

# DOCTRINE OF LOVE

September 20, 1983

- I. Love is an attribute of divine essence (1Jn.4:8 "*God is love*").
  - A. All three members of the Trinity possess this attribute.
    - 1. The Father (Jn.3:16).
    - 2. The Son (Rom.8:37).
    - 3. The Holy Spirit (Rom.15:30).
  - B. God's love does not exist apart from His Righteousness and Justice, or God would be sentimental (cp. Ps.45:7; Heb.1:9).
  - C. Since each member of the Godhead is absolute Righteousness, it follows that each member of the Trinity loves the other (cp. Jn.17:1-23).
  - D. God's love is unchanging (Micah.7:18-20).
  
- II. The greatness of God's love is demonstrated by the provision of eternal salvation.
  - A. God loved all men and so gave His Son for all men (Jn.3:16; Ti.3:3-7).
  - B. God's love was based on His integrity, not on our merit (1Jn.4:10).
  - C. We were God's enemies due to the indwelling sinful trend of Adam, spiritual death, and personal sins, yet God still was motivated to provide eternal salvation (Rom.5:8 "*But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*").
  - D. God's love enabled us to go from being His enemies to being His children (1Jn.3:1 "*See how great a love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him*").
  - E. As sons of God, we can never be separated from God's love, since God's love does not depend on us (Rom.8:35-39). Since God's love for us did not depend on us in the first place, it does not depend on us to keep it.
  - F. The *a fortiori* argument of God's love to the believer is stated in Rom.8:32 "*He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?*"
  
- III. The objects and applications of God's love.
  - A. Spiritually dead humanity (Jn.3:16).
    - 1. Christ died for all (1Tim.4:10).
    - 2. So all have the blessings of salvation as potential.
    - 3. Only by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ can men possess the blessings of salvation.
    - 4. Those who reject God's love in Christ perish in hell.
  - B. For believers.
    - 1. All believers are in union with Christ (1Cor.12:13; Gal.3:26-28).
    - 2. All believers share the same love that the Father has for His Son (Eph.1:5,6 "*in the Beloved*"; cp. 1Thess.1:4 "*beloved*" of the Royal Family).

3. However, all believers do not share the same degree of temporal and eternal blessings due to differences in growth and application (Jn.15:9; 16:27).
4. Divine discipline is proof of God's love (Heb.12:6; Rev.3:19).
5. God will demonstrate His love for believers in Ph3 (Rev.3:9).

IV. Category 1 love is the believer's love for God.

- A. It is commanded (Deut.11:1; Jn.15:9,10; Jd.21).
- B. The evidence of category 1 love is the knowledge and application of doctrine (Jn.14:15,21,23,24; 1Jn.5:3).
- C. The blessings associated with category 1 love are found in Deut.7:13, 11:13-15, 19:9-10, and Jam.1:12; 2:5.
- D. Category 1 love is also called occupation with Christ (1Pet.1:8).
- E. One who has maximum doctrine and who has a proportionate degree of application is called a "*friend of God*" (Jn.15:14; Jam.2:23).
- F. Those who do not attain to the love of God are under a curse (1Cor.16:22).

V. Category 2 love is love for right man/right woman.

- A. It is commanded of right man to right woman (Eph.5:25,28,33; Col.3:19).
- B. Of wives to their husbands (Ti.2:4).

VI. Category 3 love is love for friends (David and Jonathan, 2Sam.1:26).

- A. A true friend loves at all times (Prov.17:17; 18:24).
- B. A true friend tells you what you need to hear (Prov.27:6).
- C. A true friend does not malign (Ps.15:3).
- D. A true friend shows hospitality (Lk.11:5,6).
- E. Category 3 love is used to illustrate category 1 love (Jn.15:14; 2Chr.20:7; Jam.2:23; 4:4).
- F. A friend of the cosmos is not a friend of God (1Jn.2:15,16).

