

Faith, Hope, and Love

1 John 4:16 “God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.”

- **Echos 1 John 4:8** declares, “God is love.” What does that mean?
- Love = not merely something God chooses to do from time to time
- Love = who He is = He governs by holy / unselfish love
- Every true act of mercy / patience / justice / compassion / self-giving flows from His heart
- Cross = clearest revelation of this love.
- **Romans 5:8** “God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”
- God did not wait until we were lovable = He loved us / in our ruin
- He loved us into hope / He loved us toward salvation
- One who calls us / corrects us / prepares eternity for us
 - does so w/ heart of perfect love
- It means that when He transforms us = He is not taking something from us / but restoring us to what we were meant to be

1 John 4:16 “God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.”

- Love = not optional ornamentation for believer
 - Love = received in heart thru union w/ Jesus
 - evidence of abiding in Christ / God
 - evidence of Christ in us = our hope of glory
 - When Christ abides in us = His character begins to appear in us
- John 15:4, 5** “Abide in Me, and I in you. . . . He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.”
- Life that abides in Christ will bear fruit
 - at center of that fruit = is love
 - God = love = source of love = Abide in Vine / Christ Jesus
 - love flows from Him thru us = by power of Holy Spirit = SAP

- Love is not merely something we try to perform
 - Love = fruit of His life within
- Why **1 Corinthians 13** matters so deeply.
- Corinthians had gifts / speech / knowledge / zeal / public spirituality
 - but something vital / missing = conduct revealed they were not walking in spirit of Christ as they should.
- If we remove word “not” from Paul’s description of love, we begin to see tragic diagnosis
 - Instead of being patient = impatient
 - instead of being kind = harsh
 - instead of being humble = boastful / proud
 - Instead of seeking good of others = self-seeking

1 Corinthians 13:1–3 eloquence / prophecy/ understanding/ faith / generosity /even sacrifice = amount to nothing W/O love

- Speak “w/tongues of men /angels” = yet be only “sounding brass”
- have mountain-moving faith = yet be nothing
- Give away all our goods = yet profit nothing
- Heaven not impressed by religious performance W/O
 - Without spirit of Christ’s love
- Before we judge Corinth too quickly= should let passage examine us
- How easy it is to defend truth W/O tenderness = speak doctrine W/O grace = serve W/O compassion = correct W/O tears
- Yet heaven measures our Christianity not only by what we say/dp
 - = but by spirit in which we say/do it

1 Corinthians 13:4, 5 “Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil”

- Not sentimental wedding poem f= giving church spiritual diagnosis
- Not merely moral ideals = descriptions of Jesus = He is patient / kind / not self-exalting / not harsh or selfish / He bears with us / forgives us / continues to love us even while He is transforming us.

- Question / not what would love do? Question / What is Jesus like?
 - Then / by His grace / we imitate Him
 - Love = Christlikeness in action

**John 13:5 By this everyone will know that you are my disciples:
If you love one another**

- And why is love so central? Because love alone will never end.

1 Corinthians 13:8–12 ⁸Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; [no longer need to interpret divine will / in His presence] whether there are tongues, they will cease; [all speak same language] whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. [partial knowledge will vanish / be superseded by complete truth]

⁹For we know in part and we prophesy in part. ¹⁰But **when that which is perfect has come**, then that which is in part will be done away. ¹¹When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. ¹²For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

- Spiritual gifts are given for =church's present need
 - but they are temporary

1 Corinthians . 13:13 "Now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love"

- These three virtues define Christian life
 - Faith lays hold of Christ
 - Hope looks forward to His promises
 - Love reflects His character
- When Christ returns = unfinished will be completed
- Faith will become sight = **2 Cor. 5:7** NOW "we walk by faith, not by sight" = but then = we shall see Him face-to-face
- Hope = in one sense = will be fulfilled
 - **Romans 8:24** "hope that is seen is not hope"
- But love will remain forever

- because love = essence of God's character
- atmosphere of heaven
- .
- Very soon = will see our Lord face-to-face
- Until that day = let our lives be defined by faith / hope / love
 - Arguments cannot heal / wounded soul
 - Pride cannot restore / fallen
 - Harshness cannot win / the wandering
 - Only love of Christ can do that
- Let faith anchor us in Christ
- Hope lift our eyes to His coming
- Love reveal that He truly lives in us
- For when Christ abides in the heart = love will be / evidence.
 - And that love will never fail.