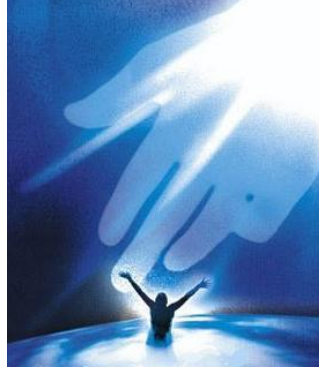


October 11, 2009
"LOVE", *Daily Disciple*, page 293



Psalm 57:9-10

- ⁹ I will praise you, O Lord, among the nations;
I will sing of you among the peoples.
- ¹⁰ For great is your love, reaching to the heavens;
your faithfulness reaches to the skies.

MEDITATION

“This may be called properly the golden chain of divine truth. The end of it is charity, or love—the beginning is unfeigned faith—and the middle is a good conscience, and a pure heart. Faith produces, or leads to a good conscience—this to purity of heart—and this to love, or universal benevolence. This the sum of Christianity, without which none can be perfect or complete Christians.” (Barton W. Stone, *Christian Messenger*, 1834, page 74).

SCRIPTURE

⁴Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

(1 Corinthians 13:4-7)

PRAYER

“God of love, pour your love into my heart so I might bear, believe, hope, and endure all things.”

Digging Deeper: Finding out, discussion and sharing

1. Read all of Psalm 57 and answer the following questions:
 - a. How does this Psalm begin?
 - b. What would you say is the theme of this Psalm?
 - c. The word for “love” in verse 10 is *chesed* in the Hebrew language. It means something like: steadfast love, lovingkindness, or especially covenant love and faithfulness.
 - d. What are expressions of *chesed* regarding God’s love that are specifically mentioned in chapter 57?
 - e. What does the steadfast love of the Lord mean for us today?
 - f. Share ways in which your group has experienced the steadfast and faithful love of God
2. Barton W. Stone, in his meditation above, has an interesting perspective on how he believes that love progresses.
 - a. Do you agree with his progression?
 - b. If you were to describe the growth of love, how would it look to you?
 - c. What is the greatest evidence of love growing in our hearts?
3. You may remember the campfire Christian song that said “The gospel in one word is love.” It was designed to be sung in rounds.
 - a. In what sense would you say the gospel in one word is love?
 - b. How did God demonstrate that love?
 - c. How has your group seen love demonstrated among yourselves?
 - d. How has that reflected the love of God?
4. Paul’s description in 1 Corinthians 13 of love is a famous biblical passage. Why is this passage in the book of 1 Corinthians? What was going on in the Corinthians church that made it necessary for Paul to compose this picture of love for his readers?
5. Take each characteristic of love that Paul mentions and demonstrate where Paul learned it or experienced it in his own life. Interestingly, some New Testament scholars believe that this list is autobiographical, i.e., Paul’s list reflects what he has learned through his own life about love.
6. Creative exercise: pretend we are in Paul’s place writing to the Highland View congregation. Given what you know about our congregation, compose a similar description of love that you believe speaks to the heart and soul of our congregation: both what love is and what love is not.
7. What is the opposite of love?
8. “*Knowledge puffs up but love builds up.*” This truism spoken by Paul is so critical to the health and life of churches. Why is it true?
9. Have you ever prayed for God to pour his love into your heart? Is that possible? And, under what circumstances might this type of prayer be uttered from our lips?
10. Where do you find that you are still lacking in love?
11. Do you feel that your group knows how to love another with the love of God?