

**Love: The Greatest
Commitment**

February 12, 2012

- Last week our focus was on *who to love...*
- We are to *love God* with heart, mind and soul, *and our neighbor* as ourselves

- This week our focus is on *how to love...*
- ...showing our love for God by our ***commitment*** to loving others

- Chapter 12-14 of 1 Corinthians focuses on spiritual gifts
 - *Attitudes*
 - *Misuse*

- In chapter 12, Paul talks about the *manner* in which spiritual gifts are bestowed

- In chapter 14, Paul *contrasts* the gift of tongues with the gift of prophesy.

- **Chapter 13 ties chapters 12 and 14 together and establishes the context for the use of spiritual gifts.**

- Paul's message...**
- **...If we serve others with the *wrong motives*, our serving is meaningless in the eyes of God.**

- **If we are going to make the commitment to love others unconditionally, it will cost us everything.**

- A commitment to...**
- **...*serving others must be preceded by a commitment to loving others***

Commitment?

- **...*unshakeable beliefs that are matched with unswervingly consistent behaviors.***

Love is the...

- **...*greatest commitment because it is the only acceptable motivation for serving others. (1-3)***

• **Agape** love is the love and establishes the *context* for serving others.

• **Agape** is a *selfless, sacrificial, unconditional* love

Loving is more...

- ...than eloquence
- ...than knowledge
- ...than sacrifice

Love begins with...

- ...an attitude and that attitude manifests itself in service to others
- **Philippians 2:1-8**
- **Mark 10:45**

Philippians 2:1-3

- ¹ Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and compassionate?

Philippians 2:1-3

- ² Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose. ³ Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves.

Philippians 2:4-6

- ⁴ Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. ⁵ You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had.
- ⁶ Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to.

Philippians 2:7-8

- ⁷ Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, ⁸ he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross.

Love is the...

- ***...greatest commitment because it demands that we die to ourselves as the means for serving others. (4-7)***

What Love is & isn't...

- ***...Love is others-centered***
- ***Love is not self-centered***

- ***The question for us...
How do we die to ourselves?***

- ***...as siblings, as parents, as husbands, as wives, as singles***

John 12:24-26

- ²⁴ Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. ²⁵ He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal. ²⁶ If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.

Four Promises/Four Demands

- *You will be with Jesus where He is... if you follow Him to Calvary*
- *God will honor you... if you serve Christ*

Four Promises/Four Demands

- *Your life will bear fruit... if it falls in the ground like a seed and dies*
- *You will keep your life for eternity... if you hate your life in this world*

Love is the...

- *...greatest commitment because when it is finally mature, it will not fail. (8-13)*

True love never...

- *...fails, even when everything else around it is falling apart..*