I. THE PRIMACY OF LOVE (this we have finished)

1 Corinthians 13: 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.

Paul said in the last verse of 1 Corinthians 12

1 Corinthians 12:31 But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.

He then proceeded to talk about the things we do for God and for others is nothing without love.

Today, we will continue with the outline

- II. THE PRACTICE OF LOVE** (we're going to start with this)
- III. THE PERMANENCY OF LOVE** (we'll end with this topic)

THE PRACTICE OF LOVE

Since Paul started to talk about love as the most important and indispensable ingredient in what we do, he then proceeds to show them what love is.

There's a popular song in the 80s with the lyrics:

*I wanna know what love is
I want you to show me*

Of course, the song is talking about romantic love which is "eros" BUT WHAT we're talking about is "agape" love, this is the kind of love that CHRISTIANS (followers of Christ) practice.

Remember, the Christian kind of love entails self-sacrifice and is unconditional

It is not dependent on your mood, or your circumstances or how the other person treats you or reacts to you or on your feelings.

***As described before, we love because we want to not because we have to.**

You know what the opposite of love is?

We immediately think that the opposite of love is hate. No. The opposite of love is "apathy"
Etymology : apathy from "a" nothing "pathos" affection

Apathy is a "I don't care" attitude or "who cares?" attitude

Story : There was this high school teacher who was so fed up with his students who has no enthusiasm in their studies. They don't care at all. One day, he came into class and wrote in the blackboard in big bold letters A-P-A-T-H-Y.

The students became curious and one of them read it "Ey-pathy" and then asked his classmate beside him, "What does "eypathy" means?" The classmate answered with a yawn "Who cares?"

Love by its very nature, cares. It is not passive. It's always active whether by "doing something" or by controlling ourselves "not to do something."

Let's look again :

1 Corinthians 13 : ⁴ Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; ⁵ does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; ⁶ does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; ⁷ bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

***You see how agape love should be practiced?**

It is a positive action

Positive actions are the things we should be actively applying in our lives

Love suffers long and is kind... rejoices in the truth; ⁷ bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

It's also a negative action

Negative actions are the things we should be actively controlling in our lives.

love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; ⁵ does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; ⁶ does not rejoice in iniquity

Example : Part of God's love for us is though He has the right and the power to punish sinners immediately, He doesn't do it. Why?

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

Story : There was story of an atheist professor who was trying to prove to his class that God doesn't exist. He said, "I will curse God for 5 minutes and if He doesn't strike me dead that goes to show that He doesn't exist." So he started cursing God for 5 minutes and nothing happened to him. One student told the story to his theology professor and the theology professor answered, "Do you think he can exhaust God's patience in only 5 minutes?" There is one thing that the atheist professor forgot, God is love and part of His love is that He sent His Son Jesus Christ to die even for those who curses him.

not wanting anyone to perish,

Now regarding the positive and negative actions, God has already given us the power to do this :

2 Peter 1:3 By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence. (NLT)

In short, you don't need to pray to God anymore to give you patience...God has already given you that, we just need to go ahead, walk with Him (be filled with the Spirit) and practice it.

You remember the prayer of the impatient man :

"Lord give me patience...NOW!"

This now brings us to the first practice of love :

Love suffers long

Other translations translate this as “Love is patient...NIV”

Etymology : suffers long; patient “makrothumeo” of long spirit, not to lose heart
Slow to anger, slow to punish

From two words “makros” long or far off or distant and “thumos” anger, from “thuo” to slay or kill

In short, patience is being far from anger or from hurting or killing or avenging

Two elements are involved when it comes to patience :

TIME AND TRIAL (that’s why the translation is long suffering)

Now, when the Bible talks about patience :

- Patience in dealing with our own suffering

What is the one thing you want most when you are undergoing suffering? FOR IT TO END IMMEDIATELY!

There’s one thing about suffering that makes it so hard...WE DON’T KNOW WHEN IT’S GOING TO END...it’s the waiting that makes it difficult

Story : When Chicay was in the middle of battling her cancer (I think that was the second time). She will look at me after her chemo and she would ask, “Matatapos din ba ito?”

That’s why even the Psalmist wrote :

Psalm 13 : 1 Lord, how long must I wait? Will you forget me forever? How long will you turn your face away from me? 2 How long must I struggle with my thoughts? How long must my heart be sad day after day? How long will my enemies keep winning the battle over me? 3 LORD my God, look at me and answer me. Give me new life, or I will die.

