

## Love's Many Faces!

### I. Slide#1blank **Announce:**

- A. **Slide#2** Reliance Church, Josh White Concert: [Aug 18th, \$20 per couple]
- B. **Slide#3-7** Haiti Trip Women's Conf: TY for your generosity [dresses/jewelry/nail polish/crafts]

### II. **Intro:**

- A. **Slide#8 Title:** *Love's Many Faces!*
- B. **Overview:** 2 Weeks ago regarding vs.1-3 our Title was *What you believe must determine how you behave!*
- C. [2 weeks ago] Our relationship with **The Lord**(vs.1,2); Our relationship with **Ourselves**(vs.3); [Today] Our relationship w/**The Church**(4-13); [Next Week] Our relationship w/**Our Enemies** (14-21)
- D. **Outline:** **Unity in Diversity**(4,5); **Gifts Many Facets**(6-8); **Love's Many Faces**(9-13).

### III. **Slide#9 UNITY IN DIVERSITY! (4,5)**

- A. What would happen if one or more parts of your body stopped functioning - **or worse**, began to perform functions they weren't designed to do?
  1. Your **feet** all of a sudden say, "*I'm driving!*"
  2. What if your **hair** reversed itself(w/some I see it has!) **No**, I mean started growing **inward?**
  3. What body-part would **trade** w/the **armpit?**
  4. What if your **bellybutton** decided it wanted to do the **breathing?**
- B. (4) You are part of the body of Christ w/a ministry to fulfill, so do your part lovingly & joyfully.<sup>1</sup>
  1. *It's all about Unity in Diversity!*
  2. The Christian Faith is essentially **a corporate experience.**
- C. **Illustration:** **Rivers** gain more attention than the **little streams** that create them. You can name the great rivers of the world but you cannot name their tributaries. **However**, without the tributaries there would be no river. **It must be remembered, too**, that the smaller streams, while less well known, are **purier** and are found on a **higher elevation.**

### IV. **Slide#10 GIFTS MANY FACETS! (6-8)**

- A. **Slide#11** "**Spiritual gifts are abilities** or **powers** which the Spirit of God bestows upon **all** believers **to equip** them for service."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Warren Wiersbe

<sup>2</sup> Shepherds Notes, Romans, pg.72.

1. These **gifts** are an important part of **the gospel of grace**.
  2. We are **saved** by grace; We **grow** by grace; We are **endowed** by grace.
    - a) Salvation - growth - service! [an experience of God's grace from beginning to end]
- B. Remember, **Accepting ourselves precedes Giving ourselves**. (see vs.3)
1. Its that **painful self-discovery** where we **accept both our abilities & limitations**.
  2. Then & only then, can God use our **service**.
- C. (6-8) Paul lists **7 gifts** here, but he seems less interested in giving us an **extensive** list, **but** instead urges us to **exercise the ones we have!**<sup>3</sup>
1. **Slide#12 Prophecy** - Communication of *revealed truth* that builds up believers.
    - a) Natalie Bither gave to Cindy before our trip, Is.61:3,10 **The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness...For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness.**
      - (1) And **Ps.148 & 149** which is all about Praise.
  2. **Slide#13 Ministry** - Practical service to help others.
    - a) Catholic "orphanage", *Missionnaires de la Charite*, for children who are sick. Explain holding children(pee all over you). With 1 I drew pictures with. One beat on me the whole time.
      - (1) **Slide#14** Went to the hospital later only to meet **John**, who had no clue where we just came from. Who said, *"I grew up in an orphanage,American Christians would come & hold us & show us affection, something we didn't know. I was saved because of that love!"*
  3. **Slide#15 Teaching** - To provide guidance & moral instructions.
    - a) Women's Teaching at Conference.
  4. **Slide#16 Exhorting** - Encouraging, comforting, & exhorting others.
    - a) Late 1 night I sat on the porch w/a YWAM team member who was staying w/us. Philipson's (a Haitian himself) **encouragement about ministering to these ladies who live such a hard life**. (after session, the Macarena, the Italian dance song came on)
  5. **Slide#17 Giving liberally** - Cheerfully contributing to the needs of others. [Open-handed & open-hearted]
    - a) Lady's son died(saved 1 month, 1st women's conf), **motorcycle accident, hit & run**. Lady's at Conf passed around hat, collected 600(h) about \$73. Our team collected \$170. We brought it to her.
  6. **Slide#18 Mercy** - Helpful activities such as feeding the hungry, caring of the sick & aging.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Everett Harrison, Romans, The Expositors Bible Commentary, Vol.10, pg.130.

