

Clarksville Church of Christ
 407 W Lewis & Clark Pkwy
 Clarksville, IN 47129-1649
 (812) 944-2305
www.clarksvillechurchofchrist.org

Sundays
 Bible Study..... 9:30 AM
 Worship.....10:30 AM
 Worship.....6:00 PM

Wednesdays
 Bible Study.....7:30 PM

Elders
 Stephen W. Nale.....812-948-9917
 Allen L. Morris.....812-967-4536

Deacons
 Jeffrey B. Hunt.....502-931-5766
 Elbert Metcalf.....812-246-5938
 Rondal O. Thompson Jr....812-944-8295
 Mark Maudlin.....502-523-0479

Editor
 Brian Anderson.....317-442-9507

Goals For 2021
Theme
 A Church with a Mind to Work
Attendance: Sunday Bible Study: 40;
Sunday AM: 50
Sunday PM: 40; Wednesday Bible Study: 30

Giving: Meet Our Yearly Budget

Invitations: 130

Every Member Committed To Daily Bible Reading

Every Member Committed To Daily Prayer

Every Member Committed To Be At Every Service

Support the Work in Vincennes, Indiana
Hold A Men's Training Class

Hold One Gospel Meeting

-Like us on Facebook-View us on YouTube at Clarksvillechurch

Gary Henry will be preaching today.

We are now in week #35 of our Daily Bible Reading.

Prayer List
 Lynn Maudlin's father
 Pam Caudill
 Sharon Nale, Polly Ward
 Les & Novema Dunn
 Debby Spears (Roseann's sis)
 Sharon Thompson, Kay Thompson
 The Wards & Beth McFarland
 Dale Kahl, Brooke Thomas
 Cathie Hall, Debbie Lewellen
 The Metcalf Family

Love: John 13:34-35, I John 4:7-8, 11

Who Have You Invited To Services This week?

Lord's Supper Reading
Matt. 26:26-29

Scripture Reading
 AM: See Preacher
 PM: See Preacher

Encouragement Tally
 Invites this month: 0
 Invites last month: 8
 Visitors YTD: 14

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The
Clarksville Beacon

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Volume 33 Issue 35 Clarksville Church of Christ August 29, 2021

Faith, Hope and Love

Welcome!
 If you're visiting with us today, we want you to feel welcome and we want you to feel like our honored guest! We also want you to know that all we're interested in here at the Clarksville Church of Christ is the Truth. Jesus said, "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:32. The truth He's talking about is God's word. Jesus said, "Sanctify them by thy truth, Thy word is truth." John 17:17. Therefore we hope you'll appreciate that we'll give you book, chapter and verse from the Bible, the word of God, for everything that we say or do here today, so that everything that we do may bring glory unto God, I Pet. 4:11.

Many Bible students would recognize the triad of "faith, hope and love" as the three things that Paul said would continue to "abide" among Christians after miraculous gifts "ceased" (1 Cor. 13:8-13). But how do these abide among God's people? Are they merely matters of the heart?

Paul frequently emphasized "faith, hope and love" in his letters (Col. 1:4-5; 2 Thess. 1:3-4; Tit. 2:2; etc.). When he penned his first epistle (First Thessalonians), "faith, hope and love" were the focus of his second sentence. In fact, chronologically, this is the first place in the New Testament where these three come together. What can we learn?

Read the text: "We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father, knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God" (1 Thess. 1:2-4). Note the word "of" before each of the key words in this text. Behind this English word is a prepositional case in the Greek which indicates that "the first word" is being produced by (i.e., "of") "the second word."

Paul was thankful for the brethren's "work of faith." Their faith was not merely a matter of the heart. Paul was not thankful that they had faith in their heart. Grammatically, their faith produced work. Of course, that is what true faith does (Jas. 2:14-26). Do you have faith in your heart? If you do, it will be evidenced (on the outside) by work for the Lord.

Paul was thankful for the brethren's "labor of love." Their love was not merely a matter of the heart. Paul was not thankful that they had love in their heart. Grammatically, their agape love produced labor (a Greek word that indicates arduous, wearying toil, that involves sweating, fatigue and straining one's all). Of course, that is what true love does (John 14:15; 1 John 5:3). Do you have love in your heart? If you do, it will be evidenced (on the outside) by labor for the Lord.

