

Sept. 8th Sermon notes

Text: Philippians 4:12-13 *“I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength.”*

When Jesus began forming His church, He knew exactly what He wanted to be its "brand": LOVE!

- “Love one another as I have loved you. By this all men will know you are my disciples” (John 13:34)
- 1 Thessalonians 4:9-10 Paul praised the Thessalonian church for their love for one another.
- The love exploits of the men and women of this church are outstanding.

Romans 5:5 tells us it is the love of God that has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit. We are not boasting in our flesh but in the grace of God.

So, in keeping with the theme of our message, I want us to take a moment, stand up and give the Lord applause and a shout of praise for the love He is blessing us with.

But just as Paul praised the Thessalonians for their love. He also urged them to excel still more.

So, in like manner, I want us to be content with the love God has given us but not satisfied. To excel still more.

- Example: As my love is expanding, I wanted to do better with my Monday meal prep, so I decided to cook my first trout. It past the most important test: edibility. I’m never going to be the same quality of cook as some others, but I’m not comparing myself to them, I just want to continue to expand and grow in love.

But it’s not just the way we are to operate in the church or in our families. It is also how we are to operate in the world as disciples of Christ.

From my journal:

For me, it is a biblical fact that if my relationship with Christ doesn’t translate into greater love for others, something is either missing or wrongly understood. I can think of no clearer way to communicate this than as Paul instructed the church at Rome:

“Be indebted to no one, except to one another in love. For he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. The commandments ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not covet,’ and any other commandments, are summed up in this one decree: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ Love does no wrong to its neighbor. Therefore, love is the fulfillment of the law” (Romans 13:8-10).

Yes, there are many other commandments. I may have my points about what is righteous and unrighteous, about what is sin and what isn’t sin, about what is God’s standard and what is not.

But this is clear: all other commandments are summed up in “Love your neighbor as yourself,” or treat others the way you would want to be treated. This is the top actionable directive from God and is therefore my daily objective. If I miss this, I’ve missed. All the piety in the world does not replace this as my daily task. For me, this is the output of my thriving, amazing, and fascinating relationship with Christ, and it is the end goal of accurately representing Him.

When I stand before the Lord one day to give an account of my life, I don’t fear judgment. I don’t fear condemnation. I don’t fear being exposed to the whole world watching the interview on a big screen. I am totally confident there will be nothing but love coming from Him. And the housewarming love gift I want to give to Him as I enter my eternal home is to be able to say, “Lord, with the love You filled my life with, I went for the sum of all Your commandments: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ That was how I sought to honor You.”

With so many voices out there trying to direct my Christian duty, I am glad His voice is clear.

Grocery List! “Don’t forget the eggs.”

- Besides the passage in Romans which I just read. He’s also highlighted it in **James 2:8 (NASB77)** ⁸ If, however, you are fulfilling the royal law, according to the Scripture, " You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well.
- 1 Corinthians 13 – The greatest of these is love.
- Matthew 22:39 – The second greatest commandment is like the first. If you are really obeying the first, the second will be evident. Why?
- 1 John 4:8 The one who does not love is not of God because God is love.

Today, we see so many Christians giving their energy trying to force our culture into conformity with Biblical values. Jesus didn’t come to create a world of Christian values. He came to save people from an eternity without Christ. And the means to doing so is clear: Love!

Colossians 3:23-24 (NIV) says, “***It is the Lord Christ you are serving.***”

Paul said, 2 Corinthians 5:9 “we have as our ambition to be pleasing to Him.” What is pleasing to Him He has made clear. Love.

After the love chapter, 1 Corinthians 13, chapter 14 begins with these words: From the Amplified Bible: “**Make love your great quest.**”

Don't seek to be impressive. That's a treadmill. Instead, Seek to be pleasing to God. And what pleases Him is our pursuit of love.

God uses a different metric than the world, the world uses “how much, how many, how big.” God's metric is how loving. As far as life output goes.

1 Corinthians 16:14 Let all that you do be done in love.

Be content with where God has you in your sensitivity to love, but don't be satisfied. Trust Him to help you to excel still more.