

WHERE'S THE LOVE?

LOVE RIGHTLY DIVIDED

“... the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another,
and toward all men, even as we do toward you...”

~ 1 Thessalonians 3:12

1. Introduction

- a. Can there be anything more cliché than a Christian message on love?
- b. We should not ignore the first things: hope, love, grace, Christ, Bible belief
- c. What is love? What good is love? Does doctrine abrogate love? Is love all we need?
- d. We are told to “walk in love”, “abound in love”, “rooted in love”, “unfeigned love”
- e. All know love’s importance. It is not to love or not, it is *what* you love.

2. The Wrong Love

- a. Loving everything and everybody is foolish; loving the wrong thing is wrong – John 3:19
- b. You cannot love God without faith, nor truly love people without the truth of Christ
- c. “*ye that love the Lord: hate evil*”- Ps 97:10; Amos 5:15
- d. Loving [insert here] “*more than God*” is wrong - John 12:43; 2 Tim 3:4
- e. “*forsaken me, having loved this present world*”- 2 Tim 4:10; 1 John 2:15
- f. Love can be feigned; there is a right/wrong, true/false love – 2 Cor 6:6, 8:8, 8:24
- g. Love w/o truth = not true love, but raw emotion/carnal passion/whim/momentary excite
- h. Lust is irregular desire = “I want...”, “me before you”, “obey me”, “please me”, “do this for...”

3. Love: Rightly Divided

- a. *Under the law*: God commanded them to love - Deu 30:16
- b. If they loved him, he would love back – Deu 7:12-13; Ps 11:7; 145:20
- c. Loving God meant commandment keeping= Ps 119:97; John 13:35; 14:15-21, 15:10-13
- d. You were in him by loving him - 1 John 2:5; 5:2-3
- e. *Under grace*: God commends his love toward sinners – Rom 5:8
- f. We are in Christ not because of our love toward him, but by grace – Rom 5:5, 2Co 5:14
- g. Churches ought to operate out of love for the truth, and to see it working in others

4. Constrained by Love

- a. There is a constraint on yourself by the love of Christ
- b. Right love is right desire – Love of God, love of Christ: love of truth, right, good
- c. “*the love of the truth*” - 2 Thess 2:10, Titus 1:8, Titus 2:4; Rom 12:9
- d. Love motivates naturally. The best manipulator is fear, but perfect love...
- e. Love of truth constrains us to speak – Eph 4:15, 2 Cor 2:4; 12:15; 1 Cor 16:22-24
- f. Love of right and good constrains us to produce it, keep it, copy it, identify it

5. Abounding Love

- a. How to abound in love? 1 Thess 3:9-13
 - i. Pray – Phil 1:9, 4:6-7
 - ii. Strengthen your faith and hope – Gal 5:6, Rom 5:5
 - iii. Put on the breastplate of love to protect from corruption – 1 Thess 5:8, Eph 5:2
 - iv. Put on charity: the desire to see truth work in others - 1 Cor 13:4-7, Col 3:14