

Valentine's Day Revisited

I Corinthians 13:13

"So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love."

Introduction

1. Valentine's Day is the holiday set aside for people to declare their love for one another. What do these Valentine's quotes tell us about how love is understood and expressed?
2. In I Corinthians 13 the Apostle Paul focused on the love commanded by Jesus in John 13:34-35 - *"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another ;just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."* He put it at the forefront of Christian virtues.
 - Today we want move beyond the common views of love and get to the heart of God's love and what it means for us.

...The Greatest of These is Love.

1. We need to clear up unbiblical misunderstandings of love.
 - Misunderstanding #1: Love is not worth the cost. Some people who get burned give up on love completely. Truth: they miss out on God's best for their lives.
 - Misunderstanding #2: Love is just a feeling. When the feeling is gone I am free to go find it with someone else. Truth: the love Paul describes in I Cor. 13 is an active commitment, not just a feeling.
 - Misunderstanding #3: Love finds its greatest expression in sexual relations. Truth: Paul does not mention sex in I Cor. 13.
 - Misunderstanding #4: Love fixes everything and justifies anything. This is the "all you need is love" argument. Truth: The love Paul describes is rooted in the truth of God's Word.
2. We need a clear biblical understanding of love.
 - Truth #1: Love finds its source in God. I Jn. 4:8 - *"Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love."* The Father, Son, and Spirit live in perfect love throughout eternity. God created us to live in a love relationship with Him.
 - Truth #2: God loves us and commands us to love Him and to love one another. Gal. 5:22 - *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,"* Jn. 15:12 - *"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."*

- **A biblical marriage is a living demonstration of God's love in action.** Eph. 5:22-28 - *"Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as **their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.**" Note: "Your wedding vows are not a declaration of present love, but a mutually binding **promise of future love.**" - Tim Keller*
- **The Church is to demonstrate to the world the reality of God's love by** their love for one another. Jn. 13:35 - *"By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."*

Action Items

1. God demonstrated His love by sending Christ to die for our sin. Trust Him as your Lord and Savior today!
2. Christian, how is your love life with the Lord? Spend time alone with Him this week and ask Him to rekindle your desire for Him!

1 Corinthians 13 - If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known. So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.