

## Why The Goal Is Love?

### Introduction

We are starting a new series today called the Goal is Love. The text for the series is 1 Timothy 1:5, which says, “but the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience, and a sincere faith. This morning we are going to be looking at the context of the verse, because that is where we are as a church. Then, for the next several weeks we will be looking at 1 Timothy 1:5. Here are the messages in this series that we will be looking at.

- November 4, 2012 – 01 Why the Goal of Love
- November 11, 2012 – 02 Characteristics of Love
- November 25, 2012 – 03 Love from a Pure Heart
- December 2, 2012 – 04 Love from a Good Conscience
- December 9, 2012 – 05 Love from a Sincere Faith
- December 16, 2012 – 06 God’s Demonstration of Love (Romans 5:8, Perry Floyd)
- December 23, 2012 – 07 The Goal is Love (1 Tim 1:5, John 3:16)

Turn in your Bibles to 1 Timothy 1 and we are going to read verses three through seven. Paul wrote this letter to Timothy because there were some urgent things that he wanted to tell him that could not wait until he was able to come in person. We covered these six main areas in the series that we just finished. The first area was doctrine. Let’s pick it up in verse three.

(1 Timothy 1:3-7) "As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus, in order that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines, {4} nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than furthering the administration of God which is by faith. {5} **But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.** {6} For some men, straying from these things, have turned aside to fruitless discussion, {7} wanting to be teachers of the Law, even though they do not understand either what they are saying or the matters about which they make confident assertions."

In verse five Paul says that the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart. That is the launching pad for this next series. We are going to be talking about the goal of love. I am excited to talk about the goal of love because this is the vision of our church. Our vision is to be a church that passionately loves God with all our heart, and who fervently love one another. We believe that both the Old Testament and New Testament teach us that we must love God with all our heart soul and strength.

When Jesus was asked by one of the Pharisees about the greatest commandment in the Law, He replied, “you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” He went on to say, “the second is like it, you shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend the whole law.”

(Matthew 22:35-40) "And one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, {36} "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" {37} And He said to him, "'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.' {38} "This is the great and foremost commandment. {39} "The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' {40} "On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.""

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Jesus was quoting from Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and Leviticus 19:18. In Deuteronomy, Moses tells us to love God with all our heart. In Leviticus 19:18, he tells us to love our neighbor as ourselves.

(Deuteronomy 6:4-5) ""Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! {5} "And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might."

(Leviticus 19:18) ""You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the LORD."

For me, when the church loves God with all their heart, and they have a love for one another, everything else will fall into place. Because you are excited about Jesus, you will tell others about the Lord. Evangelism and outreach will not be a problem. To go a step further, when a church has love, it will be recognized by people outside the church. Jesus said, "by this will all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." When a church is full of love, there will be open doors and opportunities to share the gospel. People will be more receptive because of the love they see in you.

(John 13:35) ""By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.""

When a church has husbands that love their wives, and wives love their husbands, we will see marriages that are a light to the world. There will be joy and peace in the home. One husband and wife, that Karen and I counseled, each stated that they loved each other; they just could not live together. This couple really did not love each other. As I walked them through 1 Corinthians 13, and asked them verse by verse if they were doing this or that, they finally agreed that they had not been walking in love.

For example, love does not seek its own. Both of them were living very selfishly. Love is not provoked. Both of them were continually being provoked at one another. Love does not take into account a wrong suffered. Both of them were constantly bringing up old offenses. They were taking into account the wrongs that were suffered. Proverbs tells us that he who repeats a matter separates intimate friends. They were both guilty of it, and finally realized that their understanding of love was more feeling oriented, than based on how love is defined in Scripture.

(1 Corinthians 13:5) "does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered,"

(Proverbs 17:9) "He who covers a transgression seeks love, But he who repeats a matter separates intimate friends."

