

Pride the Enemy of Love (30mins)

We have talked about Fear being the opposite of Faith. They both ask us to believe in what is not seen. We need to choose to live in faith or in fear.

Today, I would like to talk about Pride being the opposite of Love.

To discuss pride and love, let's first take a look at Love, so that we have a firm grasp of its implications. Love is not just a great feeling it has some requirements.

Mark 12:30-31

Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB)

³⁰ Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.

³¹ "The second is: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other command greater than these."

The greatest commandments we are given are:

- a) To love God
- b) To love those around us

1 John 4:7

Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB)

⁷ Dear friends, let us love one another, because love is from God, and everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.

God is love to know him you must express love

Ephesians 4:1-3

Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB)

Therefore I, the prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk worthy of the calling you have received, ² with all humility and gentleness, with patience, accepting one another in love, ³ diligently keeping the unity of the Spirit with the peace that binds us.

We are called to accept each other in love, protect our unity and to do that with humility and gentleness.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8a

Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB)

⁴Love is patient, love is kind. Love does not envy, is not boastful, is not conceited, ⁵does not act improperly, is not selfish, is not provoked, and does not keep a record of wrongs. ⁶Love finds no joy in unrighteousness but rejoices in the truth. ⁷It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸Love never ends...

We say that we love the church, but are we talking about our awesome facility or the people within it?

Love:

- Is Kind
 - Do we use kind words with each other?
 - Do we look for opportunities to express encouragement?
- Rejoices in the truth
 - Accepts correction if appropriate
- Bears all things
 - Takes responsibility to ensure that things get done
 - Takes responsibility to ease another's suffering
- Believes all things
 - Has faith in those around them
 - Does not live in fear
- Hopes all things
 - It is positive about the future
- Endures all things
 - Does not allow circumstances to stop it
 - Does not stop love because of sin or situation but speaks life into the person's life
- Never ends
 - Doesn't expire or get overused, Doesn't have limitations

Love is not:

- Envious
 - I can't have what that brother or sister has right now so I am going to resent them
- Boastful
 - I am better than you because...
- Conceited
 - I am all that and a bag of potato chips
- Improper actions
 - Doing something to hurt or hinder a brother or sister

- Selfish
 - What's in it for me? How can I advance or be made great
- Happy about sin
 - Love the sinner, hate the sin

So how do we detect false love? Here are three primary indicators:

- Limits on our Love
 - We withhold something
 - We lock off areas of our life we don't want touched
 - We are Christian but are afraid to share Jesus with others
- Control
 - We manipulate for our own ends – not for the benefit of the other person
 - We have a private agenda we are trying to achieve
- Detachment
 - We separate ourselves
 - We remain self-sufficient
 - We become insular and don't reach out beyond our families
 - We remain uninvolved

God never limited his love for us... he sent his Son. The word of God does not manipulate it instructs and corrects. Remember the scripture Jesus Wept? He knew he could heal Lazarus but he didn't distance himself from the suffering of his people.

We need to follow the examples we have been given. Did you ever notice that you need to love with your heart and not your head? When you take your head out from between your ears, the ears form a heart. Was God trying to give us a hint? I don't know, but I do know that to grow as Christians we need the living water of authentic love.

If we don't love, then we don't have anything that the world needs. God is love. If we are not doing it then why would our community want to be a part of our church?

Let's talk about pride for a minute...

1. For the sins of their mouths, for the words of their lips, let them be caught in their **pride**. [Psalm 59:12](#)
2. When **pride** comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom. [Proverbs 11:2](#)
3. **Pride** only breeds quarrels, but wisdom is found in those who take advice. [Proverbs 13:10](#)
4. Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not **proud**. [1 Corinthians 13:4](#)

5. The LORD detests all the **proud** of heart. Be sure of this: They will not go unpunished. Proverbs 16:5

We need to walk in humility. To do this I have had to come to realize that nothing in life is really about me, what I want or how I feel; it is about the glory of God. If I love God, then I will look for ways to honor God with my words and my actions. I will discipline myself to listen to what God is telling me and then do it. To be truly humble I must yield to the Spirit of God and trust him to lead my ways. Does this mean that I have to act or look humble all the time? No, that is acting... It means that I can confidently proclaim the direction that God want to go, because I have humbled my own desires and will to what he wants. I can be confident in obedience.

God has taken a firm position against pride. He has promised to bless those who will humble themselves. (Matthew 5:3; 1 Peter 5:6; and James 4:6)

William Temple once said: "Humility does not mean thinking less about yourself than of other people, nor does it mean having a low opinion of your gifts. It means freedom from thinking about your-self one way or the other at all." When we become truly humble we cease to matter to ourselves, and rely on the fact that we matter a whole lot to our father.

Andrew Murray described humility like this: "Humility is perfect quietness of heart. It is to expect nothing, to wonder at nothing that is done to me, to feel nothing done against me. It is to be at rest when nobody praises me, and when I am blamed and despised. It is to have a blessed home in the Lord, where I can go in and shut the door, and kneel to my father in secret, and am at peace as in a deep sea of calmness, when all around and above is trouble."

