

2-19-23
Aspects of Biblical Love

Introduction:

This past Wednesday we had our annual Valentines banquet. We had a great meal, and a great time. Brother Howell always has a great devotional sharing how God loved us and how we should love God and one another.

This morning I want to continue with our theme concerning Love.

This morning I want to talk about

ASPECTS OF BIBLICAL LOVE

Now for three weeks we have been speaking on the subject of love. I may sound like a broken record. Yet:

Bishop Jerome wrote: "When the venerable John could no longer walk to the meetings of the Church but was borne thither by his disciples, he always uttered the same address to the church; "he reminded them of that one commandment which he had received from Christ Himself, as comprising all the rest, and forming the distinction of the new covenant, "My little children love one another" when the brethren present wearied of hearing the same thing so often asked why he always repeated the same thing, he replied, "Because it is the commandment of the Lord, and if this one thing be attained, it is enough.."

The Apostle John wrote more about love than any other disciple in the Bible. He was called the disciple whom Jesus loved..

We talk a lot about love in the world. Especially leading up to Valentines day, but notice now that it is over, the subject of love has been dropped like a hot potato. WHY? The reason is the world can no longer capitalize on it and sell anything that talks about love. Valentines day is over.

SO WE CAN SAY.."Where is the love??? Where has it gone?
In the world love is just a show, and hype, a word for the birds..

I was just talking to someone and asking about their children. The mom was lamenting the broken marriages and dysfunctional relationships of her children. There is not a family in this country that is not dealing with relatives and family and friends children that are not having problems getting along. Where is the love?

My wife and I have been married for 48 years.. 48 years may seem like a long time to some. It should be the norm because our vows said we would stay together till death do us part.

I had a preacher friend who had connections in the Pocono's and would often get us discounts on places to stay in that resort area.

I think it was on our 25th wedding anniversary that my wife and I went to the Pocono's to get away.. and I was talking to a rabbi in a restaurant.. when I told him that we were there celebrating our 25th wedding anniversary he said they ought to stuff you and put you in a museum. He said that because he said over half of the people in his synagogue were either divorced or going through a divorce and he himself was a divorcee and just recently was going through a divorce..

How is it that people who are suppose to know how to love cannot demonstrate that in their own homes? Where is the love?

I believe that one of the greatest reasons we have so many problems in our nation today is because we have no idea what Biblical love is..

The Bible says this..

I John 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son [to be] the propitiation for our sins.

I John 4:19 We love him, because he first loved us.

We do not by nature love God.. we love him because he first loved us...

If we could only understand and receive and emulate God's love this would solve a lot of problems in our nation today..

THE REASON MARRIAGES ARE IN TROUBLE TODAY IS BECAUSE WE DO NOT KNOW HOW TO LOVE..

THE REASON CHURCHES ARE IN TROUBLE TODAY IS BECAUSE WE DO NOT KNOW HOW TO LOVE..

THE REASON OUR NATION IS IN TROUBLE TODAY IS BECAUSE WE DO NOT UNDERSTAND GOD'S LOVE..

THE BIBLE CLEARLY DEFINES WHAT BIBLICAL LOVE IS:

I Corinthians 13:1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become [as] sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

I Corinthians 13:2 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, and have not charity, I am nothing.

I Corinthians 13:3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed [the poor], and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

ASPECTS OF BIBLICAL LOVE

I. GOD IS LOVE: ALL LOVE PROCEEDS FROM GOD OR IT IS NOT TRUE GODLY LOVE ANYTHING ELSE IS A COUNTERFIT..

I John 4:8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

God is love..

This is quite a statement.. GOD IS LOVE.. That is what he is..

If we do not have God in our life and heart.. we are not able to love properly..

I John 4:7 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

I John 4:8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

I John 4:9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

Apart from our relationship in Christ.. we do not know how to love..

Apart from being born of God we are incapable of true love..

I can't begin to tell you of how many young people that I have known who claim to be madly in love and then a few years after marriage can't stand each other and are in divorce courts.

When we are born of God we then know how to love but words are cheap.

I am thinking of a young man who went to Bible college.. meet a young lady there got married and had 4 children. This young man's mom told me how this young lady he meet in Bible College took off on her husband with another man. She claims she no longer loved him.. they have 4 children.. How is it that we have young people going to Bible college coming out not knowing what Biblical love is and not knowing how to love their spouse and love their children?

The Bible says, Husbands love your wives.. that is a command.. would God command you to do something you cannot do?

The Bible says, that wives need to love and submit to their husbands.. would God ask you to do something you cannot do?

When you say you no longer love the one your commanded to love.. I say you are not willing to obey God. Husbands you are commanded to love your wives, wives your are commanded to love your husband!

