

LOVE

Theme: Love 7

Discipleship groups purpose: Each member being transformed into the image of the Son.

Key Truth: Love does not act unbecomingly.

Key Scripture: *1 Corinthians 13:5 does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered,*

Read: Love always does the righteous thing because it's love. To continue to act unbecomingly is to not have love being formed in us. As we have looked at, we are to be perfected in love by keeping His Word, so to continue to act outside of love is to not be keeping His Word. This is how powerful His living Words are.

Wisdom in its fullest form is the demonstration of love. The scriptures teach us that wisdom is vindicated by her deeds. Love doesn't covet, it doesn't mistreat another, it's not jealous, it doesn't lust after things, it doesn't lord itself over another, and it certainly doesn't look down on others with a self-righteous judgment of condemnation. Love doesn't act in an unbecoming manner, because of what it is.

I love how 10 out of 10 Commandments God gave Moses, are related to living in right alignment to God. I love how the Law and the prophets depend now on the 2 Commandments of loving God and loving our neighbour as we love ourselves. When we are in Christ, this love becomes our reality and with it comes the ability to love and not act in an unbecoming manner.

How would we see one another and act towards one another, if this love is being perfected in us? The fact that people get hurt in the body is evidence of us not being perfected in love, or acting in love. We can not act in love if we don't know love, hence offence is a very common reality in God's body.

Lust gets manifested through a variety of behaviours from sexual abuse, physical abuse, to emotional and spiritual abuse. Love doesn't act in this way as it only has what's best in mind for anyone and everyone. Even when love is persecuted or attacked by lust, it still doesn't act like lust because its love, and love models the complete opposite spirit to lust.

Matthew 18:21-35 *Then Peter came and said to Him, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. "For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he had begun to settle them, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. But since he did not have the means to repay, his lord commanded him to be sold, along with his wife and children and all that he had, and repayment to be made. So the slave fell to the ground and prostrated himself before him, saying, 'Have patience with me and I will repay you everything.' And the lord of that slave felt compassion and released him and forgave him the debt. But that slave went out and found one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and he seized him and began to choke him, saying, 'Pay back what you owe.' So his fellow slave fell to the ground and began to plead with him, saying, 'Have patience with me and I will repay you.' But he was unwilling and went and threw him in prison until he should pay back what was owed. So when his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were deeply grieved and came and reported to their lord all that had happened. Then summoning him, his lord said to him, 'You wicked slave, I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, in the same way that I had mercy on you?' And his lord, moved with anger, handed him over to the torturers until he should repay all that was owed him. My heavenly Father will also do the same to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart."*

This act of love is only possible when we know the perfect love of God. We see love and lust manifesting itself in this teaching. I wonder how we would have responded to the first slave if we were the master - becomingly or unbecomingly?

LOVE

If we were the first slave, after receiving love from the Master, I wonder how we would have received our fellow slave - becomingly or unbecomingly?

Questions:

1. How powerful is a love that only knows how to act becomingly, no matter what it is confronted with?
2. Our neighbour is anyone other than ourselves. What position do you find yourself loving your neighbour in more often than not - Becomingly or unbecomingly and why?
3. How does one be perfected in His love?

1 John 2:5-6 but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.

4. To not be able to love like this if we have been following Christ for some time, may be the evidence that we are not keeping His Word. What does it mean to keep His word?

Action: Pray and ask the Spirit to reveal His word in us.