

Summer Sermon Series: "Adding to Your Faith" from 2 Peter 1:3-11

"No Greater Love" ~ Week 7

Sermon for Sunday, August 28, 2011

2 Peter 1:5-7 (NRSV)

⁵ For this very reason, you must make every effort to support your faith with goodness, and goodness with knowledge, ⁶ and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with endurance, and endurance with godliness, ⁷ and godliness with mutual affection, and mutual affection with love.

1 Corinthians 13:1-13 (NRSV)

1 If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. 3 If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. 4 Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant ⁵ or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶ it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. ⁷ It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. 9 For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; ¹⁰ but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. 11 When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. 12 For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. 13 And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

1. Understanding the Love (Agape) of God in Jesus Christ through the Power of the Holy Spirit

- a. Jesus loves me
- b. Transformation from the inside – out
- c. Power of sharing it in word and deed

2. God's Love Never Ends!!!

3. Have You Received God's Love into Your Life?

Questions for Small Group or Individual Study/Reflection ~ August 28, 2011
Summer Sermon Series, “Adding to Your Faith” from 2 Peter 1:3-11
“No Greater Love” – I Corinthians 13

We conclude our Summer Sermon Series this week exploring what it means to add LOVE to your faith. More importantly, let’s explore together a deeper understanding the word that the Apostle Paul uses here in I Corinthians 13 (and is used in other NT texts by Jesus, Paul & other writers) - that indicates unselfish, unconditional love. Such love is prompted more by will than by emotion. It seeks to reach out to others in need, even if the person seems unworthy of being loved - and to have/share a love for them, based on sincere appreciation and high regard. Give thanks for the AGAPE love of God which has laid claim on your life and faith. Be challenged to ask the Holy Spirit to help you share the AGAPE love of God with others in thought, word and deed!!!

1. What was one of your favorite love songs when you were a teenager? Can you sing or repeat any of the lyrics? When in your life have you felt the most loved? How did that love affect your life?
2. You probably have heard/read I Corinthians 13 before – especially if you have been to your share of weddings! Take time to read it again silently – then out loud. Has any new thought/insight “hit” your heart and mind? Take time to share....
3. On a scale of 1 to 10, how much love did you receive during the last week? How much did you give? How has a small group (current one, if applicable) shown real love to you? What hope/comfort do you have that only the AGAPE love of God will never fail and will last forever?
4. In what ways has God loved you according to the qualities of love you found in I Cor 13:4-8? In your opinion, what is the best way to develop the ability to love others? What have you done lately that is an example of what love is *not*? Have you ever done a religious act without love? What was it like? How did you feel during...after?
5. As you look at Paul’s description of what love is and what love is not (in I Cor 13), how do you see yourself reflected? What areas are you weakest in? What can you do about those areas?
6. Ask Yourself...Is the love of Christ evident in how I use my gifts? My words and actions? Am I more eager to be seen doing something admirable than to show real love? “Consider again for the first time” – the power of these words – “Jesus LOVES me this I know!”
7. **Personal Application/Spiritual Growth Checkpoint & Prayer focus for the week:**

Additional Scripture references for further study: Proverbs 10:12; I Peter 4:8; John 13:34; John 3:35; I John 4:7-19; Romans 13:10. Do others come to mind that are meaningful to you?