<sup>4</sup> Shepherds Notes, Romans, pg.73.

- a) (I didn't have a picture of Maria) *Maria in the hospital* (83 yrs old, prob weighed 70 lbs., a deacon, white long sleeve dress soiled w/blood down rt arm. Prayer for, motioned to sit up...to urinate)

7. **Slide#19 Lead w/diligence** - Service carried out for the benefit of others. (That's Marie!)

- D. If these gifts are functioning properly the church will be: **genuinely spiritual** (*controlled by the Spirit* so that we minister to His people); **spontaneous** (*serving from the heart rather than from a sense of legislated duty*); **sacrificial** (*generously sharing* time, money, energy, & talent).

## V. **Slide#20 LOVE'S MANY FACES! (10-13)**

A. Nowhere in Paul's writings do we find a more concise collection of **ethical injunctions**.

1. Some have **love...but** their trouble is not **expressing** it. [but then, is it really love?]

a) **The father** who loves his son, but can't bring himself to tell him.

b) **The daughter** who loved her controlling mom, but was too afraid to share the gospel with her,...even as she lay on her death bed.

(1) Oh, the consequences of **unexpressed love**.

2. **Slide#21,22** Paul makes it clear that **Christian love** always **leads to action** - deliberate & purposeful expression that glorifies God & ministers to His people.

B. So, what does **Gods way of love** look like?

1. James Montgomery Boice points out...**Love is not some mushy emotion that embraces all, forgives all, forgets all, & requires nothing...In fact, you will notice at once that in our text Paul does not even define love. He passes immediately to how love functions.**

a) **How does love function?**

(1) At its heart, it is first genuine, w/o hypocrisy; & it is also discriminating.

C. (9) **Let love be w/o hypocrisy** – sincere, devoid of any deception.

1. **It's not** fake, or selfish, it doesn't put on an act, it doesn't wear a mask that hides other feelings or motives, it doesn't smile & say, "*everything is fine!*"

**It's pure, honest, genuine, & kind.**

2. Love must be **genuine**, not a form of **role-playing**.

D. **Abhor what is evil, cling to what is good** – Love discriminates (**between good & evil**).

1. **We can't only cling to what is good, we must abhor evil.**

2. We are constantly told that every ideology, every viewpoint, is valid & must be affirmed...no matter how *outlandish, illogical, or immoral*. **They say we are supposed to personally determine for ourselves what is true.**

a) **However**, God has made it very clear in His Word that **His standards** are objective, true, absolute, & apply to everyone. There is no valid standard other than His own.

**Sin** is not something to be winked at, shrugged off, or tolerated away. **Evil** should be hated, & **good** should be clung to.<sup>5</sup>

- b) **We should hate** all *oppressive injustice* that denies life & causes people to be vulnerable...like exploitation, violence & discrimination, voicelessness, Human Trafficking, corruption.
  - c) **We should love justice** that values life...like dignity for all people, protection for the vulnerable, enabling the exploited, bringing salvation to those who have not heard, helping with a safe & civil society, helping with sustainable economic opportunities.
3. **Abhor**(hate bitterly) **what is evil, cling** (glue or cement) **to what is good.**
- a) **Love** will bond us to the good, we will stick to it like epoxy!
- E. (10a) **Devotion** - Be kindly affectionate one to another w/brotherly love.
- 1. The Greek verb *kindly affectionate, philostorgas*, means “*family affection, tender loving*”.
    - a) It speaks of the **loyalty & warmth** God designed family members to have for one another.
    - b) It’s a love that leaves room for **weakness & imperfections**.
    - c) It’s a reminder for family members to **be committed to & supportive of** each other.
- F. (10b) **Unselfishness** - In honor giving preference to one another.
- 1. Honor means to **value & respect** them.
  - 2. Give this **respect & affirmation** to others, rather than seeking it for ourselves.
  - 3. Our Christian love should honor all people, Christians & non-Christians alike... *because, they were made in the image of God!*
    - a) **Slide#23Story** - *Dead man laying on the side of the road.* Value. Made in the image of God
- G. (11a) **Enthusiasm** - Not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord -
- 1. **Not lagging in diligence** - Don’t lack zeal. Put your whole heart & soul into it.
    - a) We’ve all drifted into a *lazy, complacent, or indifferent routine* in our walk with God.
    - b) Paul wants to shake us out of that.
  - 2. **Fervent in spirit** - Be aglow with the Spirit. A life-giving presence of the Holy Spirit radically alters the way a person lives.
    - a) **Fervent** (*zeo*) means “*to boil, be hot*”. Paul’s saying be passionate & bubble over with God’s love.
  - 3. **Serving the Lord** - Don’t forget who you serve.
- H. (12a) **Hope** - Rejoicing in hope - *Confident trust* **not** uncertain expectation.
- 1. Let your **love** bloom into **hope**. **Love points our gaze into the future.**

<sup>5</sup> Charles Swindoll, pg.12.