Marriage is a wonderful covenant relationship. When God created Eve for Adam, He said it was good. God meant marriage to be a wonderful relationship. However, when there is no love in the home, it can be a miserable experience for both parties. In fact, Solomon said that it is better to live in the desert than with a contentious woman. A wilderness or desert is where there are no people. It is a lonely and deserted place. But, a lonely place is better than a marriage full of strife and contention.

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(Proverbs 21:19) "It is better to live in a desert land, Than with a contentious and vexing woman."

When a home is full of love, children will have stability and security. They will be nurtured and cared for. They will have joy and a good countenance.

When a church loves God with all their heart, giving will not be a problem. Jesus said your heart is where your treasure is. If our treasure is Christ, giving to Him is not a problem. When a church has a love for one another, sharing and caring for one another will not be a problem.

(Matthew 6:21) "for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

(1 John 3:17) "But whoever has the world's goods, and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?"

When a church has love for God and for one another, the other things fall into place. My heart's desire, and I think I have the Father's heart on this matter, is that we always walk in love, and that we never stray from what the Lord has called us to be – a church that passionately loves God and fervently loves one another.

What I would like to look at this morning is why the goal of love. We see that the goal of Paul's instruction was love. I want to go back to the chapter of love, 1 Corinthians 13, and show you why Paul's goal was love. He gives six reasons why our goal should be love. Then, I want to look at Jesus' goal. Finally, I want to finish with the application of this in our own lives.

### **I. Paul's Six Reasons For the Goal of Love**

Let's read the first three verses of 1 Corinthians 13. Paul gives six reasons why our goal should be love. Lets look at those six reasons.

(1 Corinthians 13:1-3) "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. {2} And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. {3} And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing."

#### **A. More Valuable Than Tongues**

The first comparison is with the gift of tongues. In verse one he says that if I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

(1 Corinthians 13:1) "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal."

**Paul does not devalue the gift of tongues. He wanted all to speak in tongues.** In chapter fourteen, Paul says, "Now I wish you all spoke in tongues." Later on in the verse eighteen, he says, "I thank God, I speak in tongues more than you all." Paul used this gift, was thankful for this gift, and he

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desired for everyone could have this gift. This does not sound like Paul devalued the gift of tongues. Paul's point is that love goes beyond, exceeds, and surpasses the value of this gift of tongues.

(1 Corinthians 14:5a) "Now I wish that you all spoke in tongues."

(1 Corinthians 14:18) "I thank God, I speak in tongues more than you all;"

Many years ago I used to coordinate and lead a quarterly prayer meeting for the churches in Acworth, Georgia. I would visit with all the pastors and invite them and their congregations to the prayer meeting. We would also move the meeting around to different churches. Some of the responses from pastors were surprising. One Baptist pastor said he could not pray with people that believed in speaking in tongues. I told him that he did was not getting married to them, just praying with them.

At the same time, I asked our congregation to refrain from praying in tongues in these city-wide prayer meetings. I wanted our congregation to walk in love and to be respectful to those who may not have the gift, or even believe in the gift of tongues. I was surprised at how some of our congregation got upset with me about this instruction. Walking in love is more important than speaking in tongues.

Tongues are a wonderful gift. **The gift of tongues edify or build up a believer.** Notice why he said he wished that everyone spoke in tongues. This is repeated in Jude, where we are exhorted to build ourselves up on our most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit.

(1 Corinthians 14:4) "One who speaks in a tongue edifies himself; but one who prophesies edifies the church."

(Jude 1:20) "But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith; praying in the Holy Spirit;"

As a church we believe in the gift of tongues. We believe all of the gifts are for today. The gift of tongues is a wonderful gift. However, if we are just a charismatic church that speaks in tongues and does not have love, we are a noisy gong or clanging cymbal.

### **B. More Valuable Than Prophecy**

Paul's second comparison is to the gift of prophecy. He says that if he has the gift of prophecy, but does not have love, he is nothing. Again, **Paul does not devalue prophecy. God wants us to earnestly desire to prophesy.** He is just making a value comparison with love. Love has a surpassing value when compared to prophecy.

