

L.2 - The Central Issue: Love or Selfishness? - Thursday: A Legacy of Love

1. **What's the central issue? Love OR Selfishness – Let's not overcomplicate it.**
 - a. It is not an abstract concept, but a practical issue lived out "in OUR daily lives"
 - Love or selfishness is a battle we fight from childhood

2. **John 13:35 – *By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.***
 - a. John 13-17 (5 chapters) – is Jesus' "FAREWELL" conversation with His disciples – An EVENING of conversation over a Passover meal – the night before His Crucifixion..
 - Think about HUMAN farewells – to begin to understand Jesus' words perhaps a little better.
 - Jesus' words in John 13 are important, final, from the heart.
 - b. **John 13:33-35 – *"My children, I will be with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and just as I told the Jews, so I tell you now: Where I am going, you cannot come. ³⁴ A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."***
 - These are words Jesus wants ringing in His disciples' ears.
 - When others look for a demonstration of God's love, they will be looking AT YOU!
 - THIS IS THE LEGACY PART OF THURSDAY'S TITLE.
 - c. People want to see Jesus today as much as then.
 - **Sons and Daughters of God 101 – Love is not simply an impulse, a transitory emotion, dependent upon circumstances; it is a living principle, a permanent power. The soul is fed by the streams of pure love that flow from the heart of Christ, as a well-spring that never fails. ... And this because the heart is in love with Jesus. Our affection for one another springs from our common relation to God. We are one family, we love one another as He loved us. When compared with this true, sanctified, disciplined affection, the shallow courtesy of the world, the meaningless expression of effusive friendship, are as chaff to the wheat. To love as Christ loved means to manifest unselfishness at all times and in all places, by kind words and pleasant looks.... It will lead us to bestow little acts of attention, to make concessions, to perform deeds of kindness, to speak tender, true, encouraging words. It will lead us to sympathize with those whose hearts hunger for sympathy.**
 - Such a simple message: THEY WILL KNOW
 - NOT if you're financially blessed, have a great church website, live out the Health Message, preach heart-stirring messages, obey God's Law
 - **1 Corinthians 13:3 – *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.***
 - **IF YOU LOVE EACH OTHER ... IN THE CHURCH AND IN THE HOME**

3. **WHAT CAN WE DO? – Love each other AS CHRIST HAS LOVED YOU**
 - a. **Talk, Read, Think, Pray, Imitate, Look for examples OF CHRIST'S LOVE.**
 - Think of a **name of someone** in the Family of God who you have a conflict with
 - Think of a **situation** where your natural selfish heart won't be loving – Give it to Jesus right now.
 - Think of that **person who cuts you off in traffic**, and the **words that come** to your mind – Ask for help right now.

- Think of someone you need to **humble yourself before and apologize** – Ask God to help you.
 - Think of **someone who has less** than you, and you can lighten their burden – Help them.
- b. **Philippians 2:1-4** – *Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, ² fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. ³ Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. ⁴ Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.*
4. John “got it” from listening to Jesus, and He couldn’t endure the thought of you/us, NOT getting it too.
- a. **1 John 4:21** – And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God *must love his brother also.*
- **1 John 3:11** – *For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another,*
 - **1 John 3:16** – *By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*
 - **1 John 3:23** – *And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.*
 - **1 John 4:7-8** – *Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸ He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.*
 - **1 John 4:11** – *Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.*
5. **1 Corinthians 16:13-14** – *Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong. ¹⁴ Let all that you do be done with love.*
- a. Love really does prepare us to face hardship or persecution.