

“The Greatest of These is Love” (Part Three)

(Compiled by Paul R Blake)

Introduction:

A. 1Cor. 12:31, 13:13

B. Lesson One

1. Love is the greatest duty of man
2. Love is the greatest manifestation of grace
3. Love is the greatest evidence of faith
4. Love is the greatest means of glorifying God
5. Love is the greatest source of well being

C. Lesson Two

1. Love is the greatest measure of perfection

I. LOVE IS THE GREATEST PRECEPT

A. Love is more than a feeling; it keeps God's commandments toward others

1. 1John 5:2-3; 2John 1:6

B. This doctrine teaches that God's commandments are the best possible way to treat others - Matt. 7:12, 22:39-40; Rom. 13:8, 10

C. Love is involved in the work of removing sin of others

1. Lev. 19:17; Rev. 3:19
2. With their best interests at heart, you will work to help them to be saved from their sins - Prov. 9:8, 27:5, 28:23
3. How do parents show love for children? - Prov. 13:24, 3:12; Heb. 12:6-8
Psalm 141:5

D. Love renders kindness and compassion that resonates with everyone

1. 1Peter 3:8-9; Rom. 12:10; Phil. 2:1-4; Eph. 4:1-3, 31-32; Rom 14:15
2. 1Cor. 8:1, 10:33
3. Love covers transgressions and forgives them repeatedly
a. Prov. 17:9; 1Peter 4:8; Matt 18:21-22

E. Love is ... sacrificial desire resulting in action to help another realize God's best for his life.

1. Love is ... sacrificial. It considers others more important than one's self and so gives up self.
2. Love is ... desire. Love involves feelings and passion.
3. Love is ... action. Love that is felt, believed, or professed is worthless. It must cause action.
4. Love is ... help. It will recognize its role in adding others and refuses to overlook opportunity.
5. Love is ... another. Love is not self-centered, but other-centered. Love looks away from self.
6. Love is ... God's best. It knows that God's will and pleasure is the supreme goal for all men.
7. Love is ... Jesus' life. It seeks the best for another's life, here and later, even at self's expense.

- F. Paul summarized the definition of love in a 15-part sentence in 1Cor. 13:4-7.
1. Love suffers long. It will tolerate many offences and still love on
 - a. Prov. 10:12, 17:9, 19:11
 2. Love is kind. It considers others in gentle, benevolent ways
 - a. Prov. 19:22
 3. Love does not envy. It does not harbor jealous feelings toward others
 - a. Prov. 27:4
 4. Love does not exalt itself. It seeks rather to emphasize others
 - a. Prov. 13:10; Phil. 2:1-4
 5. Love is not puffed up. It does not think more highly of self than is right
 - a. 1Cor. 4:6, 5:2, 8:1
 6. Love does not behave unseemly. It behaves in a honorable way
 - a. Phil. 4:8; Col. 3:19
 7. Love seeks not its own. It will sacrifice self for others
 - a. 1Cor. 10:24, 33; Rom. 15:2; Eph. 5:25
 8. Love is not easily provoked. It will tolerate much before responding
 - a. James 1:19; Prov. 14:17
 9. Love thinks no evil. It will not allow suspicion, but rather believe the best
 - a. 1Tim 6:4
 10. Love does not rejoice in iniquity. It is grieved to see others sin
 - a. Lev. 19:17-18; Psalm 119:136
 11. Love rejoices in the truth. It is glad when its object is in the truth
 - a. 3John 1:3-4; James 3:17
 12. Love bears all things. It is willing to help others as much as possible
 - a. Rom. 15:1-2; Gal. 6:2
 13. Love believes all things. It places the best construction on others
 - a. 1Cor. 11:18
 14. Love hopes all things. When evidence mounts, it will hope for good
 - a. Phil. 1:21
 15. Love endures all things. It is not provoked by others' evil - 1Cor. 13:4

II. LOVE IS THE GREATEST CHALLENGE

- A. The Adversary doesn't want you to understand Bible love; it is the greatest and most powerful enemy of his evil
- B. While we learn of love from God, we learn how to love by practicing love
 1. And that's the great challenge of love: how do you love someone you are not inclined to love or someone who has brought harm to you?
 2. By choosing to love and then acting on your choice
- C. Accepting the challenge of Bible love - Rom. 12:9-18
 1. Accept the challenge and never turn back regardless - 2Cor. 12:15
 2. Love without regard to how you are loved in return
 - a. Rom. 5:6-8; John 3:16

Conclusion:

- A. Love is the only answer to sin. It is the answer God gave.
 - 1. "Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that" (Martin Luther King, Jr.).
- B. Love others regardless of whether they love you in return. That is how God loves us.
 - 1. "You don't love someone because they're perfect, you love them in spite of the fact that they're not" (Jodi Picoult).
- C. Love others for their own sake; make loving them who you are. Love is God's defining characteristic.
 - 1. "Love is that condition in which the happiness and well-being of others is essential to your own" (Robert Heinlein).
- D. Love must endure, regardless of how much we must bear. Consider what God has borne over the millennia out of His love for humankind.
 - 1. "The opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference" (Elie Wiesel).
- E. Loving others transforms us into our best selves. It is what will make us like our heavenly Father.
 - 1. "Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone deeply gives you courage" (Lao Tzu).