**Love Requires Sacrifice**

1 Corinthians 13 part 2

Last week we began unpacking what love is. In 1 Corinthians 13 the apostle Paul shared what love is with the church in Corinth. He wrote to them:

4 Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud 5 or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. 6 It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. 7 Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NLT

Today I want to emphasize one overarching principle, that I think is seldom emphasized when it comes to love.

That principle, in my own words, is this. If you have ever been loved or if you have ever felt loved, then someone else worked hard to show you love.

If you remember from last week, I shared…

“Love counts the cost, finds out it costs everything, believes it’s worth it, and does whatever it takes to pay the price.”

People who have been loved have had someone count the cost for them and at least in some way have paid the price for them. This is the love Jesus has showed us. Our freedom from the penalty of sin, our friendship with God, our eternal life (our ability to have life to the fullest) is all made possible because God, through Jesus’ sacrifice accessed the price and paid the bill.

As Philippians 2 says:

2 Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and compassionate? 2 Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose.

3 Don’t be selfish; don’t try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. 4 Don’t look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too.

5 You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had.

6 Though he was God,

he did not think of equality with God

as something to cling to.

7 Instead, he gave up his divine privileges;

he took the humble position of a slave

and was born as a human being.

When he appeared in human form,

8 he humbled himself in obedience to God

and died a criminal’s death on a cross.

As a Christian it is crucial that we understand this. And I want to emphasize that as God’s beloved, it says that “we must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had.”

Using Philippians 2 I am going to challenge you to do just that “have the same attitude as Christ.” We have been loved by Him…He counted the cost and paid the price for us…So we too must count the cost and pay the price for others.

What does that mean?

It means…

Don’t be selfish

Don’t try to impress others

Be Humble

Think of others as better than yourselves

Take an interest in others

Don’t think you are equal with God (Don’t think you are righteous. In other words, don’t think you paid your own price).

Give up your own privileges (Things you think you earned) in order to work hard to show love for others.

Which naturally leads to the next truth, that we are to…

Take the humble position of a servant…A position that leads you to love others and (at least figuratively) die for them.

Siblings are to love their siblings.

Parents are to love their children.

Children are to love their parents.

Wives are to their love husbands.

Husbands are to love their wives.

Friends are love their friends.

Christians are to love their enemies.

God loves the World and how do the scriptures illustrate that…

16 “For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. 17 God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him.”

John 3:16-17 NLT

You cannot say that you love someone if you do not work and sacrifice for that person.

As Michael Novak once said:

“Love is not a feeling of happiness. Love is a willingness to sacrifice.” – Michael Novak

“Sacrifice is one of the purest and most selfless ways to love someone. Practice it daily.”

“The ultimate display of love, is not hugs and kisses. It’s sacrifice.” – Steve Harvey

“If you really love one another, you will not be able to avoid making sacrifices.” – Mother Theresa

“Love and sacrifice are not the same thing, but they are inseparable. To think of Christ and to think of the Cross is not the same thing, but the association is so close that the implication is immediate. Where love has been preached without sacrifice, it has not lead to love but to license.” – Hubert Van Zeller

Showing love to someone requires sacrificial work.

This is why the scriptures say:

7 Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God. 8 But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

9 God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. 10 **This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.**

11 Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other. 12 No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love is brought to full expression in us.

1 John 4:7-12 NLT

Do you love people?

What is it that God wants you to sacrifice to show the people in your life love?

Do you believe that love comes without a cost?

Love always costs the lover.

Real love, True love is demonstrated through selfless sacrifice for the beloved and it is the sacrifice that every single believer everywhere has been called to. This is what Jesus meant when He said.

24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, “If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me. 25 If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it.

Matthew 16:24-25 NLT

It is very tempting to believe that success in the Christian life is about getting our lives together so we can be successful in this life and show the rest of the world how great we are.

The most successful act of love was Jesus’ death. And no one, not even His closest followers, thought is was success at the time.

We must ask ourselves today, what is our definition of success in terms of love.

I have heard many conspiracy theories and lots of sarcasm about the end of the world being near. And this is the application that love was made for. Peter once wrote:

7 The end of the world is coming soon. Therefore, be earnest and disciplined in your prayers. 8 Most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love covers a multitude of sins. 9 Cheerfully share your home with those who need a meal or a place to stay.

1 Peter 4:7-9 NLT

And as Jesus at the very end of His life commanded His disciples…

“34 So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. 35 Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.”

John 13:34-35 NLT

So if you want to know what to do as the love of most grows cold and people go their own way. It’s right here laid out for you today.

Love one another. And when I say that what I mean is make costly, hard sacrifices for one another. Cause without that there is no love.