- I. (12b) **Consistency** - **patient/persevering in tribulation** - This world will through at you its share of difficulties, but the believer is to be **steadfast** in time of trouble.
1. Simply, it is patience in hard times.
- J. **Slide#24** (12c) **Prayerfulness** - **Continuing steadfastly in prayer** - If Satan can keep us **out of touch with God**, he knows we won't cause any problems for his evil kingdom.
1. **Continuing steadfastly** = **attend to it constantly**.
  2. **Prayer is our lifeline with God**. How thick is your lifeline? (Thread? Rope? Cable?)
  3. **How else can we remain connected to His love?**
- K. (13a) **Generosity** - **Distributing to the needs of the saints**. Share w/bel's in need. **Love is generous!**
1. **It is critical for believers who had plenty to share their abundance with those in need**
  2. **The world's love is grasping**: It's a love where we want them for ourselves. We want their time; their affection. We want them to meet our needs.
  3. **Real love, God's love moves us to provide for the needs of others**: Those needs **aren't** always **financial**. **Money** may not help someone who is **grieving** or **lonely** or **sick**. Sometimes its putting our arm around somebody's shoulder. **Or**, giving them our company, our laughter, or our gentleness. (Lady screaming/wailing on way to hospital)
- L. (13b) **Hospitality** - **given to (pursuing, or to hunt) hospitality** -
1. Hospitality means **"love of strangers"**(people who are foreign or different from us).
    - a) The kind of love Paul describes helps us to fight against our prejudices, our contemptible desire to exclude those whose **skin color, nationality, religion, gender, age, or class** are different from our own.
  2. **Slide#25** **It's loving others by being hospitable**. (Sister Genevieve from India, **Sisters of Charity**, in her typical attire of traditional white sari with blue border, who adhere to the vows of **chastity, poverty, obedience**, and the fourth vow, to give "Wholehearted and Free service to the poorest of the poor")
    - a) Can go home every 10 years. Can't call home, but can receive 1 phone call a month. Kel, **"oh my gosh that must be hard?"** Genevieve, **"It is something I've chosen"**.
- M. **Slide#26** What **hinders us** from loving others? [Fear, Passivity, & Preoccupation]
1. **Fear** - Opening our hearts to others makes us **vulnerable**. **We might be rejected**. Past experiences of **being burned** can make us gun shy.
    - a) **Instead of taking a risk, we back off in self-protection**.
  2. **Passivity** - A lot of us wait to let the other person make the first move. **Instead of finding out what someone's needs are, we want someone to tell us what to do**.
    - a) **This passivity effectively squelches spontaneity & sensitivity of love**.
  3. **Preoccupation** - It's so easy to get wrapped up in our own lives, our own pleasure & pains, **isn't it?** Some get so busy with their lives where they aren't spending time



with others anymore or take time to notice their feelings. Their pursuit of their own interests drains their energy & dims their care, crowding out love.

a) It's being caught in the riptide of the lie that cries, "*tomorrow I'm going to do this or that for the Kingdom.*"

- (1) Tomorrow I'll be **generous** when I get that next raise.
- Tomorrow I'll be **hospitable** when I get a larger home.
- Tomorrow I'll **love** when I'm positive to be loved back.
- Tomorrow I'll **pray** when I have time.
- Tomorrow I'll **help the poor** when my bills are all paid.

N. **Slide#27** Tennyson said, *Tis better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all.*

1. **Tennyson** claimed that losing a love by death was better than never loving at all.
2. **Slide#28 C.S.Lewis** concluded that *never loving was a death in itself.*

a) To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything, & your heart will certainly be wrung & possibly be broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact, you must give your heart to no one, not even to an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements; lock it up safe in the casket or coffin in your selfishness. But in that casket - safe, dark, motionless, airless - it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, irredeemable. The alternative to tragedy, or at least to the risk of tragedy, is damnation. The only place outside Heaven where you can be perfectly safe from all the dangers and perturbations of love is Hell. – C.S.Lewis

O. **Slide#29-35** Love has Many Faces!