



INSTRUCTIONS IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

Dr. Peter D. Wyns

Entry 7 - 7

A - Ω

Loving God's People

There are two doctrines more important than all others; to love God and to love people. The greatest commandment is to love the Lord your God with all of your heart and the second is like it; to love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the words of the prophets, the Law and all the teachings of the Bible. All other Bible doctrines are just commentary to help us understand and achieve these two doctrines. The other day, I met with our church leadership team to share these two essentials. I said, "Loving God is obvious but loving people requires a determined focus. You may preach poorly, mess up the worship set or drop the ball administratively; that is not very professional, but mistakes are for learning and we will improve. If, however, we do not love people so that they know they are loved, then we have failed. The Bible says, if we do not have love we are just a loud noise. It says, without love we have nothing and we are nothing. (see 1Cor. 13)

Two drops of rain land on a mountain an inch apart, one rolls to the left and the other to the right depending on which side of the mountain they hit. The two drops will end up thousands of miles from each other because each went in a different direction. So it is with churches who show real love and those who do not. Jesus taught this watershed doctrine of love in Matthew 22:37-44 and Paul taught it in 1 Corinthians 13. Paul described four kinds of good churches that can easily fail if they miss the mandatory love doctrine. Take note of the different types of churches that can be identified in the following Bible passage.

"If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy [the prophetic church] and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, [the Bible teaching intellectual church] and if I have a faith that can move mountains, [the faith church] but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all my possessions to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, [the mission-outreach church] but have not love, I gain nothing." 1Cor.13:1-3

Most pastors desire these qualities in the church, but without love, the best churches will miss God's mark. Here are four kinds of churches that Paul describes and we give thanks to God for their expertise.

1. The prophetic movement church
2. The Bible knowledge, intellectual church
3. The Word of Faith movement church
4. The compassion, missions, outreach church

It would be great to be in a church that emphasized all four of these fantastic directives. These qualities are mentioned in this scripture, not because they are wrong but because they are exactly what a Bible church should be doing. Still, the Bible says that we can exercise all of these great directives and miss the heart of God. We can be so busy building the organization of a successful church but not know how to love the individual people who are the church.

Love is not an idea, an intention or a statement of faith, it is an activity. Unless it is poured out it is not love. In order for love to be love, it must be given,

extended, and expressed. Love is the activity of gentleness, kindness, care, goodness, longsuffering and sacrificial giving. Love is God's character; it is the fruit of the Spirit moving through people. Without it our church and our Christianity is shallow, if not empty.

Love in a church should start at the top. A minister's interaction with people should be personal and not standoffish. In a large church, a leader cannot be close to everyone but they can be close to many people and that personal touch should trickle down from one person to another until every person knows they are loved and cared for.

Let us understand what love is. In society, love has many different definitions. The Bible says love can be described by at least 16 things:

1. *"Love is patient,*
2. *love is kind,*
3. *It does not envy,*
4. *It does not boast,*
5. *It is not proud.*
6. *It is not rude,*
7. *It is not self-seeking,*
8. *It is not easily angered,*
9. *It keeps no record of wrongs.*
10. *Love does not delight in evil*
11. *But rejoices with the truth.*
12. *It always protects,*
13. *Always trusts,*
14. *Always hopes,*
15. *Always perseveres.*
- 16 *Love never fails."*
(1Cor. 13:4-8)

It is a good test for every minister to evaluate themselves by this biblical standard. Do we really love people? No one is perfect in the exercise of love but all of us should aim to be experts in the field and all should work hard to demonstrate a higher level of love.

The activity of love is the true activity of a Biblical pastor. The pastor is a shepherd who is called to follow the example of Jesus the Good Shepherd. He laid His life down for the sheep.

Besides pastors, every serious Christian should aim to do the work of a care-giving pastor. The work of expressing godly love should be shared by all workers in the church for it is a massive responsibility to care for an entire church family with God's love.

Whether a church is part of the prophecy movement, the Bible knowledge movement, the faith movement or the outreach, mission movement or all of the above - it must make love for God and His people its main theme.

The 1st Corinthians definition of love can be divided into three parts; accepting people, being humble and showing care. These will help us see what is involved in loving one another.

Acceptance

In the church we accept: men, women, young and old, the educated and the uneducated, the rich and the poor, those who are black, white, yellow or

red, the lovely and the unlovely, the beginner Christian and the veteran saint. Acceptance of others is done with God's love because love is patient, love is kind, love is not rude and love does not envy others.

Humility

Love only works if people humble themselves. Humility is not a state of mind but an act of taking a lower place and preferring others. This works through love because love is not proud, it does not boast, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered and it keeps no record of wrongs.

Care

Caring for others does more than meet their temporal needs, it shows them that they are valuable. We seek out the needs of others to help improve their situation. This is important because love does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth. We watch over and guard those around us because love always protects. We help to train people to reach their highest potential so they may advance in the Lord because love always trusts, always hopes, and always perseveres. We love people because love is God's kindness; it never fails.

People should feel God's love when they meet us because of the way we act. They should be encouraged with the church because the love of God is visible everywhere. **AΩ**



Christians for Messiah Ministries

Instructions in Righteousness is produced monthly by "Christians for Messiah Ministries (CFM)." Dr. Peter D. Wyns is the President of CFM. After 40 years of extensive ministry in more than 35 nations, he is now based in the USA. This ministry continues because of your prayers and financial support. Your partnership is greatly appreciated. For information of Dr. Wyns availability to minister at your church, contact "Christians for Messiah Ministries."

Christians for Messiah Ministries PO Box 36324, Rock Hill, South Carolina, 29732

Office: 803-324-0739 or 704-608-7793 e-mail: reachus@peterwyns.com www.peterwyns.org

MAKE DONATION CHECKS PAYABLE TO CFM FOR TAX RECEIPTS