

LOVE: THE MOTIVATION FOR CHRISTMAS

1 COR. 13

I. INTRODUCTION-

- A. What motivated Jesus to leave the glories of Heaven...the worship of angels...the fellowship of the Father and the Holy Spirit...to come to earth as a human being... as a servant...to die a cruel death on the cross for our sins?
- B. The answer is love...*John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."*
- C. The Bible says that those who have experienced the saving love of Jesus Christ ... have an obligation to share that love with others...through our words and through our actions.
- D. These verses paint a beautiful picture of the Christ-like love...that believers are to show to others...at Christmas time and through the whole year.

II. THE ESSENTIALNESS OF LOVE-

- A. *1 Corinthians 13:1-3 (NIV) "If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing."*
- B. These verses stress the essentialness of love...if we fail to love others as we should ... nothing else we do matters.
- C. Even if a person has the eloquence of an angel...if they fail to love others as they should...their eloquence is meaningless.
- D. Even if a person has the ability to understand all spiritual mysteries...and has all spiritual knowledge...if they don't have love ... they are nothing.
- E. Even if a person has faith in God to do great miracles...if they don't have love ...they are nothing.

Even if a person gives all that they have to feed the poor...if they don't have love they are nothing...Even if a person sacrifices all that they have...including their own life...if they don't have love they are nothing.

- F. Love is absolutely essential...if we fail to love others as we should...nothing else matters.

III. THE DESCRIPTION OF LOVE-

- A. Verses 4-7...describe the Christ-like love that believers are to have toward others ... *1 Corinthians 13:4-7 "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5 It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres."*
- B. **Love is patient...**love is not short-tempered...love is patient with people...who irritate us...aggravate us...or who have wronged us.
- C. Love has the ability to be taken advantage of...to be wronged...to be insulted...to be injured...and still refuse to retaliate or seek revenge.
- D. Jesus had this kind of love...*1 Peter 2:23 (NIV) "When they hurled their insults at Jesus, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly."*
- E. **Love is kind...**this means to be kind-hearted...gracious...helpful...even to those who don't deserve it...Jesus was always kind...He even prayed for those who crucified Him.
- F. **Love is not jealous...**love is not jealous or envious of the success ... abilities ... possessions ...or the recognition others receive...love rejoices when others are blessed.
- G. Jesus did not jealously hang on to His heavenly position...but willingly set it aside to come into the world.
- H. **Love does not boast...**love does not brag...or crave the recognition and the attention of others.
- I. **Love is not proud...**love is not arrogant...big-headed...it is not puffed up...not conceited ... does not demean others in order to promote and build oneself up.
- J. **Love is not rude...**love does not go out of the way to offend someone else...to hurt the feelings of someone else...love is not ungracious...inconsiderate... or insensitive to the feeling of others.
- K. **Love is not selfish...**love is not self-consumed...preoccupied only with its own things...love is truly interested in the welfare of others.
- L. **Love is not easily angered...**love does not get angry or irritable when we don't get our way...or when someone disagrees with us...love is able to disagree ...

without being disagreeable.

- M. **Love keeps no record of wrongs...**love does not keep a record or an account of grudges and resentment...seeking an opportunity to get even.
- N. **Love does not delight in evil...**love does not tolerate evil...Jesus forgave the woman caught in adultery...but then He told her... "*go and sin no more*"...love does not find wickedness, immorality and iniquity entertaining...love does not delight when others fall into sin.
- O. **Love rejoices in the truth...**in the truth of God's Word...in what is true.
- P. **Love bears all things...**love defends...protects...and picks people up when they are down...love does not beat them down.
- Q. **Love believes all things...**love is not gullible...but neither does it jump to conclusions ...it is not suspicious or cynical...love gives people the benefit of the doubt.
- R. **Love hopes all things...**love does not give up on people...it refuses to take failure as final...love prays for...works for...and hopes for the salvation...repentance or restoration of others.
- S. **Love endures all things...**loves never stops loving.

IV. CONCLUSION-

- A. It is impossible to have this kind of love ... out of our own human resources or abilities.
- B. The only way we can love like this...is by daily abiding with Christ in prayer, holiness, worship and His Word...by living under the control of the Holy Spirit ...the more we sit at the Master's feet...the more His love will be reflected in us.
- C. When a person comes to Christ...out of His great love...God forgives our sin...our sin record in heaven is forever wiped out.
- D. *Romans 4:7-8 "Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. 8 Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never count against him." Acts 3:19 "Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord."*