A famous preacher's wife once asked him if he loved her... He said of course I love you.. She asked why do you love me? He without hesitation said, because God told me to love you. They were out visiting with another preacher and she said, brother so and so.. when I ask my husband if he loves me, he always says he loves me because God told him to love me. That just doesn't move me very much .. The other preacher said, yeah but I guarantee you it will keep him from moving.

If a man loves his wife because she is beautiful what if a sickness takes away that beauty? If he loves her because God said to love her he will still love her no matter what happens to her body.

If a man loves his wife because she has a pleasant personality, what if that personality changes because of stress or sickness.. But if he loves her because God told him to love her he will love her when circumstances make her unpleasant..

If a man loves his wife for any other reason than God told him to love her, he is walking on thin ice in his marriage.

If other things in the marriage make it easier to love his wife that is the icing on the cake.

II. GOD'S WORD DEFINES GODLY LOVE: GOD CLEARLY DEFINES AND DESCRIBES THE LOVE THAT PROCEEDS FROM HIM IN I COR. 13:4-8

I Corinthians 13:4 Charity suffereth long, [and] is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

I Corinthians 13:5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

I Corinthians 13:6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

I Corinthians 13:7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

I Corinthians 13:8 Charity never faileth: but whether [there be] prophecies, they shall fail; whether [there be] tongues, they shall cease; whether [there be] knowledge, it shall vanish away.

Look at some of the virtues of Love.. None of these virtues are based on what the person loved is able to do for the person who loves!!!

Love Suffereth Long: To bear with people.. patient, endure with them..

makrothumeo, mak-roth-oo-meh'-o; from the same as 3116; to be long-spirited, i.e. (obj.) forbearing or (subj.) patient:-bear (suffer) long, be long-suffering, have (long) patience, be patient, patiently endure.

Notice, the word suffer, and long going together. You are the person who chooses to love, and in the process the one you love may cause you to suffer.. long.. THINK ABOUT THAT.. Who loves someone that causes them suffering?

Jesus did!!!!

Love is Kind: Opposite of kind is RUDE.. mean spirited..

Of the virtuous woman it is said.. Proverbs 31:26 She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue [is] the law of kindness. How do you show a person you love them?

When you're tempted to snap off their head, instead you react kindly to them .. THEN YOU GRADUATED TO GODLY LOVE..

Love envieth not- vaunteth not itself: A person who loves is looking for the best thing for the person they love.... When we seek your own welfare above the other persons welfare .. are we really manifesting a spirit of love?

A person says, well this person better treat me better or else.. You are not loving that other person..

A person says, they better start putting more into this relationship.. this is evidence that you want for yourself and not for the other..

What did Jesus get for himself when he loved us.. did he get anything out of this deal?

Is not puffed up or unseemly... A person who loves does not have the all about me attitude, a person who loves does not say, I could care less about what other people think or feel. Since they are proud and all about themselves, they could care less if they embarrass others, or hurt other people's feeling. UNSEEMLY behavior is embarrassing behavior.. A person who is self centered and proud cannot love in a godly way.

Godly people should behave themselves properly .. This word even carries over the idea of dressing properly covering yourself up.. Not causing embarrassment by your behavior.

Seeketh not her own.. Love by nature is others oriented..

When you are seeking the good of another that is love..
When you are looking for the welfare of the other that is love..
When you are looking to give that is love.. GOD SO LOVED HE GAVE..

Not easily provoked: A person who has a spirit of love does not fly off the handle over every little thing..

And why do you get angry.. it is because you think you deserve better.. DO YOU?

Why are you easily provoked.. is it not because you have a high opinion of yourself.

Consider Philippians Chapter 2 and put your life up against the life that Jesus demonstrated for you and me..

Philippians 2:3 [Let] nothing [be done] through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

Philippians 2:4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

Philippians 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

Philippians 2:6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

Philippians 2:7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

Philippians 2:8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Philippians 2:9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

Philippians 2:10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of [things] in heaven, and [things] in earth, and [things] under the earth;

When people say things like..

Well he or she needs to treat me better.. oh yea, what if Christ said that!

I deserve better than this. Oh yea, so did Jesus. The Bible says let this mind be in you which was in Christ..

Love is long suffering, love is Kind, love envieth not, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked..

Love thinketh no evil: A person who has the spirit of love is not ready to indict everyone..

Do you know the devil is called the accuser of the brethren?

Some people are always looking for the evil in people because their eye is evil. This morbid, paranoia, will destroy your relationships.

Jesus knew every evil thing that was in the heart of every man, yet that did not keep him from loving others. You are going to be a very bitter person if you let the evil that exists in the hearts of others to keep you from loving and demonstrating the love of God.

I Thessalonians 5:15 See that none render evil for evil unto any [man]; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all [men].

Matthew 5:43 Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

Matthew 5:44 But I say unto you, 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;

Matthew 5:45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

Matthew 5:46 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

Matthew 5:47 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more [than others]? do not even the publicans so?