Why does any of this matter?

We want to grow our church! We want to love God. We want to reach our community. We want to be a positive impact of people's lives!

Pride and the lack of humility are beyond a doubt one of the most devastating things to unity within the church. There is no spiritual gift of criticism. It is pride. Constructive criticism is more often than not constrictive criticism.

Most of the time we do not love to the level that Christ would have us love. Our pride and lack of humility stand in the way. When we read in Matthew 22:39 that we are to love our neighbour as ourselves, what does that mean? Are our opinions or personal agendas more important than unity? Are we so prideful in what we have built that we don't want God to touch it? The real test here is whether or not we can love each other.

Faced with the lack of unity among Christians, the world cannot see the true value of the Christian Faith. It is our calling and purpose to demonstrate Christ's love to our neighbours.

There was a story a few years back of a child who left home to play in the cold snowy weather and became lost. When the parents realized that their son had not returned they were afraid and so went out to search for him. They searched his favorite places, they searched the parks and the nearby woods. Finally after several hours had passed the parents in desperation asked for help from others in the community. After a short interval, the community came out, the churches helped, the firefighters, the police. In fact, just about the whole town. They all went out in ones and twos calling the child's name and after several fruitless hours came back together. Finally they decided to organize and be strategic about the search. They all joined hands and walked through the various locations. They soon came upon the frozen body of the young boy. The heartbroken parents brushed away the snow that covered their son's body. The parents cried out... if only we had joined hands earlier and worked together we may have found him alive!

Tragic story isn't it?

People in our communities are dying without Jesus. Maybe we will mention him to them, maybe we won't. Maybe we will invite them to dinner and discuss Jesus maybe we won't. Maybe a few of us will attend an event, maybe we won't. In the end, what does it matter if somebody else is lost?

To be effective as a church we need to work together, to humble ourselves and swallow our pride. We need to put aside our own agendas and sometimes even our own plans to save the people of our community who are dying out there.

There needs to be a sense of urgency about this. People die every day without knowing Jesus. We are talking about humility and pride because they impact our ability to live a Christ like example in our community.

Pride causes us to think that our way is the only way. It causes us to dig our heels in if we don't get our own way. Pride causes me to wear my emotions on my sleeve, to do what I please, when I please and with whom I please. When we are humble we walk like Jesus (1 John 2:6)

So how do we recognize pride?

- Selfishness, we want our own way
- Self Centered Behaviour
- Jealousy, when others are blessed or succeed
- Anger when we perceive we have been affronted

- Spiteful behaviour – We try to get people back
- Un-forgiveness – We don't let wrongs go and forgive
- Sinful Actions – We allow our actions to taint our testimony

So why does this happen?

We are a bunch of different people whom the Lord has deemed to place together, who all come from different backgrounds, who hold different views and opinions, and who use different methods to accomplish tasks.

We have different agendas in life. We have different opinions about what the church should be, do and how it should operate.

We are very different from each other and... here is the kicker we use fear instead of faith in our reasoning and circumstances.

Fear:

- "If it is not done like this... it won't work"
- "If they don't do it my way then it is a waste of time"
- "We have tried that before and it didn't work"

Faith:

- "Let's do it"
- "Let's do it"
- "Let's do it"

If we walk in pride we will never have unity and progressive movement in our churches. We are essentially doomed to failure. Because Proverbs 16:18 tells us that Pride comes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.

Here are some characteristics of pride to aid in its recognition:

- Un-thankfulness
- Outbursts of anger
- Criticism
- Moody and impatient behaviours
- Seeking Independence from the team
- Stubborn and headstrong behaviours
- Inattentive listening
- Un-teachable
- Sarcasm, hurtful comments

- Resisting authority

Have you ever had pride issues? I have... Prayer helps.

Pride is easy to see in other people, but really hard to see in ourselves. Pride is at the heart of sin. It is the road to destruction. It causes many of the problems in our interpersonal relationships. It is the reason that churches split and that dis-unity arises.

Humility breeds Love and Love conquers all.

Let's bow our heads in surrender to Jesus.

No one is pointing fingers, in fact there is a lot of love in this church, that's why I love being here but... we need to examine ourselves. Are we speaking life into those around us or death? Are we speaking fear or faith? Are we showing the love of Christ? Are we willing to submit our will to his? Can we take up his cross and follow him?

Silent Prayer...

My heart oh Lord is for the people here to be completely totally unconditionally radically sold out to you Jesus. I ask for your strength here today as we examine ourselves. Cause us to spread life and love. Cause a spirit of unity to descend on this place. Cause a sense of family to fall. Let your example permeate our hearts today Lord. Let us take up your challenge. Let us join hands together in common purpose Lord so that we can find the lost before they are no longer with us. You are the God of Love and we thank you for it. - AMEN