

THE POWER OF LOVE

TEXT: “And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people will be my people, and thy God , my God. Where thou diest, I will die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death, part thee and me” (Ru.1:16-17).

THESIS: To show the impact the right kind of love can have on our lives.

INTRODUCTION:

1. Sometimes, people use the word love in a shallow, general way.
 - a. The love they have for sports.
 - b. The love they have for a certain food.
 - c. Even the love they might express for an animal.
2. At other times, people will use the word love in a more serious manner.
 - a. The love they have for their parents.
 - b. The love between a husband and wife.
 - c. Also, the love one has for their children.
3. In the Old Testament, Ruth displayed a love that was stronger than most.
 - a. A love that caused her to stay, even when she had the opportunity and encouragement to leave her mother-in-law.
 - i. “And Naomi said unto her two daughters in law, Go, return each to her mother's house: the LORD deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me.” (Ru.1:8).
 - ii. Naomi had figured that since her husband, Elimelech had died and since her sons Mahlon and Chilion (Ruth and Orpah’s husbands) died, that she had nothing left to offer them as she now made her way back to Moab in the land of Judah.
 - iii. “And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters: why will ye go with me? are there yet any more sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands?” (Ru.1:11).
 - b. Naomi thought that there would be too high of expectations or obligations on her part and that it would be too much of a burden upon Ruth and Orpah for them to stay.
 - c. However, while Orpah departed unto her own people, Ruth cleaved (meaning: to cling to or followed closely) to Naomi.
4. Therefore, let us look at a more meaningful, fulfilling love by noting the following:
 - a. How we are to love.
 - b. The way we should express this love.
 - c. What happens when we have this type love.

DISCUSSION:

I. HOW WE ARE TO LOVE

- A. We should love in the way that God loves us, which shows others our love.
1. Jesus said, “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.” (Jn.13:34)
 - a. Jesus introduced a higher order of love which was the love that caused him to leave Heaven, come to the earth and suffer and die for his disciples.
 - b. This love was to become the very badge of discipleship.
 2. For, “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, **if ye have love one to another.**” (Jn.13:35).
 - a. Therefore, it is this self–denying love that is the world’s greatest asset, being the most heavenly quality known to man.
 - b. By which, it points others to Christ so they may see him as the author because it shines forth from his excellency.
- B. Furthermore, we are to love in a way that is more than just a casual affection for someone.
1. Paul told us, “Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;” (Rom.12:10).
 - a. This means that Christians must cultivate affections toward one another in the true spirit of brotherly love.
 - b. For, we are to seek out to honor our brother instead of **seeking the highest order for ourselves.**
 2. “And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you.” (1 Thess. 3:12).
 - a. We should love one another so much that we are unable to rest (meaning never ceasing) until we make an earnest effort to make known the will of God to all men.
 - b. For, the Christians obligation to love and to serve is not to be limited in its objects to other Christians, nor does it in any way depend on the love or hate that others may show.
 - c. There is no limit to the heart’s capacity for love because it has no boundaries.
 3. “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:” (1 Pet.1:22).
 - a. Those that are obedience and grounded to the truth, do not love hypocritically (meaning to play or to lie about the love they have for another).
 - (1) This is not true love.
 - b. We are to love based on the worthiness or preciousness of the person loved.
 - c. We are to love fervently meaning intensely, forceful, pointed and vivid.
 - d. For children of God are not to love one another indifferently or

loosely, but with the full tension of the heartstrings drawn out fully by which this symphony or harmony rises to Heaven and falls pleasingly on the ears of our heavenly Father.