Matthew 5:48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

You have not demonstrated godly love yet until you can love those who do not love you back. Matt. 5:43-48 was the way Jesus loved.

With Job's friends.. we could say, "Where was their love??.. they just thought evil of Job having no evidence he was guilty.. Some people see evil in everyone.. and every thing..

The idea is that if you live this way the Devil has a strong hold in your life.

Remember the devil is called the accuser of the brethren...

If you are an accuser you are playing the part of the devil,

You will notice.. how Jesus never accused anyone unless their deeds were obviously evil, such as the Pharisees. He did not accuse them, he just exposed them.. He exposed their hypocrisy.

He said to the woman taken in adultery go and sin no more.. It was obvious she lived in sin, her repentance is what he sought not her condemnation.

Not easily provoked: A person with a spirit of love will be even tempered..

Rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth: We are living in a day where those who call sin sin are accused of being unloving.. Because we say that homosexuality is a sin we are called unloving.. NO THOSE WHO REJOICE AND BLESS INIQUITY are the ones who do not love..

To not rejoice in iniquity means we should not praise those who do things contrary to the law of God and rebel against God..

Is it love that the world shows by giving Bruce Jenner an award for his shameful transgender operation? Are we to rejoice in that?

Love rejoices not in iniquity.. INIQUITY IS WRONGFUL SINFUL BEHAVIOR.. TO DO THINGS THAT ARE SIN.. OR AGAINST GOD'S COMMANDS OR WORD..

LOVE REJOICES IN THE TRUTH: God's word is truth.. Let God be true and every man a liar..

**III. *GODLY LOVE SHOULD BE EXHIBITED IN A CHRISTIAN'S LIFE:
THE LOVE OF GOD NEEDS TO PERMEATE EVERY ASPECT OF OUR LIFE***

OUR SPEECH: Does our speech show the love of God to others? Do people see in us the love of God?

SPEECH: Charity Suffereth Long.. We could just blast someone and snip at them.. and be sharp with them.. or should we wait to think through what we will say.. take a little time.. suffer long.

SPEECH: Is Kind.. Is your tone of voice kind.. are your words kind?

SPEECH: Should think no evil.. Well.. you just said that because.. How do you know why someone says something?

How many times and how many ways do we accuse people with no proof. We become like the devil himself..

Examples of Accusing..

Job's friends accused him of sin saying that is why God was punishing him..

Sometimes.. someone may not be in church and we accuse them of being neglectful when they may just be sick. Why not call them and find out what is going on?

Sometimes we think someone took something or did something when it was just misplaced..

How quickly we become the Jury and the Judge and sometimes even the executioner..
IS THIS LOVE?

OUR WORKS: Love seeks not her own.. Are we doing, giving.. helping?

Jesus said.. love your neighbour.. and the Pharisees said who is my neighbor.. and then he gave the parable of the good Samaritan.. The Samaritans were considered to be half breed Jews.. 2nd class citizens.. yet he was the only one in the parable that gave a man in need a helping hand when he needed it..

OUR GIVING: How can we say we have the love of God but yet do not help others in need..

James 2:14 What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?

James 2:15 If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,

James 2:16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be [ye] warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what [doth it] profit?

James 2:17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

I John 3:16 Hereby perceive we the love [of God], because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down [our] lives for the brethren.

I John 3:17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels [of compassion] from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

I John 3:18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

IV. GOD'S LOVE IN OUR LIFE IS THE GREATEST EVIDENCE OF OUR SALVATION ULTIMATELY WHEN WE REFLECT GOD'S LOVE IN OUR LIVES IT SHOWS THAT WE ARE CHILDREN OF GOD..

I John 3:10 In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

I John 3:11 For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.

I John 3:12 Not as Cain, [who] was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.

I John 3:13 Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.

I John 3:14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not [his] brother abideth in death.

I John 3:15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

I John 3:16 Hereby perceive we the love [of God], because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down [our] lives for the brethren.

I John 3:17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels [of compassion] from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

I John 3:18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

The proof that we are children of God is that we love each other..

Invitation:

God is love..

When you ask Christ into your heart.. his spirit comes in.. and that spirit is the Spirit of His Love..

He places in us a love for the brethren..

He places in us a the ability to be like him..

When you say you cannot love, you are saying you are not a Christian.

I John 3:14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not [his] brother abideth in death.

How do we demonstrate God's love

Ephesians 4:31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

Ephesians 4:32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

How do we show the love of God one to another

Colossians 3:12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

Colossians 3:13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also [do] ye.

Colossians 3:14 And above all these things [put on] charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

Love and forgiveness go hand in hand. We are commanded to forgive each other and not hold a grudge against each other.

How much more should this be in our families, and marriages, and in God's church?