

# LOVE ON DISPLAY III:

## The Process, The Pain, The Power of Love

We must fight through all obstacles to allow the power of love to be evident in our lives and relationships.

### KEY POINTS

- ▶ Have you ever said, "I'm willing to go to the one who has wronged me and do what the Lord says I should do, but I'm afraid they'll react very negatively"?
- ▶ This is a totally natural fear, as there is often pain in loving as Jesus loved – but it's worth the effort for the power of love that will flow through us!
- ▶ Romans 13:8-10 (NKJV) says the following:
  - Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. <sup>9</sup> For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness," "You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." <sup>10</sup> Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.
- ▶ We are blessed to have God's Word to help us understand the "process" we should follow. According to God's Word, we should...
  - 1) ...initiate the process (take the first step). Matthew 18:15 says, "...if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone..."
  - 2) ...actively, humbly, engage in self-sacrifice in order to repair relationships, just as Jesus did (Philippians 2:3-8).
  - 3) ...be patient and kind to everyone (1 Corinthians 13:4).
  - 4) ...be willing and ready to listen to what others have to say. (After all, we do listen to those we love.)
  - 5) ...pray for those who have hurt us (Matthew 5:44).
- ▶ Displaying love often comes at the cost of personal pain, including the following possibilities:
  - **Misunderstanding.** After Nahash the king of Ammon died, David was misunderstood as he tried to show care and concern for his family (2 Samuel 10:1-4).
  - **Rejection.** Jesus came to His own people and they rejected Him (John 1:11).
  - **Open hostility** against us. This was Jesus' experience. (Prophecy: Isaiah 53:3; Fulfilment: Matthew 27:22-26).
  - Then there's the pain that comes from the **destruction of our pride** as we take the lower place in seeking to heal relationships (1 John 2:16).
- ▶ Despite these obstacles, an incredible, life-changing, God-honouring power is displayed when we love as Jesus taught us to love:

### KEY SCRIPTURES

Romans 13:8-10; Matthew 18:15; Philippians 2:3-8; Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 12:9-10

- The power to restore damaged relationships (the story of prodigal son, Luke 15:11-32).
- The power of grace (God's unmerited favour) that forgives sins and secures salvation (Ephesians 2:8-9).
- The power of personal transformation as we are formed and re-formed into the image of Christ.
- ▶ 1 Corinthians 13 isn't the only place the Apostle Paul gave us a good lesson on love. In Romans 12:9-10, he told the Roman believers, "*Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.*" <sup>10</sup> Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another."
- ▶ The italicized words in our Bibles often indicate places where the translators added words they felt would clarify and enhance the scriptural message. In this case, however, they might have got it wrong. Instead of the passive statement "Let [allow] love be without hypocrisy", the affirmative command of the original text should stand: "Love without hypocrisy!"
- ▶ Love from the heart, without pretense. Hate evil. Hold fast to what is good. Despite the obstacles, let us put our love on display and allow the power of love to flow through us.

### DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. What's the worst you can imagine happening if someone reacts badly to an apology? (Include in the discussion negative reactions group members may have experienced.)
2. What are the benefits of attempting to reconcile a relationship that is broken?
3. If someone is not aware of your disappointed feelings and the relationship is great (at least on the surface), what should you do in light of the command to "love without hypocrisy"? Should you follow any/all of the steps described in the "process"? Discuss.







### Prayer Time

Lord, please teach me how to love without fear and without regret. In Jesus' name, amen.

# WEEK OF SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2017

## NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week's message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

-  (Reminds me/Confirms)
-  (New idea)
-  (Think about)
-  (Do this)
-  (Speaks to my heart)
-  (Must share)

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L.G. Ice-Breaker: The saying states, "There's no gain without pain." Do you agree or disagree with this, and why?