- C. It should be a love that shows doing for others, without having expectations for rewards.
1. “For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.” (Gal.5:13).
 - a. We are not to use our liberty by the Gospel to justify our actions to the flesh.
 - b. Instead, love seeks the good of others which does us good.
 - c. For, love is not something said, but something practiced and when we serve others in love as we would serve ourselves, then love is displayed because if we display our love in words only, then it cannot be love.
 - d. This is why the Christian will not merely work privately and alone, but seeks out others to love.
 2. Jesus said, “If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.” (Jn.12:26).
 - a. Now, to follow Jesus is to do his will.
 - b. Therefore, in living like him in his self-sacrificial way, we will be made like him in character.
 - c. For as God honored his Son, so will he honor all who serve his Son.
 - d. And we cannot build on the hope of glory with God on the solid foundation of self-denial and self-sacrifice **if** we mistakenly build ourselves upon self-savings and self-indulgence.
- D. **We are to love in a way that people might see God in us.**
1. In fact, the apostle in whom Jesus loved, wrote, “Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.” (1 Jn.4:7).
 - a. The apostle John, tells us that tenderness and genuine love is a characteristic of true saints.
 - b. In addition, love is the foundation stone of all of Christ’ commandments and it is imperative that each saint be impressed with its essentiality (or basic importance).
 - c. For love in this passage, is a sign and proof of the new birth and not a condition precedent to it.
 2. Therefore, love is the one characteristic of the Christian religion which it is impossible to counterfeit!
 - a. Now, a wicked man may have baptism. He may have prophecy, he may receive the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ (1 Cor. 11:29). All these things a wicked man may have. But, no wicked

- man can have love.
3. “This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.” (Jn.15:12).
 - a. Jesus loves us so.
 - b. And while our love would not be equal in strength to his love, we must cultivate the same love for another and be willing to deny self and suffer for one another.

II. THE WAY WE SHOULD EXPRESS THIS LOVE

- A. It should express our patience, care, and giving attitude toward people.
 1. Love (charity) suffereth long (1 Cor.13:4).
 - a. This is the endurance over natural impulses to be long spirited and patient.
 2. Love is kind (1 Cor 13:4) to those who do evil.
 - a. It is good natured, gentle, tender and affectionate.
 - (1) It is not sour, harsh, morose (dark) and ill-natured.
 - b. It means to have the attitude that we are to actively be doing good to as many individuals as possible because if we defer our love meaning, if we say to ourselves, we will love them tomorrow, the opportunity may pass and tomorrow may never come.
 3. Also notice that, love envieth not (1 Cor.13:4).
 - a. This means that we are not to be unease at the sight of another’s excellence or good fortune with the accompaniment of hate, desire, or grudging of another’s.
 - b. Love does not envy the happiness and prosperity others enjoy, but lights in their welfare.
- B. For, we are to love in a way that is not artificial, not centered on ourselves, but sincere.
 1. Love vaunteth not, is not puffed up (1 Cor.13:4).
 - a. This means that the love that we express is not to take the upper seat meaning to think too highly of himself.
 - b. For one Christian is not superior to another, priding himself up.
 2. And love, seeketh not her own (1 Cor.13:5).
 - a. True love does not seek its own selfish desires, but looks to the good and happiness of all.
 - b. To love is to sacrifice and if all Christians would make it their grand object not to seek their own but the good of others, then true love would occupy its appropriate place in the heart of every professed child of God.
 3. Then there would be:
 - a. No lack of funds to carry foward the glorious Gospel.
 - b. There would be no lack of men willing to devote their lives to the glorious work

- c. There would be no lack of prayer to implore aid from God to live up to the fullest measure of duty.
- 4. Furthermore, love rejoiceth in the truth (1 Cor. 13:6).
 - a. The truth is the inseparable ally of love.
 - b. However, false love is seen when compromises are being made to the Truth by glossing man's iniquity and unrighteousness into the Scriptures for their non-love of the truth and of God.

III. WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE HAVE THIS TYPE OF LOVE?

- A. Well, God will be in our lives.
 - 1. "No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us." (1Jn.4:12)
 - a. On the condition that we love one another we can see two results:
 - (1) First, God abides in us.
 - (2) Second, his love is perfected in us.
 - b. God abides in us as we conform to his will and walk in harmony with his precepts.
 - c. We thus develop and make mature our love for God as we love one another more and more because love for others is a token of the love which we have for God.
 - 2. In addition, Moses wrote that, "thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." (Deut.6:5)
 - a. Now, this does not mean that we love half-heartedly for we are to engraft the words of God in our hearts and love him.
 - b. It is this type of love that the soul or personality in man follows allowing that love to be pervading (spreading throughout) his life.
 - c. Henceforth, loving the Lord with all the heart and soul gives a Christian strength to not only observe the commandments of God, but to let them flow out indicating his spiritual principles, dedication and great love for Jehovah God.
 - 3. Notice also that Paul said, "Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love," (Eph.3:17).
 - a. Christ is the food for the heart by which feeds the soul and makes the Christian strong.
 - b. It is by Christ dwelling in us that allows us to teach, work and suffer for him as he is in our thoughts which shapes the Christians life and shows us direction and purpose that shapes our character.
 - c. And, it is by this love that we surrender to him, bowing before him in all humility, seeking only his honor while our soul thrill with desire and love for him.
 - d. For the root of a man's faith and hope must penetrate, not inward into the love which he exercises, but outward to others.
 - 4. "And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might

be filled with all the fulness of God.” (Eph.3:19)

a. This love helps to fill the soul

B. Now, if we love in such a way, we will have a life without fear; one with peace and contentment.

1. “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.” (1 Jn.4:18)

a. For, “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom . . .” (Psa. 110:10)

b. Love is not something that we can have too much of, neither is it something that we gain all at once.

c. Love takes time and when we have an attitude of respect, reverence or holy awe fear begins to be replaced with genuine love.

d. Therefore, when one is fearful of the judgment, his love is imperfect for a Christian is to strive for the inner peace that only God can provide.

(1) For, “The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever . . .” (Psa. 19:9)

(2) Perfect love cast out.

2. Likewise, Paul said, “Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.” (2 Cor.13:11)

a. We are to continually strive to be perfect before God, seeking the good in each other as we seek to walk by the same rule, that is, by the directions of the word of God.

b. For, the God that is full of love and peace will dwell with them and fill their hearts with the same love and peace that he possesses.

3. “For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” (2 Tim.1:7).

a. This is a grave reminder to Christians of every age and degree that all cowardice, all dread of danger, all shrinking from doing one’s duty for fear of man’s displeasure, proceeds not from the Spirit of God.

b. Now, it does not matter how learned, wise or honored a man is in the world because if he does not accept Christ, then he has missed out on the only true wisdom that leads to true love.

C. And when time is no more, a Christian who has followed the word of God, will have the assurance and confidence in judgement that no harm will come to him.

1. “Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” (2Tim.4:8)

a. This is a crown that comes as a reward of the righteous life that one has lived.

b. We should love our up and coming crown of righteousness because

it is ready and waiting for all those who are right in the sight of God.

2. “Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.” (1 Jn.4:17).
 - a. The more we increase in love, the less we have to fear that, in that day, we shall be found wanting.
 - b. Love expresses itself in service to others of what they need whether it be food, clothing, shelter, visiting or the Gospel. (Jam. 2:1-6; Matt. 25:34-40)

CONCLUSION:

1. We have seen the difference love can make in our lives by looking at:
 - a. How we are to love.
 - b. The way we should express this love.
 - c. What happens when we have this type love.
2. Ruth’s love resulted in marrying a good man and being part of the genealogy of Christ.
 - a. “So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: and when he went in unto her, the LORD gave her conception, and she bare a son . . . And the women her neighbours gave it a name, saying, There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed:” (Ru.4:13-17a).
 - b. “And Salmon begat Boaz, and Boaz begat Obed, And Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David.” (Ru.4:21-22).
 - c. Revelation records, “I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.” (Rev. 22:16)
3. We can all have the love that provides peace in this life and eternity in heaven one day by:
 - a. Being obedient to all the commands of our Lord.
 - b. Remaining faithful to this love unto death.
4. I encourage you to respond to the invitation, to participate in the power of the greatest love known to man.