Paul was thankful for the brethren's "steadfastness of hope" (NASB). Their hope was not merely a matter of the heart. Paul was thankful that they had hope in their heart. Grammatically, their hope produced steadfastness (a Greek word that indicates persistent endurance). Of course, that is what true hope does (Rom. 8:24-25). Do you have hope in your heart? If you do, it will be evidenced (on the outside) by steadfast endurance for the Lord.

Thus, when the Bible explains itself, it teaches us that faith, hope and love are not merely heart matters, but they produce the steadfast, wearying work that the Lord is looking for in His followers. Do you have true faith, hope and love?

What Is Love?

Believers understand and accept, as true, scripture's declaration: "God is Love." Apart from God this statement does not produce a quantifiable description of love. Conversely, secular definitions can be nebulous and defy universal application. For example Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines love as: "A feeling of strong or constant affection for a person; an attraction that includes sexual desire; the strong affection felt by people who have a romantic relationship."

Both definitions interpret love in light of one's worldview, faith, emotions, and particular experiences relating to former and current relationships. Believers observe an object or person's qualities as altruistic? the ability to engender safety and security, as well as provide a sense of well-being. Using these observations believers develop and adopt a working definition of love. Still, we are impacted by a secular worldview and selfish emotions color our thought process. For example, many of us have told someone we love someone or something because of the way it makes us feel, or what it physically does for us. In other situations, we base love on physical attributes, such as how attractive we perceive a person or object to be.

Similarly, both descriptions are conditionally based, defining feelings and emotions generated by thoughts and positions brought about by the individual or object of our affections. An obvious problem with man's understanding and practice of love is demonstrated through emotions. Feelings, absent godly instruction, are inherently unstable, changing quickly and ranging from adoration to loathing, sometimes based on a single encounter.

Understanding "true love" requires turning to the source, God. God does not love based on feelings or emotions. Nor does He love us because we're lovable, or because we make Him feel good. His love originates from within Himself, as He created man out of His own abundance of love, to explicitly engage in a divine, personal and loving relationship with Him. However, even before creating man and endowing him with free will, God knew mankind would choose the deceitful pleasure of sin, shattering His intended divine relationship.

Thus, His actions serve to differentiate true love from human love. Instead of leaving man in a lost condition of their making, God's love compelled Him to establish a plan to redeem, reconcile and restore the divine relationship. This plan depended on the sacrificial actions of God the Son. Only by studying God's love can man gain an accurate understanding and appreciation of the exemplary definition of love:

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. (John 3:16-17)

Later, in John's first epistle, he again defines God's love and instructs disciples to share in this love through fellowship with one another:

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. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us. (1 John 4:10-12)

Love One Another

Multiple times in the New Testament, Christians are commanded to love one another. In fact, children of God are charged to "increase and abound in love to one another" (1 Thess. 3:12) and to "love one another fervently with a pure heart" (1 Pet. 1:22). How can we properly and effectively develop this attitude and express it "in deed and in truth" (1 John 3:18)? Wouldn't you know it! God tells us how in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. Look at those verses closely and see how they are further developed in other passages.

To love one another, we must be patient! "Showing tolerance for one another" (Eph. 4:2).

To love one another, we must be kind! "Be kindly affectionate to one another" (Rom. 12:10).

To love one another, we must not envy! "Not become conceited...envying one another" (Gal. 5:26).

To love one another, we must not seek the center of attention! "Through love serve one another" (Gal. 5:13).

To love one another, we must not be arrogant! "Submitting to one another" (Eph. 5:21).

To love one another, we must not behave rudely! "Have the same care for one another" (1 Cor. 12:25).

To love one another, we must not seek our own way! "Giving preference to one another" (Rom. 12:10).

To love one another, we must not be irritable! "Having compassion for one another" (1 Pet. 3:8).

To love one another, we must not store up resentment! "Forgiving one another" (Eph. 4:32).

To love one another, we must not rejoice in wrong-doing! "Edify one another" (1 Thess. 5:11).

To love one another, we must rejoice in the truth! "Consider one another" (Heb. 10:24).

To love one another, we must bear all things! "Bearing with one another" (Eph. 4:2).

To love one another, we must believe all things! "In harmony with one another" (Ro. 12:16).

To love one another, we must hope all things! "Encourage one another" (1 Thess. 5:11).

To love one another, we must endure all things! "Bear one another's burdens" (Gal. 6:2).