

Women & More

Love is Patient; Love is Kind

September 8, 2011

We love our husbands, our children, extended family, friends and others. But, as Christians, how do we actively show love: what does love look like and how does it perform? In God's 'call' to love—in the long run—will our love 'go-the-distance'?

*“If we are patient, we may endure and it just may be a triumph of our own strong will or obstinacy. **But to endure and be kind is a triumph of a different nature—the nature of God!** For it is one thing to endure wrong from someone and to know in one's heart that we are just and right in wanting to retaliate, but restraining ourselves in love out of obedience to the Lord, and then to be kind to that individual is the epitome of Christianity.”*

—Dr. David Jeremiah

Prepare by Soaking in Scripture:

Luke 6:27-32

READ ONLY: 1 Corinthians 13:1-4a

4a: *“Love is patient, love is kind.”*

Ephesians 4:32

1 Thessalonians 5:14-15

Titus 3:4-6

Scripture to Memorize:

Romans 2:4 *“Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness leads you towards repentance?”*

NOTES on Speaking Session:

Questions for Mentor-group Discussion:

1. In what ways do you demonstrate irritation or reflect anger?
2. How do you tend to respond when you have been offended, your rights have been stepped on, or you've been overlooked?
3. Describe a situation where you have been betrayed into speech and action that you later regret.

Recommended Reading:

The Art of Understanding Yourself, Dr. Cecil Osburn

Conspiracy of Kindness, Steve Sjogren

How to Recover a Marriage, Ed Wheat

Out of the Salt Shaker and Into the World, Rebecca Pippert

The Fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22-23:

1. ♥ Love—the first and final priority! ♥
2. Joy—the STRENGTH of love is joy.
Romans 14:17 *“For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”*
3. Peace—the SECURITY of love is peace—opposite of resentment.
Hebrews 12:14a *“Make every effort to live in peace with all men.”*
4. ♥ PATIENCE—the STABILITY of love is patience.
1 Thessalonians 5:14 *“Be patient with everyone.”*
5. ♥ KINDNESS—the SOBRIETY of love is kindness.
Ephesians 4:32 *“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”*
6. Goodness—the SIMPLICITY of love is goodness.
Ephesians 2:10 *“For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”*
7. Faithfulness—the SURETY of love is faithfulness.
1 Corinthians 4:2 *“Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.”*
8. Gentleness—the SELFLESSNESS of love is gentleness.
2 Timothy 2:24 *“And the Lord’s servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone.”*
9. Self-control—the STEADFASTNESS of love is self-control.
1 Corinthians 9:25a *“Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training.”*

To Sin Against Love

“Love was not Paul’s strong point,” said Henry Drummond. “The observing student can detect a beautiful tenderness growing and ripening all through his character as Paul gets old, but the hand that wrote, ‘*The greatest of these is love,*’ when we meet it first, is stained with blood.

“The truth is that there are two great classes of sins—sins of the *body* and sins of the *disposition*. The Prodigal Son may be taken as a type of the first, the Elder Brother of the second. Now, society has no doubt whatever as to which of these is the worse. Its brand falls, without a challenge, upon the Prodigal. But are we right? We have no balance to weigh one another’s sins, and courser and finer are but human words. But faults in the higher nature may be more serious than those in the lower. And **to the eye of Him who is love, a sin against love may seem a hundred times more base.**

“No form of vice, not worldliness, not greed of gold, not drunkenness itself, does more to unchristianize society than evil temper. For embittering life, for breaking up communities, for destroying the most sacred relationships, for devastating homes, for withering up men and women, for taking the bloom of childhood, in short, for sheer gratuitous misery-producing power this influence stands alone.

“Look at the Elder Brother—moral, hard-working, patient, dutiful—let him get all credit for his virtues—look at this man, this baby, sulking outside his own father’s door. ‘*He was angry,*’ we read, ‘*and would not go in.*’ Look at the effect upon the father, upon the servants, upon the happiness of the guests. Judge of the effect upon the Prodigal—**and how many prodigals are kept out of the kingdom of God by the unlovely character of those who profess to be inside.**

“Analyze, as a study in temper, the thunder-cloud itself as it gathers upon the Elder Brother’s brow. What is it made of? Jealousy, anger, pride, uncharity, cruelty, self-righteousness, touchiness, doggedness, sullenness—these are the ingredients of this dark and loveless soul. You will see then why temper is significant. It is not in what it is alone, but in what it reveals. This is why I speak of it with such unusual plainness. It is a test for love, a symptom, a revelation of an unloving nature at bottom. It is the intermittent fever which bespeaks unintermittent disease within; the occasional bubble escaping to the surface which betrays some rottenness underneath...the lightning form of a hundred hideous and unchristian sins. ...It is better not to live than not to love.”

Henry Drummond, from his famed book titled: *The Greatest Thing in the World*

His Name is Bill

He had wild hair, a faded T-shirt, jeans with too many holes, and no shoes—his entire wardrobe for his college years. He was profoundly brilliant, and he'd become a Christian while in college. Across the street from the campus was a conservative church whose well-manicured membership wanted to develop a ministry to students but weren't sure how to go about it.

One day Bill decided to go to church there. He walked in with his jeans, T-shirt, wild hair, and no shoes. The service had already begun and so he started down the aisle to find a seat. The church was packed—*don't we pray?*—and he could not find an available seat. The congregation began to look and feel a bit uncomfortable, but no one made a move or said a word.

When Bill got closer to the pulpit, and realized that there were no empty seats, he sat down on the carpet in the aisle. By now the tension in the air was thick enough to be sliced, further intensified as the observant pastor realized that an older deacon was slowly making his way toward the front to tend to the situation. The eighty-year-old had silver-gray hair, and wore a stately three-piece suit. A godly man, this elegant and dignified deacon made his way—aided only by a cane—toward the young man seated on the floor.

Oh my, whispered enough people to be heard by others, we really can't blame the deacon for what he has to do. After all, they surmised, how could a man of his age and background understand some college kid on the floor? Now the church was totally silent except for the shuffling of the old man and his cane, and all eyes were focused on him. Even the pastor had suspended his sermon waiting for the deacon to do what had to be done.

It took a long time for the elderly gentleman to make his way to the front and reach the young man, but when he did, he dropped his cane, and with great difficulty lowered himself and sat down next to the student. The old deacon didn't say a word, but looked up at the minister ready to worship the Lord God alongside of Bill so he would not be alone.

When the choked-up pastor gained some control, he addressed his congregation and said, "What I am about to preach about love may not be remembered, but the love we have just witnessed will never be forgotten."

—Anonymous

"A Cup of Cold Water"

- We must be so diligent in love and how we live it out,
because we may just be *the only Bible*
some—even a church congregation—will ever read!