

# Christian Love

*1 Corinthians 13:3*

*Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profited me nothing.*

In our previous study we saw that one can have extraordinary gifts of speaking in tongues, giving prophecy, performing miracles and healings how ever if there is no Christian love, what good is it? We saw this Christian love comes with regeneration, without regeneration there is no true Christian love. Now we are going to continue to the next scripture that is immensely important and that is if I give all my goods to feed the poor, then I give my body to be burned and I have not Christian love, what does it profit? Zero.

This is something very hard for many people to understand, as they ask, how can this be? Well, scripture is above our notions and understanding. I will explain this on this Lord's Day.

Giving to the poor is our Christian duty. God has compassion to the poor. The Bible mentions that when you give money to the poor you shall not take interest. (Exodus 22:25) On the seventh sabbatical year let the land rest and let the poor eat anything from that land. (Exodus 23:11) Do not oppress the poor and the needy. (Deut 24:14) Defend the fatherless and the poor. (Ps 82:3) Have pity upon the poor. (Prov 19:17) Rob not the poor because he is

poor. (Prov 22:22) He that gives to the poor shall not lack. (Prov 28:27) Jesus told the rich young ruler who wanted to follow him, go give your wealth to the poor then come and follow me. Judas was the treasurer of Jesus ministry yet he did not care for the poor, as he was a thief. Paul said, we should remember the poor. (Gal 2:10) The early church sold their rich possessions and distributed the money among the poor. (Acts 4:32) First Corinthians 16, 2 Corinthians eighth and ninth chapters apostle Paul encouraged the Corinthian church to give to the poor. He is informing the same Corinthian church if you give all your goods to the poor and feed the poor and have not love you do not profit anything.

What is he trying to tell? Before you became a Christian giving was a performance. There are many religious people give goods, foods and money to the poor but it is a performance they do. It is an external performance. The honor goes to the giver and not to the Lord. Broadcasting to the nation through TV saying so and so gave \$1000.00 then trumpets blowing. Broadcasting through media of your generous giving to the poor and all the honor goes to you. Boasting how much tithes you give to the church and telling others I give more than anyone else. These are external performances to show how religious you are and craving for that honor and pride.

Mt 6:1 Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father, which is in heaven.

2 Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.

3 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:

4 That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeks in secret himself shall reward thee openly.

All the great performances of good works are nothing if you do not have true love.

Php 3:7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.

The Pharisees of Jesus day boasted the great things they have done to God and men.

Lu 18:11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

There are many unbelievers who are famous of doing great external things. Their names have been handed down through history and they are being honored with glory among men.

Isa 42:8 I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another.

Then the apostles tell if I give my body to be burned and have not love I do not profit anything. Not only our external performances but also our sufferings mean nothing if there is no Christian love. This is a man that gives all his possessions then what else does he have nothing except his body, then he gives his body to be consumed in suffering. This suffering is the most extreme kind of suffering; suffering even unto death, yet if there is no Christian love it does not mean anything. Christian love as we studied before has to do with the new heart. How does this love differ from the other love? This love is sincere, which comes from the heart.

The Islam faith is prepared to die in a war thinking they will go to paradise. Some labor in religious exercise with much fasting, deep devotion in worship denying their sleep, but without sincere love in the heart all the suffering is useless.

It is not the external work that is done worth in the sight of God or the sufferings that endured. If you give to God thousands of dollars, thousands of animals and offer all the valuable external things to God, now does God in real need of these things? No, as God is all-sufficient in himself.

Ps 50:10 For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.

11 I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine.

12 If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fullness thereof.

1Ch 29:12 Both riches and honor come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all.

13 Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name.

14 But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.

1Ch 29:15 For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding.

16 O LORD our God, all this store that we have prepared to build thee an house for thine holy name cometh of thine hand, and is all thine own.

There is nothing external acceptable to God without sincere love to God in the heart.

The LORD seek not as man seek; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart. (1 Sam 16:7)

When someone does something externally our human eyes can see the external thing that was done, however we cannot see the heart and the motive. On the other hand the heart is naked and open to God just like how we see external things so God can see the internal.

Heb 4:13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

Sometimes we need other friends and relatives to take care of our burdens, when we suffer we need their help so when they come to help they partake in our sufferings. This shows their love to us. But does this mean that when we suffer God has to love us? No. There is lot of external piety but not internal piety.

