

Love That Covers Sin

4/22/2007

We've been looking at the core of our vision: The Great Commandment love me the Lord your God...Love one another as I have loved you.

It is the fuel of The Great Commission: GO-love

- God is love

We're called to be like Him made in His image and likeness to love with His love identifies us as His children; His disciples.

So we've looked at love – God calls The Most Excellent Way.

Without love we are nothing.

Our gifts/talents/songs/works/ whatever religious activities, our relationship with God and others, marriage, children, friends and unchurched, are all valued by God according to the degree we love like Him.

Our relationship with God is measured not by how much we say or sing about our love for Him, not by our religious activities but by how much we love other people.

Our report card in the heavens is graded by

- Loving with His love what He loves = other people!
- “How can you love God who your can't see if you don't love your brother who you can see?”
- “If you love me keep my command, love one another as I have loved you!”

So the key to Christ-likeness is loving other people.

We looked at the enemy of love which is not hatred but selfishness.

Jesus puts all of us in 2 categories according to *Matthew 25*,

- Sheep or Goats
- We are either struck in ourselves and oblivious of others need to be loved – a goat
OR
- We are transformed by His saving grace become a new creature in Christ and
 - ⊃ Love those around us
 - ⊃ Meeting their needs with God's love – A sheep
- To both sheep and goats God says, “What you did or didn't do to the least of these my brother you did to me.”

So the Great Commandment puts the spotlight on our relationships or lack of relationships with other people; people close to us and people we are to go to “preach” the gospel with our acts of love.

So how do we love like Jesus loved us?

- Its easy to love someone when they love you back or when there is mutual giving
But.....
- How do we handle offenses from others when they betray us – let us down?
Reject us, offend us, abandon us, wound us, and even persecute us!
- If you have chosen to love someone they will eventually offend you
- Love is tested at the point of offense
- The Fruit of Love is either matured by the offense or drops to the ground as only a bud.

Its when there’s a gap/a break in the relationship that Gods love shines – and demonstrates its true nature.

- *Romans 5:8*

At the point of offense that threatens to destroy the relationship I have a choice to make.

Choice #1:

- I can run, leave - “I’m out if here, I’ve had enough”
Give up on the relationship
Leave the marriage, friendship, the church
- I can stop extending love to the unlovable in the world
- I can take the offense with me
- The problem here is that’s contrary to Gods love and disobedient to His command
 - Probably selfish, self-protecting, self-preserving
- I could say, “Its costing me too much, what’s in it for me”
 - Gods love says, “I’ll never leave you nor forsake you”
 - I’m dying to let you know
 - Love will cost you
 - Love does hurt
 - Love is sacrificial – ask Jesus!

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Choice # 2: I could become judgmental

I could say they committed the offense

They need to say sorry

They need to change

The world needs to change/stopping doing sin & come to church (like me)

I've justified myself and judged them as worse than me

I judge myself more righteous than others

Problem with that:

- There's only one righteous –perfectly Holy judge
That's God!

When I become the judge, jury and executioner.

Hold myself up as God and put myself at odds with God and come under His judgment for judging.

How does a righteous God handle judgment?

- With mercy!
- *Jeremiah 2:12-13*

We were under the righteous judgment of God but instead of giving us what we deserved God had mercy on us.

- *Psalm 103:8-13*

Therefore we are to show that same mercy to others.

So love one another as I have loved you with mercy and compassion!

So God calls us to be reconcilers:

- Bringing opposing parties together
- *2 Corinthians 5:17-19*
- Here is a Spiritual Principle:
The future of a relationship is in the hands of the offended!

If marriages/families/churches/ friendships and the lost, the USA are ever to be reconciled back to God we must become merciful, compassionate lovers of our offenders

- The goal of love is to complete restoration of relationship

Choice # 2: is the only Godly, biblical Christ like one

- Stay in relationship
- Press past the pain
- Bridge the gap with love
- Go the extra mile

That's what Jesus did, that's what we are called to do.

Here is another key to loving offenders with God's love.

- *James 5:19-20*

This is a New Testament emphasis on an ancient principle from

- *Proverbs 10:12*

Love covers over all wrongs

- Covering others sins means to wrap around as bark, skin, shell
- Protecting from judgment and releasing Gods mercy
- It is the opposite of unveiling, making visible or revealing another's sin.

God did that in the Old Testament.

Instead of judging and rightly destroying His people for their offenses against Him and others, He provided the sacrifice of atonement.

A lamb in their place-took its blood into His presence in the Holy of Holies and sprinkled it on

- The mercy seat
-A cover over the 10 commandments, all of which had been broken by His people.

He covered their sons with Blood.

- Jesus the lamb of God and the final sacrifice for our sins shed His blood not just to cover our sins but to carry them away.
- *Hebrews 9:12*
- Gods mercy triumphed over judgment
- His mercy gave His Son
- His Son gave His blood that cover our sin permanently and gives us salvation
- When God looks at us He doesn't see our sins He sees His Son's blood and sees our righteous

God's love looks beyond the sin to the person He loves.

God covers and carries away our sin because He sees value in us – redeemed

- His mercy is moved by how He sees us and the value He places on us without sin

He sees us without sin
He sees our redeemed value
Value as a son set free
Value as a daughter without destruction

He sees us in His Son's image
He sees us filled with His joy
He values us as His children He created to share His glory with in heaven
He values us as a Father values His family

He values His friendship with us
He values spending all eternity with us

He values the destiny's He's given us, the gift's He out in us
He values the joy He would share with us forever

- He values us so much that He thought it was a fair deal to give His Son in our place to restore our relationship with Him.

So we are to love one another as He has loved us.
The same blood that covers my sins covers the persons sins that has offended me.
So here is a key to loving others like God has loved me

- Look past the offense to the persons value
- Value them as a spouse
- Value them as a son/daughter
- Value them as your friendships
- Value them as your Church
- Value them as your Country
- Value them as your unsaved relationships

See and declare and give thanks for the value you see in them

- Their redeemed value, who they are to God

See and say who they are without the offense/sins