

July 15, 2018

PILGRIM CHURCH SUMMER SERIES

# UNDER THE RUG

## THE MEAN CHRISTIAN

1 CORINTHIANS 13



“Modern people “delight in evil” in all kinds of ways.

(1) Monistic philosophies that have to redefine evil as actually good within some larger framework, (2) Theological systems that blur the distinction between God tolerating evil and actually causing it (3) Civil religion that accords the State honor due to God alone, often in the name of patriotism or loyalty to family, and (4) the widespread personal glee that we exhibit when enemies suffer, leaders fall, and others in general fare worse than ourselves...” - Smedes

### 8-13 - Spiritual Gifts and Love (The Permanence of Love):

13:8 Love never ends. But if there are prophecies, they will be set aside; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be set aside. 13:9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part, 13:10 but when what is perfect comes, the partial will be set aside. 13:11 When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. But when I became an adult, I set aside childish ways. 13:12 For now we see in a mirror indirectly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know in part, but then I will know fully, just as I have been fully known. 13:13 And now these three remain: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love.

### Summary Challenges

1. If we are doing something and love is not the reason we need to ask if it's legit at all. Are we acting in love and for love?
2. Love requires character formation and growth.
  - + Are you creating new habits based on knowing Jesus - daily office, spiritual formation, disciplines to become loving in a real way, or are you simply doing a Jesus schmear...to justify your old patterns?
  - + The church (teams, home groups, guests) is to be a lab of love; love of spiritual family, love of our neighbours and co-workers, love of God.
3. Our knowledge is incomplete.
  - + We need to have a humility about our theology and actions.
  - + We are incomplete. Fundamentalists and liberals need to cool their jets. They show their immaturity by forcing or pigeonholing people to conform.
  - + Love in this life understands that all else is penultimate.

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love. Gal 5.6

### OPENING AND THE BIG IDEA

“Knowledge is no good if love is absent....It did the scribes and Pharisees no good. As the Savior says: you have the key of knowledge and you neither enter yourselves nor allow others to enter (Luke 11:52). By spoiling love through their meanness, they reduced their knowledge of God to nothing.”  
-Ambrosiaster (4th century).

### INTRO TO 1 CORINTHIANS 13

A letter to some Mean Christians

Three parts 1-3, 4-6, 8-13

Gordon Fee labels these: necessity, character, and permanence of love.

Hays 1-3: Futility of spiritual practices without love 4-7: Encomium to love 8-13: Everything is provisional to love.

### WALK THROUGH THE TEXT

#### 1-3 Spiritual actions without love are meaningless (love is necessary)

13:1 If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but I do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 13:2 And if I have prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so that I can remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. 13:3 If I give away everything I own, and if I give over my body in order to boast, but I do not have love, I receive no benefit.

#### 4-7 - Love is the Opposite/Antithesis of the Corinthians Behaviour (the Character of Love)

13:4 Love is patient, love is kind, it is not envious. Love does not brag, it is not puffed up. 13:5 It is not rude, it is not self-serving, it is not easily angered or resentful. 13:6 It is not glad about injustice, but rejoices in the truth. 13:7 It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Two positives, eight negatives, four strong verbs of positive actions.