(1 Corinthians 13:2) "And if I have the gift of prophecy...but do not have love, I am nothing."

Earlier, Paul mentioned that we need to earnestly desire the greater gifts. This earnest desire is a boiling hot zeal, or a passion. We are exhorted to be passionate about prophecy. Many of us are luke warm, and God wants us passionate about prophecy. God wants us to earnestly desire prophecy. Paul refers to prophecy as one of the greater gifts, and we are to earnestly desire the greater gifts.

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(1 Corinthians 12:31) "But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And I show you a still more excellent way."

In chapter fourteen, Paul says to earnestly desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy. The Greek word used for especially is *mallon*, which means to a greater degree or more. Our desire for prophecy should be more than for just spiritual gifts; it should be to a greater degree. This gift of prophecy is something that is especially worth pursuing.

(1 Corinthians 14:1) "Pursue love, yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy."

G3123. *mallon*; neut. of the compar. of the same as G3122; (adv.) more (in a greater degree) or rather:--+ better, X far, (the) more (and more), (so) much (the more), rather.

Paul goes on to tell us why prophecy is greater than tongues. **Prophecy edifies the church, not just the individual.** When someone speaks in a tongue, he speaks to God and no one understands. The one who prophesies speaks to men for edification, exhortation, and consolation. **The purposes of prophecy are to edify, exhort, and console.** With tongues, the person is edified, but with prophecy the whole church is edified. Paul wishes that they would all speak in tongues, but more importantly, that they would all prophesy, so that the church would receive edifying.

(1 Corinthians 14:2-5) "For one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men, but to God; for no one understands, but in his spirit he speaks mysteries. {3} But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation. {4} One who speaks in a tongue edifies himself; but one who prophesies edifies the church. {5} Now I wish that you all spoke in tongues, but even more that you would prophesy; and greater is one who prophesies than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may receive edifying."

**Prophecy is considered one of the greater gifts** that Paul wished for the whole church to pursue. But, even if we did prophesy, we are nothing if we do not have love.

### C. More Valuable Than Knowledge

The third comparison is with knowledge. Paul says that if he knows all mysteries and all knowledge, but does not have love, he is nothing.

(1 Corinthians 13:2) "And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge...but do not have love, I am nothing."

**Paul does not devalue knowledge. Paul prayed that God would give us wisdom, revelation, and knowledge.** He prayed for us to be filled with knowledge. In Ephesians 1:15-19, he does not cease in giving thanks and mentioning them in his prayers. He prays that the Lord would give them a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, and that the eyes of their hearts may be enlightened. Paul want them to be filled with knowledge.

(Ephesians 1:15-19) "For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you, and your love for all the saints, {16} do not cease giving thanks for you, while

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making mention of you in my prayers; {17} that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. {18} I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, {19} and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might"

In Ephesians four Paul tells us that **the five-fold ministry gifts were to equip the church and help them grow and mature in our faith through the knowledge of the Son of God.** Knowledge is important to us becoming a mature man. Paul is not devaluing knowledge. He wants us to be filled with knowledge.

(Ephesians 4:11-13) "And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, {12} for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; {13} until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fulness of Christ."

But, Paul recognizes that something is more valuable than knowledge. **The love of Christ surpasses knowledge.** Look what he prays in Ephesians 3:16-19. He wants the church to be rooted and grounded in love, and to comprehend the breadth, length, height, and depth of God's love. Why? Because the love of Christ surpasses knowledge. Knowing and experiencing the love of God is more important than knowledge. When we have God's love, we can be filled up with the fulness of God. And, without love, even though we have knowledge, we have nothing.

(Ephesians 3:14-19) "For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father...that you, being rooted and grounded in love, {18} may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, {19} and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fulness of God."

