

BULLEEN BAPTIST CHURCH

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SERIES : "LIFE TOGETHER"

TOPIC : "2 Marks Of Genuine Christian Community"

STUDY 4 : Sunday, February 22, 2004

"Love"

Notes by Rev. Gary Lockyer

INTRODUCTION TO THE SERIES : "LIFE TOGETHER"

"Life Together" is a series of studies on the foundational aspects of Christian Community. We began with "3 Basic Commitments" and now move to "2 Evidences of a Genuine Christian Community" Leading up to Easter, we will be studying "3 Essential Attitudes" Each "topic" within the Series will have the number of studies in it as indicated in the topic's name.

As we begin our ministry together, I invite you on a journey ... to rediscover the basics of God's intention for us as his people. It is on this foundation that we must build our life together and with these principles we must shape the future of our ministry to the community around us.

INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC : "TWO MARKS OF GENUINE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY."

Jesus spoke plainly about two particular characteristics that would be evident in those who followed him. Those characteristics are : "love" and "Unity"

Further, he invited the world to observe the disciple's life together and to judge them (and it) on the basis of the presence, or absence, of these two characteristics.

These are the Evidences of Genuine Christian Community because :

1. Jesus invites a watching world to judge if we are truly FOLLOWING him by the love we have one for another.

"The world will know that you are my disciples if you love one another." ... John 13:35

2. Jesus also invited a watching world to judge the validity of his MINISTRY by observing the unity of his disciples.

"May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me." ... John 17:24

Study 4 : "Love"

A : SOME BASICS ABOUT LOVE.

- It is
1. The cast of God's CHARACTER : *"God is love"* (1Jn4:8, 16)
 2. The basis of his ACTIONS : *"... because the Lord loved you ... he brought you out of Egypt."* (Dt7:8) *"God so loved the world he gave his only Son."* (Jn3:16)
 3. The sum of God's LAW : *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart , soul and mind; and love your neighbour as yourself."* (Mt22:37)
 4. The span of ETERNITY : *"... these three remain the greatest of these is love"* (1Cor13:13) *"I have loved you with an everlasting love."* (Jer31:3) *"Nothing can separate us from the love of God."* Rom8:39

B : LOVE DEFINED

1. How is love defined?

For the New Testament writers, the Cross revolutionised their idea of love

"Herein is love ... we see it CLEARLY

not that we loved God ... not by looking at OURSELVES or our RESPONSE

but that he loved us and sent his Son ... but by seeing JESUS

to be a propitiation for our sins." give himself in costly SERVICE

2. How is love distributed? in COPIOUS amounts!

"God has poured out his love" (Rom5:5)

"How great is the love that the Father has lavished on us." (1Jn3:1)

3. Did we earn it? ... all by Grace - God's UNEARNED & UNMERITED favour (Eph2:8)

"Powerless, ungodly, sinners, God demonstrated his love for us while we were enemies" (Rom5:6-10)

"Dead in sin, gratifying our sinful nature, by nature objects of wrath, because of his great love for us God made us alive" (Eph2:1-5)

C : LOVE COMMANDED

How can love be commanded?

Consider three Greek words for love :

EROS - EMOTIONS *PHILEO* - INTELLECT *AGAPE* - WILL

In the western world, which one do we consider primarily "drives" love? (Circle one)

Biblically, love is "driven" by the WILL

"For God so loved that he gave" Jn 3:16

As God's love shows itself by ACTIONS, so will ours

"Let us not love with words, but with actions" (1Jn3:18).

and loving deeds, since they come from the will, can be COMMANDED!

"A new command I give to you; Love one another as I have loved you." Jn13:34

"What does love look like? It has hands to help others. It has the feet to hasten to the poor and needy. It has eyes to see misery and want. It has ears to hear the sighs and sorrows of men. That is what love looks like." Augustine.