

THE ABUSE OF “LOVE”

Of all possible emotions, love is the greatest. There is a sense in which love even eclipses faith and hope (1 Cor. 13:13). Both faith and hope ultimately reach a termination point—faith issues in sight and hope is fulfilled by realization. Genuine love, however, is enduring—it abides forever. It is perhaps the nature of the case that the thing most precious is sometimes that which is most abused—and so it is with love. Let us reflect upon two broad categories that illustrate how love is abused.

1. Rationalization - Love is abused when one entertains the notion that he can get by with doing evil under the guise “God loves men, therefore he will not condemn me.” Legions entertain this myth. That is why, in the opinion of many, rarely does a person die lost. God simply would not permit a person He has created to be lost. His love is too marvelous for that. If that is the case, why did Christ have to die? If Heaven’s love covers sin unconditionally, the death of the Savior was absolutely for nothing! The entire thrust of the Bible is opposed to this misguided idea.

Our mistreatment of others also is rationalized under the umbrella of love. If you love me you won’t fret that I borrowed your car without asking. If you love me you won’t insist that I repay the money I owe you. On and on the excuses go—all in the name of “love”.

What a gross abuse of “love” it is for two people who are not married to become sexually intimate, using the rationale, “We love one another.” Or what of the person who justifies his/her behavior in adulterating his marriage (or the marriage of another) with the rationalization, “But we were in love”? “Love” never excuses sin.

2. A Defense Mechanism - A common misuse of love is the attempt to ward off a Christian chastisement with the charge, “You are not a loving person.” Such a disposition not only reflects serious ingratitude, it evidences a manifest ignorance of scripture. Note this test: “My son, regard not lightly the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when you are reprovved of him; for whom the Lord loves, he chastens” (Heb. 12:5; cf. Prov. 3:11).

It is not uncommon for youngsters, in their immature way of evaluating the events of life, to feel that their parents are unloving because of restrictions that are placed upon them. They will learn better when they have their own children—if they don’t destroy themselves by their youthful foolishness before they reach that point. Elders who attempt to lead the church in disciplinary procedures against wayward members of the congregation are frequently accused of being “unloving” (yet see 1 Cor. 5:5). How insensitive ungodly people can be, their understanding almost totally bereft of what true love involves. Paul once inquired of the foolish Galatian Christians, “Have I become your enemy because I tell you the truth?” (Gal. 4:16) He might well have phrased it like this: “Do you think I no longer love you because I tell you the truth?”

Preachers are charged similarly. “He doesn’t preach with love!” A minister of God can spend his days and nights helping people; he can teach them rich truth, listen to them in times of trouble, give them assistance in hours of financial crunch, help them in days of family crises, and comfort them in burying their dead—but when he feels the need to admonish them, because of weakness or worldliness in their lives, suddenly he has become “unloving.” Figure that out!

Sin clouds a person’s vision. It distorts reality. It generates a defensive, retaliatory, disposition. It turns true love, the agape kind (acting in another’s best interest), into something ugly and hateful. There is nothing more painful to the loving person than having his/her love rejected; there is nothing so wretched as rejecting that love.

Wayne Jackson from *Eastside Edifier*

Be present for every lesson of our

GOSPEL MEETING

April 29 – May 3, 2007

with

Larry Yarber

Evangelist and OABS Instructor of

Mountain Grove, Missouri

Sunday: 9:30 & 10:30 AM; 6:00 PM

Monday – Thursday: 7:00 PM

Wednesday Ladies Class: 10:00 AM

ANNIVERSARIES

Donald and Jodie Lycan, 04-29.

BIRTHDAYS

Leah Thrasher, 04-30; George Thomas, 05-04.

ILL

Wednesday: Lindsey Brown. Carol Tigner is in Room 207 at Meadowbrook in Gardner. Allen Scott had a procedure to reduce the pain in his back.

Those battling cancer: Jamal Abyad, Diane Cannon, David Cole, and Ledgia Campbell. Please remember these in your prayers, as well as: Janice Carter, Millie Robertson, Allen Scott, and Ralph and Helen Franklin.

HOME BOUND

Bob Adams resides at Room D-4 of the Johnson County Nursing Center in Olathe. Marion Stone is at home. Please remember these in your prayers and visitation.

OUT OF TOWN

The Brown's were in Texas over the weekend.

MEETING CHANGES

Our Pot Luck Dinner will be held this Sunday to coincide with our Gospel Meeting. The Men's Business Meeting will be held next Sunday, May 6.

LADIES CLASS LUNCHEON

The Ladies Class will host a Taco Salad luncheon on Wednesday. All are invited to class and lunch.

PHOTO DIRECTORY

Steve Brown will be taking photos during the month of May starting Sunday May 6.

AREA EVENTS

There are several area Gospel meetings taking place over the next few weeks. Check the bulletin board for details.

ATTENDANCE

Sunday AM, 45; Sunday PM, 35; Wednesday PM, 34.

Those To Serve

April 29, 2007

BUILDING AND COMMUNION..... Parish

MORNING WORSHIP

ANNOUNCEMENTS..... George Thomas
SONG LEADER..... Joel Nelson
OPENING PRAYERJeremy Keifer
PRESIDE.....Jared Nelson
ASSIST.....David Parish
ASSIST.....Allen Scott
CLOSING PRAYER..... Jeff Nemechek

EVENING WORSHIP

OPENING PRAYERSteve Brown
CLOSING PRAYER..... John Carter
LORD'S SUPPER.....Jared Nelson

WEDNESDAY May 2nd

SONG LEADER..... John Cody Carter
INVITATIONGospel Meeting

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday

Bible Study 9:30 AM
Morning Worship 10:30 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Ladies Bible Study 10:00 AM
Bible Study 7:00 PM

Preacher: Ted J. Thrasher

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