

# 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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