Musical instruments were made to give praise to God in his temple. Yet these are lifeless instruments, which does not have no thought, understanding, will

or heart so these instruments alone cannot give praise to God. Just like that a man has a heart, understanding and a will. If he gives anything to God and gives without his heart what good is it? It is just like the lifeless musical instruments. If there is no real sincerity in his giving and suffering then what ever he does is not to God but for himself. The true end motive in giving and suffering is not God but about himself. The result is the individual gets famous and honored but not God. This is a mockery to the most High God. They want to be seen by men and acknowledged by men.

Mt 23:5 But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,

If you are making a great show of your love and respect to God with your outward actions yet do not have sincere love to him, that is called hypocrisy and truly you are lying to God. You are acting and performing very well in front of the people as you pretend such love to God but there is not in the heart. This is a lie, just like how the Israelites did when they were delivered from Egypt.

Ex 19:8 And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD.

Ex 24:3 And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the LORD hath said will we do.

Ps 78:36 Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues.

1. 1. 37 For their heart was not right with him, neither were they steadfast in his covenant.

We all need to examine and see if there is such hypocrisy, examine and see if there is sincerity in our hearts towards God. God hates hypocrisy but he delights when things were done with a sincere heart. Even small little things done with a sincere heart is a great delight to the Lord. Even a cup of cold water given to a disciple of Christ with a sincere heart is greater than feeding a multitude of people poor people without a sincere love to God.

Now what is the nature of sincerity? There are four things.

- • Truth
- • Freedom
- • Integrity
- • Purity

The first nature of sincerity is truth.

It means there is outward action of your love to God; your outward performance of your love to God comes because of your inward love to God.



Ps 51:6 Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

This means that your words and actions flow together. This is the opposite of hypocrisy. This is sincere Christianity.

Here is the opposite.

Lu 11:39 And the Lord said unto him, now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.

In truth there is no deceit, cunningness and craftiness. There are some who will try to help someone but there is deceit at the end they will profit from the other person.

2Co 12:16 But be it so, I did not burden you: nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile.

What is the meaning of guile? Cleverness in tricking or deceiving people.

Joh 1:47 Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!

Ps 32:2 Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputed not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.

Let us examine our self and see when there is external respect to God, do you sincerely feel it from your heart. Is it real love, without it all what you are doing is nothing.

Freedom – This is the obedience of the Christian. This obedience is not a forced obedience, it is not slavery type obedience but this obedience is performed in great delight and love to God. It is a free obedience. We love Christ, we love to serve him, and our soul rejoices in him when we serve him, it is our highest happiness and delight.

Do not come to church with a heavy burden, “it is another Sunday, that means I have to show my face to the church.”

Ps 27:4 One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.

When you are serving the Lord do not do it as a duty and with a burden to please the church, please do not do it. Do not do with the motive, “I have to do this, let me hurry up so I can get out from this place, quick.”

Ps 100:2 Serve the LORD with gladness.

Ex 8:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, Go unto Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Let my people go, that they may serve me.

There was freedom to serve God.

It is a love relationship.

Joh 14:23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

Ga 5:13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

Let us examine and see where we stand.

The third nature of sincerity is integrity.

The word signifies wholeness. God is sought with a whole heart; follow God and his holiness with a whole heart. Embrace God with a whole heart.

Ps 119:2 Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart.

2Ch 25:1 Amaziah was twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem.

2 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, but not with a perfect heart.

When God gives a new heart the whole man is renewed. The whole body, soul and spirit are sanctified. All the parts of our body are subject to his obedience and subject to his will.

Trusting with the whole heart.

Pr 3:5 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

Giving the whole heart in love.

De 6:5 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

All the parts have the same function in bearing fruits for the glory of God. Examine and see where you stand with God, a whole heart or a partial heart?

The fourth that belongs to the nature of sincerity is purity. Purity has to do against impurity, uncleanness and defilement. Which means not living in these things. It means not mixed not adulterated but pure and holy.

Ps 24:3 Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD?  
Or who shall stand in his holy place?

4 He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

Mt 5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

1Ti 1:5 Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.

1Ti 5:22 Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.

1Pe 1:22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.

A person who says he or she is a Christian but living in worldliness then on Sunday becomes a Christian is not living in purity towards God. They are being polluted and defiled with sin.

Seek Christian love with diligence and prayer. Seek it of God not of yourself, as our nature cannot give it only God can give. Without sincere Christian love we cannot follow Christ.

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