### D. More Valuable Than Faith

The fourth comparison that Paul makes is with the gift of faith. He says that if we have faith to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. Again, **Paul is not devaluing the gift of faith. He is only putting it in proper perspective.** If we have faith, but do not have love, we are nothing. Love is the ultimate goal. We want to be people of faith, but not at the expense of love.

(1 Corinthians 13:2b) "And...if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing."

**Jesus encouraged the disciples to have faith.** He told them that they lacked faith when they were worried about their provisions. He told them not to be anxious, but to have faith that the Lord would provide for them.

(Matthew 6:26-31) ""Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? {27} "And which of you by being anxious can add a single cubit to his life's span? {28}

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"And why are you anxious about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, {29} yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory did not clothe himself like one of these. {30} "But if God so arrays the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more do so for you, O men of little faith? {31} "Do not be anxious then, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'With what shall we clothe ourselves?'"

In Matthew 8, Jesus told the disciples not to be timid in the midst of a storm. He tells them that they are men of little faith. Jesus arose and rebuked the winds and the sea and it became calm. Jesus wants us to exercise our faith and speak to the storms. He wants us to be men, women, and children of great faith.

(Matthew 8:26) "And He said^ to them, "Why are you timid, you men of little faith?" Then He arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and it became perfectly calm."

In Matthew 17, Jesus was asked by the disciples why they were not able to cast out a demon and heal a boy. Jesus tells them that it was because of the littleness of their faith. Jesus wants us to minister to people. Faith is not something without value. Faith is something extremely important in ministering to people and bringing about God's kingdom here on earth.

(Matthew 17:18-21) "And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out of him, and the boy was cured at once. {19} Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" {20} And He said to them, "Because of the littleness of your faith; for truly I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it shall move; and nothing shall be impossible to you. {21} "But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.""

We find in Hebrews that **without faith it is impossible to please God**. You and I want to please God in everything that we do. None of us want to do things that displease God. We know that we must have faith, and apply our faith in our lives to please Him.

(Hebrews 11:6) "And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him."

We know God and we come to God by faith. Paul tells us in Ephesians that it is **by grace we are saved through faith**. We begin by faith and it is by faith that we please God. Without faith, it is impossible to please Him. Yet, without love, our faith means nothing. We need to know God's love. We need to experience God's love. We need to walk in God's love. We need to be known by love. Our love should be obvious to the world. Without love, we are nothing.

(Ephesians 2:8-9) "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; {9} not as a result of works, that no one should boast."

Paul concludes chapter thirteen by saying, not abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love. There are three pillars that are very important in our Christian walk, but the greatest of these three is love. Even if we have the faith to remove mountains, and we do not have love, we are nothing. Love has a surpassing value to faith. Love exceeds or goes beyond the value of faith.

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(1 Cor 13:13) But now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love."

### E. More Valuable Than Mercy

The fifth comparison that Paul makes is with mercy. He says, "if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, but do not have love, it profits me nothing." We know that giving to help our brother in need is one way to lay our lives down for our brothers. However, **we can give to the poor for wrong reasons or motives**. If our actions are not motivated by love, if they are not driven by love, then it does not profit. We can feed the poor, but still not have love.

(1 Corinthians 13:3) "And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing."

Jesus was always reaching out to the poor. In Luke 4, Jesus quotes Isaiah 61 and says that He was sent to preach the gospel to the poor. **God wants all of us to preach to the poor.**

(Luke 4:18-19) "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives "THE , and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are downtrodden, to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord."

When the Lord sent me out to do evangelistic work in the golf world, I had some good fruit. The Lord used us in many ways. However, when I entered into prison ministry, I was able to preach the gospel to the poor. These men were literally and spiritually poor. These men were white for harvest. Consequently, I saw people coming to Christ every week.

One of the many things that the Vineyard is known for is its compassionate outreach to the poor. When Tony Vaughn preached here in January 2011, he shared with us the importance of remembering the poor. I am excited that the Lord brought Danielle Clarke to our body. Her ministry, Promised Land, feeds and clothes the poor. We support her ministry, and are seeking ways to increase that support. Her ministry is at the heart of what Jesus taught.

