

SPRING QUARTER SUNDAY SCHOOL 2015

THEME: THE PRESENCE, POWER AND PROPERTIES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT UNIT III – HIS PROPERTIES

“OBEYING CHRIST’S TEACHINGS CONCERNING UNCONDITIONAL LOVE” (“What’s Love Got To Do With It?”)



Sunday School Lesson No. XIV – May 31, 2015
Rev. Frank A Davis, III – Pastor-Teacher

Lesson Text: I Corinthians 13:1-13

Motto Text: I Corinthians 13:13 (KJV), “*And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.*”
(The Message), “*But for right now, until that completeness, we have three things to do to lead us toward that consummation: Trust steadily in God, hope unswervingly, love extravagantly. And the best of the three is love.*”

Required Reading: I Corinthians 13

Reliable Resources: Union Gospel Press Expositor and Illuminator; Precepts for Living (UMI); Word-Search
10 Electronic Library System; Barnes Notes on the New Testament MacArthur Study Bible;
Transformed Living in Tough Times (pgs. 115-116); Spiritual Warfare by Dr. David Jeremiah;
The Outline Bible by H. L. Willmington

LESSON INTRODUCTION

Beloved, who do you want to define the truth about love? I’ve heard the poet, the musician, and the artist, but I have decided to make Christ my choice, for love can only be defined by its Author. I John 3:1-3 tells us, “*Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.*” We now come to the last lesson in I Corinthians for this quarter. It is sometimes seen as Paul’s swan song of truth. After using several chapters to establish divinely important insight in the hearts of the Corinthians, Paul now summarizes the greatest point of all. No matter what a Christian’s gift from God may be, it can only properly function when it is submerged in the unconditional love of Christ that should abide in every Christian’s heart. Not a

love that is tainted by conditions placed over another's head, but the kind of love that looks beyond one's faults in order to see one's needs. This is the love Greeks called "Agape," the unconditional love practiced and taught to us through the substitutionary sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ! It is the kind of love that is truly unconditional and in spite of all else!

Finally beloved, gifts without unconditional love are nothing but windbags of waste! Literally, they profit nothing for the gifted or the giftee.

Anticipated Power Points:

- Futility of Love's Absence. I Corinthians 13:1-3
- Fullness of Love's Activity. I Corinthians 13:4-7
- Future of Love's Abiding. I Corinthians 13:8-13

OUTLINE

"Obeying Christ's Teachings Concerning Unconditional Love" **("What's Love Got To Do With It?")**

I. Futility of Love's Absence. I Corinthians 13:1-3

Paul's continuation from Chapter 12 is defined by what he learned from Christ's teachings: No matter how gifted, blessed, or highly-favored I am, without experiencing the love of Christ, I am nothing. No one can practice good Christianity with an absence of love. The question asked by Tina Turner is "What's love got to do with it?" And the answer from Christ through the Apostle Paul is... **"Everything!"**

A. Love prevails over the gift of tongues. vs. 1

Paul describes the gift to speak a language never studied as nothing but noise, without love. He even uses hyperbole to say that if one could speak as an angel, without love it is futile!

B. Love prevails over the gifts of prophecy, knowledge and faith that can reveal all of Heaven's mysteries.

Without unconditional love in one's heart, such gifts profit nothing! vs. 2

C. Love prevails over all the gracious gifts of benevolence that one could possess, according to verse 3.

Without love, the most precious of gifts are not profitable at all!

II. Fullness of Love's Activity. I Corinthians 13:4-7

Now Paul turns a corner and begins to describe the fullness of active love in a believer. Again, "What's love got to do with it?"... *"Everything!"* Note how the Message Bible describes the fullness of active love: vs. 4 – ***"Love never gives up. Love cares more for others than for self. Love doesn't want what it doesn't have. Love doesn't strut, Doesn't have a swelled head."*** vs. 5 – ***"Doesn't force itself on others, Isn't always 'me first,' Doesn't fly off the handle, Doesn't keep score of the sins of others."*** vs. 6 – ***"Doesn't revel when others grovel, Takes pleasure in the flowering of truth."*** vs. 7 – ***"Puts up with anything, Trusts God always, Always looks for the best, Never looks back, But keeps going to the end."*** Beloved, thank God for the fullness of active love. It is always at work and never at rest!

III. Future of Love's Abiding. I Corinthians 13:8-13

The beauty of unconditional love is that it never fails, or literally, never comes to an end! Why not? Because God is love! I John 4:8, ***"He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."*** Paul declares without doubt that the unconditional love of God will abide forever. Note: Prophecy will end; there will come an end of speaking in different languages (Genesis 11:1). The knowledge of men will reach its limitation. For all that we have learned or what we have acquired is limited to a time. The day will come according to verse 10, when the perfection and completion of the Eternal shall cancel all else. Though we as Paul grow daily in spiritual maturity, putting away the toys of our childhood, love will ever abide! All that we are now in Christ is but a dimmed mirror as to what we will one day become. But until then faith, hope and love will have a place, but the greatest of these divine intangibles that will abide into the eternal eons of everlasting is **LOVE!**

"What's Love Got To Do With It?" Beloved...*"Everything!"*

CLOSING

Beloved, remember our closing words found in I John 4:7-11 (PHILLIPS), *“To you whom I love I say, let us go on loving one another, for love comes from God. Every man who truly loves is God’s son and has some knowledge of him. But the man who does not love cannot know him at all, for God is love. To us, the greatest demonstration of God’s love for us has been his sending his only Son into the world to give us life through him. We see real love, not in that fact that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to make personal atonement for our sins. If God loved us as much as that, surely we, in our turn, should love each other!”*

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Looking Ahead:

June 7, 2015

Amos 2:4-8

You are invited to attend Noon Bible Study every Wednesday as Pastor Davis teaches the lesson at Bibleway.