VII. Category 4 love is love of one's personal enemies.

- A. Believers are to pray for those who persecute them (Mt.5:43-48).
- B. You are to avoid revenge tactics and use opportunities to bless them (Rom.12:20,21).
- C. As you apply category 4 love, you will imitate God's love as seen in the Cross.
- D. It was taught under the Law (Ex.23:4).

VIII. Category 5 love is love for fellow believers.

- A. It is commanded (Jn.13:34 "*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another*"; cp. 1Jn.2:7; 3:11,23; 2Jn.5; Jn.15:12,17; 1Pet.2:17).
- B. It was taught under the Law (Lev.19:18).
- C. It is demonstrated when we exercise patience towards each other (Eph.4:2).
- D. It is synonymous with the filling of the Holy Spirit and GAP (Col.3:14).
- E. It is an appropriate subject of prayer (1Thess.3:12).

- F. It is to be applied towards the royal chain of command (1Thess.5:13).
  - G. It is not characterized by hypocrisy (Rom.12:9; 1Pet.1:22).
  - H. It does not cause fellow believers to stumble (Rom.14:15).
  - I. It is manifest by helping a fellow believer with physical needs (1Jn.3:17,18).
  - J. It is a source of inner confidence that we are saved (1Jn.3:10,14; cp. 3:19).
  - K. Forgiveness (love) covers a multitude of sins (1Pet.4:8).
  - L. It is demonstrated by showing hospitality (Heb.13:1,2).
  - M. Hebrews 10:24 is an exhortation to stimulate one another to application in this area.
- IX. Positive volition is to love God's Word (Pss.119:47, 48, 97, 113, 119, 127, 159, 163, 165, and 167; Prov.4:6; 8:17,21; 2Thess.2:10).
- X. Love and GAP.
- A. The Pastor who loves God feeds his congregation (Jn.21:15-17).
  - B. Love for God is to keep His commandments (Ex.20:6; Deut.6:5; 7:9,10,12,13; 11:13,22; 13:3; Josh.22:5; Neh.1:5; 1Jn.2:5).
  - C. The knowledge of God's love for us is broadcast in our hearts by the Holy Spirit (Rom.5:5).
  - D. The love of Christ for the believer is comprehended under GAP (Eph.3:14-19; Col.2:2,3).
  - E. GAP gives us the discernment so that our love applications may abound (Phil.1:9).
  - F. Capacity for, and acclimation to, the dictates of love produce unity in the local body and maximum production and SG3 (Col.3:12-17).
  - G. The prayer for the Royal Family is multiplication of love, which comes through GAP (Jd.2).
- XI. Love is a characteristic of the filling of the Holy Spirit and is expressed in the commands to "*walk in love*" (Eph.5:2), "*abide in love*" (Jn.15:10), and "*put on love*" (Col.3:14).
- XII. In 1Cor.13 love is technical for the filling ministry of God the Holy Spirit, apart from which there is no divine good production.
- A. Five hypothetical statements are used to show the foolishness of great service, insight, and sacrifice apart from the FHS (vv.1-3).
  - B. In vv.4-7 Paul describes the characteristics of the FHS both in positive and negative terms.
  - C. In vv.8-12 Paul explains that the FHS (love) will continue long after the temporary gifts have ceased.
  - D. In fact, love (FHS) will continue into Ph3, where faith and hope cease (v.13).
- XIII. To the extent you stay under the FHS, to that degree you will have divine good production (Jn.15:5; cp. v.9).
- XIV. Christ possesses God's love in super abundance.

- XV. The mature believer loves His appearing (2Tim.4:8).
- XVI. The believer who is in danger is said to have "*left his first love*" (Rev.2:4), or his love has "*grown cold*" (Mt.24:12).
- XVII. Conclusion.
  - A. 1Cor.14:1, "*pursue love*".
  - B. 2Cor.6:6, "*in genuine love*".
  - C. Eph.6:24, "*Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with a love incorruptible*".

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