

Right Thinking Leads To Right Service - III

Review

- Last week we looked at 1Co. 12:1-7.
- Thinking About Who & What is Spiritual: **1)** Christians can be uninformed while thinking they know who & what is spiritual [v. 1], **2)** Christians must remember past errors & not be led by feelings & emotions [v. 2], **3)** Christians must use discernment when people say or do things supposedly from God [v. 3].
- Thinking About Unity in Diversity: **1)** There are varieties of spiritual gifts that come from the HS to produce unity [v. 4], There are varieties of way to serve in the body that all come for the Lord to produce unity [v. 5], There are varieties of supernatural effects that all come from God to produce unity [v. 6], The HS is revealing something about Himself through the spiritual gifts given to each believer [v. 7].
- Love is essential in ministry. Love is the “more excellent way”.

I. Thinking About Ministry Without Love (v. 1-3)

Paul is still defining what it means to be spiritual or from the Holy Spirit!

- A. People will eventually be irritated & annoyed (13:1)
People are initially impressed with spectacular displays of what appears to be spiritual, but when they eventually see that someone has self-serving purposes it will irritate them.
- B. The believer’s life is of no value to God (13:2)
*A believer is useless to God if he/she misuses their spiritual gifts for selfish purposes – praise, power, money, etc. Examples: Balaam (Num. 22-24; 31:8; Jude 11), believers at Ephesus (Rev. 2:4-5). **Life in vain – wasted!***
- C. The believer’s ministry is of no value to God (13:3)
*A believer’s works & ministry is useless to God if he/she serves for selfish purposes – preaching, teaching, singing, ushering, diaconate, giving, etc. Examples: Giving (Mt. 6:1-3), Praying (Mt. 6:5-6). **Ministry in vain – wasted!***

ILL: Companies hire employees with apparent potential; Sports teams hire coaches...; schools hire teachers... But if an employee has no concern for the best interest of the company or other employees, he/she is of no value to the company – negative influence on other employees & harm to company.

APPL: The same is true in the body of Christ. If a believer has selfish motives, he/she is causing harm & making no valuable contribution... body.

II. Thinking About The Meaning of Love (v. 4-7)

- A. Love **is** patient (v. 4a)
*Love endures difficult people & situations a long time w/o retaliation/revenge (1Pe. 3:9); **takes** anything from people.*
- B. Love **is** kind (v. 4b)
*Love responds with goodness & useful actions even when wronged (Eph. 4:32); **gives** anything to people.*
- C. Love **does not** envy (v. 4c)
Love is not displeased at the success of others; not making comparisons or competing.
- D. Love **does not** boast (v. 4d)
Love is not a “windbag” constantly boasting about itself.
- E. Love **is not** arrogant (4e)
Love does not think exaggerated/inflated thoughts of self.
- F. Love **is not** rude (v. 5a)
Love doesn’t act in a disgraceful/indecent way with people.
- G. Love **does not** insist on its own way (v. 5b)
Love does not insist on personal rights or opinions.
- H. Love **is not** irritable (v. 5c)
Love is not angered about self-centered matters (Js. 1:19-20)
- I. Love **is not** resentful (v. 5d)
Love is not bitter about a wrong suffered (Eph. 4:31-32).
- J. Love **does not** rejoice at wrongdoing (v. 6a)
Love finds not joy in sin or any evil way
- K. Love **rejoices** with the truth (v. 6b)
Love finds joy in truth & righteousness (Rom. 14:16-19)
- L. Love **bears** all things (v. 7a) – Love is reluctant to disclose another’s sins/weaknesses (1Pe. 4:8) = Protects
- M. Love **believes** all things (v. 7b) – Love always has faith in God & believes the best about people = Stability
- N. Love **hopes** all things – never loses hope/confidence in God or people **because grace can overcome human failure!**
- O. Love **endures** all things – faces any situation w/o giving up

Because of what love is & does, we can function in the most difficult ministry for a long time w/o giving up or yielding to other temptations!

CONCLUSION

No Christian wants his/her labor to be in vain. Every Christian wants to be commended by Jesus for our labors & service in the kingdom of God; we all want to hear “well done good & faithful servant”. Well remember that you cannot please God without **faith** (Heb. 11:6). And we’ve also learned that you cannot please God without **love** (Jn. 14:15; Mt. 22:37-39). So my beloved brothers/sisters contemplate what you do for the Lord & why; what motivated you today, right now! Ask the HS to search you right now & see if there is any envy, resentment, arrogance, etc. Then ask the Lord to give you a clean heart...

If you are not a Christian, I want you to know that God has proven His love for you (Jn. 3:16). **Jesus has proven His love for you because He died for you & your sins. The HS is here right now to prove His love for you by changing your heart; giving you a new heart; making you a new creation. Only believe...**

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