**Jesus also taught that we should give to the poor.** In Matthew 19:21, He told a wealthy young man to go sell his possessions, give to the poor, and then come follow Him. This was a way that the young man could store up treasures in heaven. Giving to the poor was important to the Lord.

(Matthew 19:21) "Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.""

In the separation of the goats and the sheep, He commended the sheep for feeding and clothing the poor. He says that they are blessed of His Father. Inasmuch as they did it to the least of the brethren, they have done it unto Him.

(Matthew 25:34-40) ""Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. {35} 'For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; {36} naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.... {40} And the King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I



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say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me."

In Galatians 2, Paul, Barnabas, and Titus met with the apostles in Jerusalem. Paul shared with them how God had called him to preach to the Gentiles. The apostles in Jerusalem only asked one thing of Paul, Barnabas, and Titus: that they remember the poor. Paul adds to that his own attitude, "the very thing I also was eager to do." **Paul was eager to remember the poor.**

(Galatians 2:1-10) "Then after an interval of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also...and recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we might go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcised. {10} They only asked us to remember the poor-- the very thing I also was eager to do."

### F. More Valuable Than Martyrdom

The final comparison that Paul makes is with martyrdom. He says, "if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing." Martyrdom is the epitome of being sold out to the Lord. It is the willingness to lay your life down for the gospel. It is a willingness to stand up for the sake of the gospel no matter what happens. Yet, **without love, there is no profit in martyrdom.** The Lord is telling us that love has a surpassing value compared to martyrdom.

(1 Corinthians 13:3) "And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing."

When John wrote that by this all men will know that you are Christians, he did not finish the statement, "because you are willing to die for your faith." John wrote, "by this all men will know that you are My disciples if you have love for one another." **Love, not martyrdom is the greatest witness to people and evidence of our faith.**

(John 13:35) "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

**Martyrdom was very common in the early church. Eleven of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb were martyred.** The stoning of Stephen brought a severe persecution against the church. Historical documents record the death of over two thousand believers in that persecution.

### **Apostles of the Lamb that were martyred**

1. James, the son of Zebedee, was put to death by Herod Agrippa in 44 A.D.
2. Philip was crucified in 54 A.D.
3. Matthew was martyred in Ethiopia, in the city of Nadabah, in 60 A.D.
4. Matthias was stoned and beheaded in Jerusalem.
5. Andrew, the brother of Peter, was crucified in Edessa.
6. Mark, was dragged to pieces by the people of Alexandria.
7. Peter was condemned to death, and crucified in Rome. He was crucified, head down and feet up, because he said he was unworthy to be crucified in the same manner as Christ.
8. Jude, the brother of James, was crucified at Edessa in 72 A.D.

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9. Bartholomew, after preaching and translating the gospel into the language of India, was crucified by the impatient idolaters.
10. Thomas preached the gospel in Parthia and India, and was martyred with a spear.
11. Simon preached the gospel in Africa and in Britain, where he was crucified in 74 A.D.

### **Other notables in the NT that were martyred**

- Paul was martyred by Nero in Rome in 66 A.D.
- Barnabas was martyred in 73 A.D.
- Stephen was martyred in Jerusalem around 34 A.D.
- Luke is said to have been hung on an olive tree by the idolatrous priests of Greece.

Even if we deliver our bodies to be burned and die of martyrdom and do not have love, it profits us nothing. Love has a surpassing value to martyrdom.

## **II. Applications**

Paul said the goal of our instruction is love. Our goal is not just to have our instruction come out of a motive of love, but everything that we do come out of love. **The goal of every ministry should be love.**

(1 Timothy 1:5) "But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith."

