

LOVE IS THE THEME (Part One)

I Cor. 13:1-13

Introduction:

1. I Cor. 13 could be called the Tasty Ingredients of a sandwich.
2. In I Cor. 12, the Bible names wonderful, spiritual gifts given to Christians.
3. In I Cor. 14, the Bible describes the exercising of some of the spiritual gifts to the benefit of all.
4. Sandwiched between 12 and 14 there is a whole chapter on love, which is to make up the entire package of giving and exercising spiritual gifts.
5. Relationships are like two pieces of bread coming together, but if the center ingredient between them isn't love or lovely, the entire relationship is distasteful.
6. What is love?
 - A. Some think it's chemistry that happens when someone sweeps you off your feet, so we should move toward it.
 - B. It depends on God's design and desire as to whether we are to move toward or away from it.
 - C. Chemistry attractions last an average of 2 years, and after that we come back to the foundations that hold us together.
 - D. Love is not simply a feeling, but a particular way of behaving.
 - E. I John 4:7 – ***Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and everyone that loves is born of God and knows God.***
7. What destroys love?
 - A. Our temper.
 - 1) Ephesians 4:26-27, 31 – ***Be angry, and sin not: Let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil . . . Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice.***
 - 2) Hebrews 12:15 – ***Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.***
 - 3) There are more angry folks today than ever before with roots of bitterness from which they haven't been healed.
 - 4) Proverbs 28:25 – ***He that is of a proud heart stirs up strife: but he that puts his trust in the Lord shall prosper.***

- B. Our tongue.
 - 1) II Timothy 2:23 – ***But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do breed strifes.***
 - 2) Ephesians 4:29 – ***Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying that it may minister grace unto the hearers.***
 - 3) It's better to be silent as a fool, than to open your mouth and remove all doubt.
 - 4) Proverbs 15:1 – ***A soft answer turns away wrath; but grievous words stir up anger.***
- C. Soulsh ties.
 - 1) The question was asked whether anyone knew of a perfect mate, and a man raised his hand and said, "My wife's first husband."
 - 2) I Corinthians 6:15-18 – ***Do you not know that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. What? Do you not know that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? For two, said He, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man does is outside the body; but he that commits fornication sins against his own body.***
 - 3) As long as a third party is in the mix, repentance and healing can't occur.
 - 4) What prevents soulsh ties?
 - a. The conviction of the Holy Spirit.
 - (1) John 16:8 – ***And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin and of righteousness, and of judgment.***
 - (2) I Corinthians 6:9-10 – ***Do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God.***
 - b. The conviction of the Holy Scriptures.
 - (1) Psalm 119:11 – ***Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against Thee.***

- (2) Revelation 21:8 – ***But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and the sexually immoral, and sorcerers, and idolators, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.***
- c. The constant love of our Savior.
 - (1) John 14:15 – ***If you love Me, keep My commandments.***
 - (2) Loss of the fear of the Lord equals sin.

Conclusion:

Using I Corinthians 13:4-8, I want you to do a personal love survey with me.

Everywhere the word love is used in this passage, I want you to put your own name. After all, we're commanded to love as Christ loved, and this will help us to understand the magnitude of our Christian task of exercising Christian love.