

WORDS OF TRUTH

A Weekly Bulletin for the Sunrise Acres church of Christ

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Sunrise Acres CHURCH OF CHRIST

Meeting at:
8625 Robert Drive
El Paso, TX 79904

915-525-5794

OUR MEETING TIMES:

Sunday Bible Class: 9:45 AM
Sunday Worship: 10:55 AM

Are You Visiting With Us?

If you are visiting with us, we want to welcome you to the Lord's church (Matthew 16:18 and Colossians 1:18). Our goal is to simply get to Heaven and to help you do the same. We use the Bible as our standard to govern what we do in our work and worship for the Lord (Colossians 3:17, II Timothy 1:13, II Timothy 3:16-17, and I Peter 4:11).

We welcome your questions and would love the opportunity to study further with you. Luke recorded a fascinating statement we all need to consider: "Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able" (Luke 13:23-24). We invite you to join us in being one of the few that are saved!

Without Love, Your Good Deeds Are In Vain

By: Brian A. Yeager

The Apostle Paul was writing to the church of Christ in Corinth and trying to resolve a number of problems in that first epistle. The misunderstanding and misuse of spiritual gifts was among the problems that needed addressed. Our English translations of the Bible are divided into chapters for us. It is within the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth chapters of the first epistle to Corinth we see Paul dealing with the issues the Corinthian church had with spiritual gifts.

It is in the context of Paul teaching on spiritual gifts to correct the errors in Corinth that we find the premise of this article. If we do the right things, but without charity [love], those correct actions become actions that are in vain. Notice: "*Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but **the greatest of these is charity**" (I Corinthians 13:1-13). So, incorporate love into your deeds!*

The Love We Need To Incorporate Into Our Godly Deeds

When you read above that the right actions without love means nothing and profits you in no way, something should “ding” in your mind. So, what or who do we need to love when we are doing the right actions? Imagine a husband giving his wife her favorite flowers, a wonderful card, and a box of her favorite chocolates. That sounds nice. However, if his actions mean nothing because they are not done in love then those nice things will mean nothing to her. She will see that he spends no time with her, doesn't respect her, and that he doesn't care about her needs or wants more than she will see those nice gifts. The same is true with our Lord. We cannot just go through the motions and pretend to do the right thing for the right reasons. Remember, our relationship with the Lord is likened unto a marriage (Ephesians 5:22-33). Think about that!

Our right deeds need to first been done because we love the Lord. As noted above, it cannot be that fake kind of love (Titus 1:16). The Lord expects us to prove our love for Him (John 14:15, John 15:10, I John 5:2-3, and II John 5-6). That begins with us making Him first in our lives (Matthew 6:33 and Colossians 3:1-4). God expects our full devotion and for our love to be with all of our heart, mind, and soul (Deuteronomy 6:5, Deuteronomy 10:12, Deuteronomy 30:6, Joshua 22:5, and Matthew 22:35-38). Notice something that Paul wanted the church of Christ in Ephesus to understand: “*Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ **in sincerity.** Amen*” (Ephesians 6:24). True love for the Lord begins with a love of the truth. For our Lord is revealed to us through His word (John 5:39).

The Scriptures plainly declare to us that those who do not love the truth are damned (II Thessalonians 2:10-12). Loving the Lord is all about keeping His words (John 14:23 and I John 2:3-5). Remaining true to Bible Authority, through following the pattern outlined in the New Testament, is directly related to our love for the truth (II Timothy 1:13; cf. Psalms 119:104-105). When we love the truth, the word of God (John 17:17 and Ephesians 1:13), we'll spend the time learning about the Lord (Psalms 119:97). Without a love for the word of God, we'll never progress to the right actions done in love for we'll never get an understanding of true love without God's word (I Corinthians 2:9-14). Then, the failure to do the right actions for others will occur since we'll not know about loving our brethren and loving our neighbors **GOD'S WAY**.

When you help a brother or sister in Christ, that action must be done in sincere love (I Peter 1:22). For example, if our assistance to our brother or sister in Christ comes through teaching, this must be done in love (Ephesians 4:15). You want to know how many understand that point? The answer: NEARLY NONE. Most think teaching in love means compromise, softening the message, etc. Both points are false (Proverbs 23:23, Proverbs 28:4, Jude 3, Habakkuk 2:2-3, Matthew 16:21-23, Matthew 23, John 8:31-45, II Corinthians 3:12, I Timothy 5:20, etc.). Real love, in teaching, will be shown when we plainly tell someone what they NEED to hear to be saved (Acts 8:13-24, I Corinthians 2:1-5, and Revelation 3:19).

We are commanded to love our neighbors (Galatians 5:14). What does it mean to love your neighbor? Well, the same points above about plain teaching certainly apply. There are also some side points to consider. For example, you do not love your neighbor when you're helping them to sin. What if you help your neighbor financially when he or she is lazy? You're helping them sin and you're sinning too (I Timothy 5:8 and II Thessalonians 3:10). Do not enable them to sin through silence or even through aid in other ways (cf. Jeremiah 23:14). Loving God first, the truth, the brethren, and understanding how to do right the loving way will aid us in being loving neighbors.

Conclusion

There is much more which could be said. The simple point is, we need to love God enough to allow His word to define what love is. Then, we must incorporate that into our good works (Hebrews 6:10; 10:23-24)!

What must one do to be saved (Acts 2:37)? Hear and believe the Gospel (Mark 16:15-16 & Romans 10:17), repent of their sins (Acts 3:19), confess Christ (Acts 8:37), and be baptized (immersed) for the remission of sins into the church of Christ (Acts 2:38-41; 47, I Corinthians 12:12-13, and Romans 6:1-6; 16:16). One must then remain faithful (Colossians 1:23).