

Advent: Love

[1Co 13:1-13 ESV] 1 If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. 4 Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant 5 or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; 6 it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. 7 Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part, 10 but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. 11 When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. 12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known. 13 So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

I. Intro

A. Recap:

1. Hope: Expectation
2. Peace: Freedom in Christ
3. Joy: cannot be separated from Christ's presence
4. Love: The greatest of these attributes

B. When we genuinely Love, we demonstrate an attribute of God.

1. Once again, the divine imperative and the divine indicative collide
2. God loves as only he can, and indication of His divine attribute.
3. God tells us to love, by His power, and with His love.

C. Love words in the NT:

1. Phileo: love for a brother
2. Agape: Love like God
3. Both words are attributes of the Spirit filled life, but today we are focusing on AGAPE

D. God showed HIS LOVE for humanity in the incarnation, we remember that in the Advent.

E. The passage for today is an example for us to follow, and a statement of who God is.

1. Passages that set the stage:
2. God is Love:
 - a) [1Jo 4:8 ESV] 8 Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.
 - b) [1Jo 4:16 ESV] 16 So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.
3. Perfect Love: [1Jo 4:18 ESV] 18 There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.
4. Love in Action: [Jhn 3:16 ESV] 16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

II. Text

A. Read 1 Corinthians 13

B. Verses 1-3:

1. This is directed to instruct us of how to act/react
2. We are to possess this attribute of love as an example of Christ in us.

C. Verses 4-8:

1. Christ was an example for each of these attributes

2. His example is for us to follow.
3. ALL OF US

D. Verses 9-13

1. Right now, we are in an imperfect place, in an imperfect battle with our flesh
2. There will be a day when it all becomes clear
3. There will be a day of perfection
4. This is the promise of LOVE in action, it will have immediate effect, yet will never end and be experienced in perfection.

III. Points

A. Love God

1. The simplest of commands, but the most profound
2. Love God, this is seen in the 10 commandments and in the restating of the 10 commandments with Jesus in the gospels.
3. Our journey starts with Love
 - a) But the Love does not start in us, but in God
 - b) Then we come around eventually, but embrace this truth
 - c) We Love God, His Holiness, His work
 - d) We Love God! Though, our flesh is a war with this truth!
4. How is your flesh at war with this truth?
 - a) Lack of Trust
 - b) Lack of obedience
 - c) Lack of acknowledgment
 - d) Selfishness!
5. Selfishness is the enemy of the Advent
 - a) When we focus on self rather than rely on God
 - b) When we tell God "We've got this" rather than trust in Him and what He has done
 - c) When our hope is in something other than the incarnation
 - d) When our peace is a counterfeit
 - e) When our joy is separated from Jesus
 - f) When we love self more than we Love God.

B. Love Like God

1. 1 Corinthians 13 is an example of Christian Love found in the person of Christ
2. He did this, and we shall as well.
3. How would your world look different if you LOVED LIKE GOD?
 - a) Unconditional?
 - b) With GRACE?
4. How would you impact the world with your life?
 - a) You would be marked
 - b) You would demonstrate truth...the whole truth...Grace and Truth
5. What needs to change?

C. Love of God

1. You are loved by God
2. That will never change
3. There is no place you go, no deed you've done, not thought you think that is past the redemptive love of God!
4. You are chosen, and forgiveness is available for you.

IV. Close

- A. Love people enough to share truth and life with them
- B. Love God enough to invite Him into the areas you have walled off
- C. Allow transformation to continue in you