In John 15, Jesus is talking to His disciples about abiding in Him and bearing much fruit. In John 15:12, He commands them to love one another, just as He has loved them. Then, He tells them, "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends." Jesus is about to lay His life down for them and for us. He is about to show the greatest love possible to us. Jesus' death on the cross was the completion of the goal that He had, which was to lay His life down for you and I. His goal was to reconcile sinful men to God by dying for our sins. It was the ultimate demonstration of love, and it was motivated by love.

(John 15:12-13) ""This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. {13} "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends."

Jesus tells us to lay our lives down for one another and to demonstrate the same kind of love towards one another. He gave us an example that we should follow. In 1 John 4:10-11, we are told that God loved us and sent the Son to be the propitiation or satisfaction for our sins. Then, we are told that if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. How did God love us? He laid His life down for us. We are to have the same goal and motivation to love that Jesus had. **One of the ways that we can show love is to lay down our lives for one another.**

(1 John 4:10-11) "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. {11} Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another."

In chapter three, John says this very clearly, "we know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has the world's goods, and beholds

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his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?" In other words, one of the ways that we lay down our lives for people and demonstrate love towards one another is meeting practical needs in their lives.

(1 John 3:16-17) "We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. {17} But whoever has the world's goods, and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?"

In the book of Philippians, Paul encourages the saints to maintain the same love and to be intent on one purpose. He tells them to do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind they were to regard one another as more important than themselves. They were not to just look out for their own interests, but also the interests of others. **We should not only look out for our own interests, but also the interests of others.**

(Philippians 2:1-4) "If therefore there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, {2} make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. {3} Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; {4} do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others."

Jesus demonstrated that goal of love by serving us, and by laying His life down for us. As we begin to look at the practical applications in our lives, let's break it down even further. In Paul's letter to Timothy, he tells him that the goal of his instruction is love. You may not be a teacher. You may have the gift of mercy. Guess what? The goal of your mercy and compassion on people is love.

When you see someone suffering, you take time to go and comfort them. You lavish your love and comfort on them. You make the person feel like you are experiencing their pain. They feel that you fully understand their situation and care about them. The gift of mercy is a wonderful gift to the body of Christ. There are so many hurting people that need to be loved on by people with this gift.

You may have the gift of giving? What is your goal? Your goal is to love God and to love people through your giving. Your willingness to sacrificially give to help brothers in need is a demonstration of love.

You may have the gift of exhortation? You prod people to do things because you want them to succeed. You want them to experience more in the kingdom. It is not selfishly motivated. You genuinely care about them, about their walk, and their ministry. What is the goal behind exhorting and prodding people to action? It is love. It must be love. It must be motivated by love. The people you are exhorting need to see and feel the love of Christ in your exhortations. They are more apt to respond to your exhortations if they know you are motivated by love.

Many times an exhorter has such urgency and directness about a matter that the other person does not interpret the exhortation as love. The key is the motive behind the exhortation. What is the goal of your exhortation? Are there any selfish motives behind the exhortation. If we are going to effectively minister to people, the goal of our exhortations must be love.

## Why The Goal Is Love?

You may have the gift of prophecy. What is the goal of your prophetic words? It is love. There are many prophetic people who are just prophetic, they are pathetic. They have been given the “Jeremiah anointing” to proclaim everything everyone is doing wrong. They are constantly bearing bad news to everyone. Guess what? The goal of prophecy is love. Paul tells us that prophecy is to edify or build up people. It is not to tear down, expose, or humiliate people. It is to build up, edify, and encourage people. It is to love people. The goal of prophecy is to love people.

Whatever gifting or ministry that you have been called in, the goal must be to love. If you are on the Media Team, your goal is love. How can I love people today? How can I show the love of Christ? How can I help show our love to God in our praise and worship? How can we help the message of the love of God be shared through the sound system, PowerPoint, or CD's that we make for people?

