

LOVE

Theme: Love 20

Discipleship groups purpose: Each member being transformed into the image of the Son.

Key Truth: Without love it profits us nothing.

Key Scripture: *1 Corinthians 13:3 And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body [a] to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.*

Read: We can give all our possessions to feed the poor. We can surrender our bodies in sacrifice to be burnt and still miss the entire purpose of God, if we do not have love.

1 Corinthians 13:3 And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.

All of this profits us nothing if we do not have love being perfected within us, because the central context for the scriptures is about the most intimate loving relationship/fellowship between Christ and His church in a covenant called marriage. The gospel is a relational based and centred gospel, before it is a works, functional based gospel. Is this our revealed position, because until it is our revealed understanding, we will always live out a functional based gospel, even though we say we are about relationship/fellowship. We only give relationship/fellowship lip service, hence we don't yet know love.

When I say love I don't mean our human conditional love but the love of the Father that we have spent 6 months looking at.

Too many in God's body pursue gifts, signs and wonders, miracles, doing good works, feeding the poor, or justice for the weak, all these things are good but they are FUNCTION based and don't produce love, God is sending us a very clear and definitive message in these 3 verses.

If we do not have love then we are a noisy gong or a clanging symbol. We are nothing and we profit nothing for all our energy, effort, sweat, toil and hard work. Jesus clearly taught that the life we lose must be lost for His sake and not our own. If we lose our life for our sake we have in fact not lost our life at all, even though we perceive we have, because we are now doing things we never have before. We now give our time, energy, effort, skills, use of gifts, works, prayer, teaching etc, all for the purpose of God's work and yet in our inner most being, the inner recesses of who we are, self still sits comfortably on the throne of one's own life.

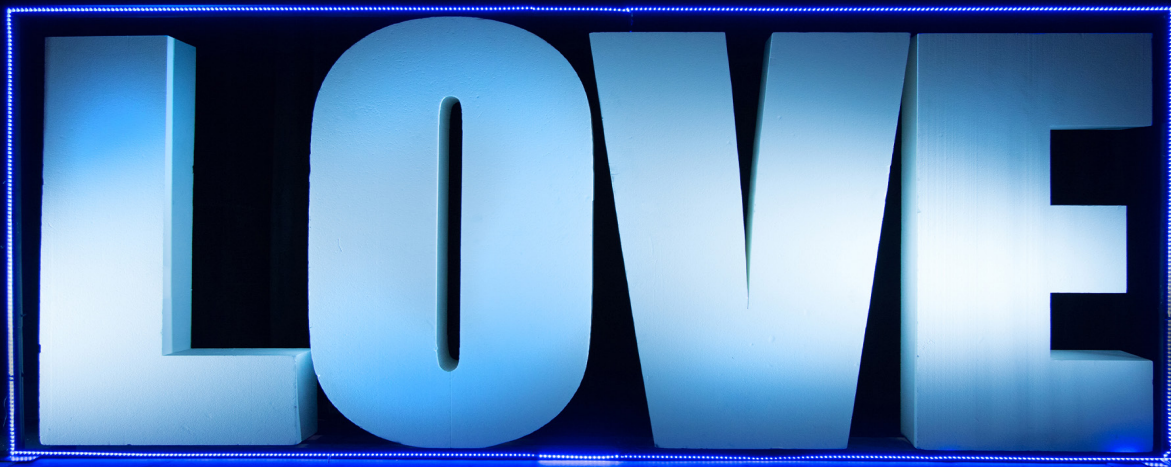
Self has not yet fallen upon the Rock and been broken into pieces, and so self is still the root system of our lives and not love. While this remains the case we are unable to know love in a way that transforms us and has us living from love. We know about love but we don't know love, and so many of our works that we commit to, ultimately come from us and our strength, which hold no eternal value and are burned up at the judgement seat of Christ for His church.

That's why Jesus said it is only those who lose their life for His sake that will find it. The key being His sake and not our sake. How does one know the difference?

Matthew 10:39 He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it.

Duplicating the outward acts through the spirit or the flesh doesn't produce or form in us God's divine nature. This is what the Word of God does, hence the 16 attributes we have been declaring is the divine nature of God. Only when we keep the Word is this nature formed in us and manifested from us for all to receive. It is from this position of love in us that all His works by the Spirit are accomplished through us. Works prepared beforehand which are of eternal value and worth.

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We are to receive His love for us, be matured and perfected in His love and minister in the gifts and power from this position in Christ. This is the true kingdom position in the Father.

Paul shares with us from Ephesians 3:14-21 about the divine outworking of God's love being implanted into our inner most being. For us to receive love in this inner man, self must come out from this inner man place via the receiving of God's Word or coming to the very end of itself through its own attempts to bring itself into divine life. Either way, when this happens we are now in a position to receive the powerful infilling of Gods love.

Romans 5:5 and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

Questions:

1. What stood out the most for you from what you just heard?
2. How many of us truly relate to the reality Romans 5:5 and Ephesians 3:14-21?
3. How many of us can relate to doing works from the position of being committed but not necessarily surrendered, and what does this produce?
4. Why is it essential the inner life is changed by His Word?
5. What does it mean to keep His Word so love is perfected in us?

Action: What is one thing you need to put in place from going through this resource?