



Divinely Blessed & Restored

What's

LOVE
 Got To Do With It? ©



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And now abideth faith, hope, charity (love), these three; but the greatest of these is charity (love). *1 Corinthians 13:13. KJV*

The book of Corinthians is a letter authored by Paul to the Corinthian Church. In the church of Corinth, the concept of love had become mixed-up and very little love was evident. The Christians in Corinth were struggling not to adapt and conform to the environment of corruption and sin that surrounded them. Paul confronted them about their sin and shortcomings bringing to the forefront, the lack of love in their lives. Paul challenged them to return to "Christ-centered" loving lives and not to blend in with the world, accepting its values, life-styles and its definition of love. Does that not sound like our lives today! These same challenges face us today and just as in the Church of Corinth, somewhere along the way, love has lost its importance in our lives

Recognizing a problem is the first step towards a solution. Paul had to refocus the Church of Corinth to get them to realize the things they had begun to consider important were not as significant as they imagined without love. First, he had to remind them their spirituality, eloquence of speech, education, use of spiritual gifts, and faith were nothing without love. Thou the world is impressed by great communicators, words without love are empty and as noise. *(1 Corinthians 13:1) KJV* He cautioned about scholarship without love because knowledge can puff up but love builds up. It is better to have a right heart than

to only have a right mind. *(1 Corinthians 13:2) KJV* Paul also reminded the church they could give everything they have in tithes, offerings, and for charity, but without love they have done nothing. Without love, the motive behind the giving becomes questionable. Are you giving for recognition, for power, out of obligation or guilt? Just because you give it - doesn't mean you did it in love. *(1 Corinthians 13:3) KJV*

We must remember, one day God is going to do an audit on our life and when He evaluates our life He is not going to focus on your accomplishments or your bank account, but He is going to look at what I am going to call - your "love barometer" to evaluate how you have lived, how you have loved. Just as a barometer measures the atmospheric pressure, your "love barometer" measures how your love has registered in the atmosphere around you.

Next, Paul wanted to make sure the church of Corinth knew what love is. Just as now, the people of Corinth probably were experiencing plenty of phony love, fickle love & conditional love and had developed a distorted view of what real love is.

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I Corinthians 13:4-7 KJV provides a definition of what love is:

4Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not;charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, 5Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; 6Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; 7Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. KJV

The scriptural description of love is much different than the definition given by man. In the American Collegiate Dictionary love is defined as: *an intense affection concern for another person, an intense sexual desire for another, to embrace or caress.* Notice the definition focuses upon emotion or feeling. But, if we look at the scripture, love is not an emotion, love is an action. Love is not simply warm feelings or sugary words; it is an attitude that reveals itself in action. Notice all the action steps outlined in the scripture - things that you do. Be patient, be kind, protect, trust, and not hold a grudge. Love isn't just talking, giving lip service - love is demonstrated.

As believers, living a lifestyle of love is not an option, it's a command. In John 13:34-35 Jesus said, "A new commandment I give you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." KJV Notice He says "a new commandment", He doesn't say a new suggestion, He says commandment. How are we to



love? Jesus says, "As I have loved you." Jesus is our model. You are probably saying: "I can't love people the way Jesus did! He was perfect!" You're right, on our own, you can't. That's why we need Jesus Christ in our life. Only He can help you and I be patient, kind, not envious of others, to not become boastful

and full of pride, have a sweet disposition and not rude, to not be self serving, not easily angered, able to not hold grudges and let things roll off our back.

If you find yourself struggling from time-to-time to keep that love barometer hot, that's probably a good

indication that you need to grow in love.

I Thessalonians 3:12 tells us: "*and the Lord makes you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you.*" KJV

Love grows, increases, when it is cultivated. The same



way that farmers have to nurture the natural seeds they've planted for a crop to grow, we must care for the love that God has planted in our hearts so it can grow. If you feed the love in your

heart on the Word, love will grow. Garden's don't grow by themselves and love doesn't either. It requires a relationship with God. He's the gardener of our heart. Like any other relationship, that means you spend time with Him. This requires desire and a commitment to consistently spending time with God, studying his word, conversing with him (having prayer time) an allowing him time to speak back to you. Just as a farmer has to tend the ground in which he plants his seeds to make sure it is fertile ground, we must keep the ground of our heart fertile and soft. It's all too easy to allow your heart to become hardened and calloused by bitterness, and unforgiveness. When these take root in your heart, just as weeds smother a crop, these smother your love.

We must recognize the importance of love in our Christian walk. Showing love one to another is a sign of our Christianity and our relationship with God. This loving life-style is not something we get to turn on and off. How many people know you're a Christian because of your loving lifestyle? The sign of a Christian, the distinguishing mark of a Christian, is not a cross, is not a crucifix, a dove, and a fish on your bumper sticker - it's you. Jesus commands us to show love: "*a new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you....*" He's saying, I've demonstrated love to you, now you go and demonstrate love to another. The Apostle Paul found out first hand on the road to Damascus what happens when people encounter love. Paul was a religious zealot, a Pharisee persecuting the newborn Church until his personal encounter with love - **Jesus**. It had a radical effect upon him. He was transformed him from a persecutor of Christians to a preacher for Christ!! This is how an encounter with us should be. We should have a radical impact upon an unbeliever's life! **That's What Love Has Got To Do With It!**

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A graphic header for the 'Calendar of Events' section. It features the word 'CALENDAR' in a bold, white, sans-serif font at the top, and 'of Events' in a white, cursive script font below it. The background is a blue gradient with a faint, semi-transparent image of a calendar grid showing dates and numbers.

CALENDAR
of Events

Make sure that you check our website for updates and upcoming events!!