You have to remember that it’s not a sin to ask these things, e.g. how long, when will it end and etc.

It becomes sinful when we start complaining just like what the Israelites did to Moses

Numbers 21: ⁴ They traveled from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea, to go around Edom. But the people grew impatient on the way; ⁵ they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!”

⁶ Then the Lord sent venomous snakes among them; they bit the people and many Israelites died. ⁷ The people came to Moses and said, “We sinned when we spoke against the Lord and against you.

Illustration : Lord why did you give me this job? I hate this job. Lord, why did you bring me here to Canada? And etc...

You know why it's sinful when you start complaining in the midst of suffering?

It's because you start doubting or attacking the character of God.

WE SHOW our love for God when we are patient in our suffering.

Be careful when you start asking why (no problem with it in itself if it is an honest question rather than a complaint)

It's like a little child just asking "Why? Why? Why?" No problem with it.

But there's a "Why?" that is already a complaint like "Why only that food? I hate this food."

"Why give me only this kind of life?" "Why is my face like this?"

There's a song in the Prince of Egypt that really touched my heart :

YOU KNOW BETTER THAN I 40:12

I thought I did what's right
I thought I had the answers
I thought I chose the surest road
But that road brought me here
So I put up a fight
And told you how to help me
Now just when I have given up
The truth is coming clear

Chorus 1:

You know better than I
You know the way
I've let go the need to know why
For You know better than I

If this has been a test
I cannot see the reason
But maybe knowing
I don't know is part of getting through
I tried to do what's best
But faith has made it easy
To see the best thing i can do
Is to put my trust in You.

Chorus 2

For, You know better than I
You know the way
I've let go the need to know why
For You know better than I

The more important question is how can you be joyful in the midst of suffering?

Remember, patience must have the element of joy in it.

IMPORTANT : PATIENCE IS SINGING WHILE WAITING

How? Let's look at David again in Psalm 13

5 But I trust in your faithful love. My heart is filled with joy because you will save me. 6 I will sing to the Lord. He has been so good to me.

1. Trust that He faithfully loves you.

But I trust in your faithful love. My heart is filled with joy because you will save me.

You have to remember 1 John 4: 8 God is love.

In short, the attribute of God is love. Everything that He does is out love. He allowed you to undergo that trial because He loves you and He has a higher purpose for you by using that trial.

***Quote :** If you can't see His hand, trust His heart – Charles Spurgeon

2. Remember His goodness to you.

6 I will sing to the Lord. He has been so good to me.

During times of trial, in order for you to sing while waiting, this is the time to remember the blessings He has poured on you before and the blessings that you have right now.

One of the things that I learned from my wife is she says, "When times are good we praise the Lord, but when times are bad we complain to the Lord...nakakahiya sa Dios, ang daming niyang kabutihang ginawa sa atin...nahihiya ako"

I remember another question, she also asked me before while in the middle of cancer aside from "Matatapos din ba ito?" was "Magkakabahay ba tayo?" It's because I'm the only one working during that time and my salary was very small and we had no money for downpayment. But then, God gave us a modest home.

We got our home in 2008 and in 2009 Chicay had cancer again which was much worse than the first one. But during the time she was losing all her hair, she called me while she was washing her hair and clumps were falling in her hand...and she showed it to me.

After I left the bathroom, I tried to listen but instead of hear her crying. I heard singing, she was singing, "Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah to the Lamb!"

Patience is singing while waiting and that's how we show our love for God.

Biblical Illustration : Remember Paul and Silas, Acts 16

Acts 16 : ²² The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten with rods. ²³ After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. ²⁴ When he received these orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

²⁵ About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.

Why? BECAUSE GOD LOVES US AND IS GOOD TO US!

LOVE IS LONG-SUFFERING...LOVE IS PATIENT

***Next week :**

Patience in dealing with the suffering caused by others.

In short, how do we show our love to others by being patient with them.

S.G.D.

Will you

A man in a supermarket was pushing a cart which contained, among other things, a screaming baby. As the man proceeded along the aisles, he kept repeating softly, "Keep calm, Thomas. Don't get excited, Thomas. Don't yell, Thomas."

A lady watched with admiration and then said, "You are certainly to be commended for your patience in trying to quiet little Thomas."

"Lady," he declared, "I'M THOMAS!"