If you are on the Worship Team, your goal is love. How can I express my love to Christ today? How can I help the congregation express our love, appreciation, gratitude, and honor to the Lord? The Worship Team cannot simply be musicians. The Worship Team cannot be performers. The Worship Team is a group of worshipers who love God with all their heart. They must be private worshipers of God. They must be people who lavish their love on God in their own prayer times and worship times. The Worship Team cannot lead us in loving God if they do not love God themselves.

If you are a Life Group or Small Group Leader, what is your goal? Your goal is to show the love of God to the people in your Life Group. It is to encourage the members to show the love of God to one another. It is to create an atmosphere and culture of love in the Life Group. Your goal as a Life Group leader is love. No matter what ministry we are involved in at the church, it should be done with and motivated by love.

Let's pray.

**Introduction** (1 Tim 1:3-7, Matt 22:35-40, Deut 6:4-5, Lev 19:18, John 13:35, 1 Cor 13:5, Pro 17:9, 21:19, Matt 6:21, 1 John 3:17)

**I. Paul's Six Reasons For the Goal of Love** (1 Cor 13:1-3)

**A. More Valuable Than Tongues** (1 Cor 13:1, 14:5, 14:18)

- Paul does not devalue the gift of tongues. He wanted \_\_\_\_\_ to speak in tongues. (1 Cor 14:5, 14:18)
- Tongues \_\_\_\_\_ or build up a believer. (1 Cor 14:4, Jude 1:20)

**B. More Valuable Than Prophecy** (1 Cor 13:2)

- Paul does not devalue prophecy. God wants us to earnestly \_\_\_\_\_ to prophesy. (1 Cor 12:31, 14:1)
- Prophecy \_\_\_\_\_ the church, not just the individual.
- The purposes of prophesy are to \_\_\_\_\_, exhort, and console. (1 Cor 14:2-5)
- Prophecy is considered one of the \_\_\_\_\_ gifts. (1 Cor 14:5, 12:31, 14:1)

**C. More Valuable Than Knowledge** (1 Cor 13:2)

- Paul does not devalue knowledge. Paul prayed that God would give us wisdom, revelation, and \_\_\_\_\_. (Eph 1:15-19)
- The five-fold ministry gifts were to equip the church and help them grow in the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Son of God. (Eph 4:11-13)
- Paul said that the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ surpasses knowledge. (Eph 3:14-19)

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#### **D. More Valuable Than Faith (1 Cor 13:2b)**

- Paul is not devaluing the gift of faith. He is only putting it in proper \_\_\_\_\_.
- Jesus encouraged the disciples to have \_\_\_\_\_. (Matt 6:26-31, Matt 8:26, 17:18-21)
- Without faith it is impossible to \_\_\_\_\_ God. (Heb 11:6)
- By grace we are saved through \_\_\_\_\_. (Eph 2:8-9)
- Of faith, hope, and love, the greatest is \_\_\_\_\_. (1 Cor 13:13)

#### **E. More Valuable Than Mercy**

- We can give to the poor for wrong \_\_\_\_\_. (1 Cor 13:3)
- God wants us to \_\_\_\_\_ to the poor. (Luke 4:18-19,
- Jesus taught that we should \_\_\_\_\_ to the poor. (Matt 19:21, Matt 25:34-40)
- Paul was eager to \_\_\_\_\_ the poor. (Gal 2:1-10)

#### **F. More Valuable Than Martyrdom**

- Without love there is no \_\_\_\_\_ in martyrdom. (1 Cor 13:3)
- \_\_\_\_\_, not martyrdom is the greatest witness to people. (John 13:35)
- Martyrdom was very \_\_\_\_\_ in the early church.
- Eleven of the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lamb were martyred.

#### **II. Applications (1 Tim 1:5)**

- The goal of every ministry should be \_\_\_\_\_.
- One of the ways to show love is to \_\_\_\_\_ down our lives for one another. (John 15:12-13, 1 John 4:10-11, 3:16-17)
- We should not only look out for our \_\_\_\_\_ but also the \_\_\_\_\_ of others. (Phil 2:1-7)

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