

LOVE ON TRIAL, con't.

Love is proved by our actions, not merely by our words.

KEY POINTS

- ❖ This is the year we put our Love “on Trial”. Romans 2:15 reminds us of the court of conscience in our hearts where all our actions are weighed and either “accused or ... excused.” In similar fashion, we need a “Love Court” where our thoughts, words and actions are consistently tried, to ensure that we are living the lives of love prescribed for us by Jesus (see John 13:34-35) and espoused by the apostle John (see 1 John 4:7-8, 11-12, 20-21).
- ❖ In Luke 10:25-37, Jesus confronts a lawyer who has questioned Him, using the powerful parable we call “The Parable of the Good Samaritan” – a story that demonstrates true love.
- ❖ The despised Samaritan Jesus chose as His main character demonstrated the kind of love God expected the lawyer (and us) to practice:
 - An observant love: “he saw him” v.33
 - A compassionate love: “he had compassion” v.33
 - A barrier-breaking love: “a certain Samaritan” v.33; “went to him” (a Jew) v.34
 - An involved love: “bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine” v.34
 - An inconvenient love: “set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn and took care of him” v.34
 - A time-consuming love: “on the next day... he departed” v.35
 - A costly love: “he took out two denarii” v.35
 - An ongoing love: “when I come again” v.35
- ❖ This is love of the highest order – self-giving, ‘agape’ love.
- ❖ We designate 1 Corinthians 13 Paul’s ‘love chapter’, but this isn’t the only good love lesson he gives. Here is what he said to the Romans:

Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. ¹⁰Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another.... ¹³distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality (Romans 12:9-10, 13).
- ❖ The italicized words in our Bibles indicate places where translators added words they felt would clarify and enhance the message scripture was trying to give us. But in this case, instead of the passive statement “[Let] love [be] without hypocrisy,” the real power of the verse will be seen if we remove the additions and read it as Paul seems to have intended: “Love without hypocrisy!”
- ❖ The apostle continues in Romans 13:8-10:

Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law...

KEY SCRIPTURES: Luke 10:25-37; John 13:34-35; Romans 12:9-10, 13; 13:8-10

- ¹⁰Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.
- ❖ We can use the following simple questions to cross-examine ourselves in our “Love Court”:
 - Am I treating all of my brothers and sisters the way in which I wish them to treat me?
 - Do I acknowledge and show an openness to welcome and include people in my life?
 - Do I go directly to a brother or sister in private when I have a dispute with them, or do I air my grievances publicly?
 - Do I feel superior to any brother or sister?
 - Do I have an open heart and ears to those who think differently than I do, loving them enough to consider what they have to say?
 - Is there anyone in our church I cannot go and speak to because I hate them?
 - Do I ever say we won’t help someone because “they doesn’t deserve it”? (“Look what they did to me!”)
 - Can I be trusted? Do I ever reveal secrets that were told to me in confidence?
 - Have I sincerely apologized to someone I have wronged? (An apology is only effective when the recipient feels it is sincere.)
- ❖ To summarize the tools we have been given in this lesson for putting our love “on trial”, let’s memorize the words of Jesus:

“...whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them....” (Matt. 7:12).
- ❖ How is this possible at all? Only through the power of the Holy Spirit!!

DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. Which questions from the list above do you think are most valuable for assessing our levels of love for one another?
2. Are there questions you would add to a self-examination? If so, share with the group.
3. Discuss: “Is there anyone in my life for whom the answer to every question is positive?” Why do you think this is the case?
4. Write down or in some other way commit to an act of love that you will attempt to do every day this coming week.

Prayer Time

Lord, help me to show love to those I know well (good and bad) and also, as the ‘good Samaritan’ did, those who are strangers to me.

Start-up: In our modern society, what debts do you consider “acceptable” - car loan, mortgage, credit card (gym fees, groceries...)?

WEEK OF SUNDAY, MARCH 24, 2019

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)

PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS

Go deeper with your Life Group family.
CONNECT-REFLECT-DISSECT THE WORD
Your Life Group ~ Your Lifeline