
Subject: Post valentine re-assessment and re-alignment
Posted by [william](#) on Fri, 15 Feb 2008 13:19:35 GMT
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Quote:Jas 1:12 Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

Love (the great motivator!)

Popular culture distorts the biblical concept of love. Especially Hollywood.

Romance, flowers, valentines, a romantic setting, adoring glances, mushy poems, corny sayings, etc.. You can think of a lot more, but these, always vague, ideas of "love" are not biblical. We've even gotten to the point in our society where we may even feel a bit queasy when a man speaks of his love for Jesus. This is a distortion of what I believe to be the most important doctrine of the Bible.

I think the devil is behind some of this, but preachers may need to share some of the responsibility for this distortion.

Think about it; the heart of the gospel is based upon a revelation of God's love to us and, in turn, our reciprocating that love back to Him. The spread of the gospel depends upon our love for both God and our fellow man. Keeping God's commandments, to be worthwhile, must be motivated by love.

No wonder the devil works hard to propagate misconceptions about love.

Since the Bible teaches us that God *is* love, it behooves us to have a proper understanding of the concept or we will end up having misconceptions about God.

Ramifications of the outright distortion of the concept of love:

1. We cannot know God, after all, He is Love.
2. We are in danger of becoming idolaters. If our conception of God isn't based upon His self-revelation, then we are in fact not serving God, but a false idol that we've imagined.
3. We substitute the central reason for God sending His son to die and make it something it is not; a mere emotional novelty which has no basis in the Word of God.
4. Our responsibility as ambassadors of Christ is unclear. Can we really share the gospel effectively if our ultimate motivation isn't love? The gospel is God's ultimate expression of love to us, and without a proper understanding of this love we spread a false gospel.
5. Without a proper understanding of love it becomes impossible for us to "love God" aright, and certainly the command to "love our neighbor" is distorted.

6. Jesus said that if we love Him we will keep His commandments, but if we do attempt to keep His commandments without the motivation of true love then our attempts are vain and unfruitful.

What is biblical love?

First we need to understand that love is voluntary and rational. No one can "make" us love. Love is a rational decision that we voluntarily undertake.

Secondly, true biblical love can be defined as simply desiring the best for others. Since God is the ultimate "best," it is only natural that we want to share this gospel of love to our fellow man. This is the basis and the motivation for gospel preaching (remember, we are all preachers!).

Thirdly, since love must have an expressive aspect, it is what we "do" for others, and what we "do" for God that really proves we possess love.

James 1:12 teaches us that if we are to receive the "crown of Life," it is because we endure our present trials (so does Acts 14:22). We won't endure our trials unless we love Him, and if we love Him we will keep His commands!

So who are you going to rationally chose to love today, and in what manner?

Blessings,
William
