

TRAINING FOR THE BATTLE: PRACTICE GOSPEL LOVE

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INTRODUCTION

1. Success in spiritual warfare depends on discipleship & fidelity to King Jesus. Discipleship is nurtured in the church as we experience "gospel-love"
2. We march thru wilderness of Church-Age as churchmen.
03. Our love to God & each other determines our love for enemies.

1st: The Need for Gospel Love

1. 1C 13:4-8a - w/o love, we are *nothing* [v1-3]. 12:31 - love *excellent*; 13:13 *the greatest*. Gospel-love is seen against backdrop of remaining sin w/i the church. [Prv 10:12; 17:9; 19:11; I C 13:5] - forbearance
2. Gospel-love is needed b/c of sin: disobey God in our relationships w/ one another. Alert to issues of conscience.

2nd: The Basis of Gospel Love

1. The objective basis of gospel-love. Love *from heart* [1Pt 1:22], but love is defined by the objective work of Jesus: life, death, resurrection, reign.
2. Col 2:9-14 - v10 we are *full in Christ* - union w/ Jesus - regenerated & baptized into Christ - v11-12. Forgiven: when? on what basis?
 - i. v14 - legal indictments *anceled*:
 - ii. How? *certificate of debt nailed to cross*. What was nailed? 1Pt 2:24
 - a. see *His body on cross* - legal indictments are canceled.
 - b. What is Jesus doing on cross? *He Himself bore our sins*
 - 1) carried up & away = offering sac [Hb 7:27; Hb 9:28]
 - 2) Jesus *bore our sins* in His body: bore penalty of death
 - iii. Interpret Bible w/ Bible & use Bible terms biblically. Sin is punished, not "absorbed". Forensic: court-room - conscience.
 - a. Emotions: condition of conscience [Rm 14:22b]
 - b. Sinless Savior: power of God & perfection of humanity - forgiveness & imputation of righteousness: justification by grace!

3rd: We Must Practice Gospel Love

1. God must teach us how to love. Sin kills love.
2. Boot-camp: develop muscles & movements of gospel-love.

3. How we handle sin as Xns determines our love of enemies on battlefield.
4. 2 Pt 1:5-8 The program for learning love.
 - i. *faith* - in Jesus revealed in Bible: now, *supply* - personal cost
 - ii. *moral excellence* - don't settle for mediocrity
 - iii. *knowledge* - [3:18]: facts, insight, contemplate - apply.
 - iv. *self-control* - bodily appetites [1 C 9:27]
 - v. *perseverance* - endure; reliable, trustworthy
 - vi. *godliness* - habits of piety. Actually, Christianity is a "religion".
 - vii. *brotherly kindness* - affectionate, heartfelt - Hb 13:1
 - viii. *love* - Gospel Love - 1 C 13
 - ix. v8 - Fruitful Soil - possessing & increasing in these virtues
 - x. v10-11 see an inclusio? v5 & v10 - *all diligence* [v15].
5. Jn 13:34-35 who benefits when disciples learn to love each other? *all men know* - Our chmanship & gospel-love is something men will see & know.
 - i. In worship as churchmen, we experience gospel-love.
 - ii. In witness, we express gospel-love.
 - iii. All men confronted by the God of gospel-love [1C 14:24-25].

Applic #1: Let us be Determined to Love Each Other with Gospel Love

1. Be clear re: nature of gospel-love. "Love" - God's victory over sin in Jesus.
2. Next sermon: necessity for us to exercise muscles of gospel-love. Heading onto battlefield. Revelation begins w/ scene of Jesus in midst of lampstands - the church. Churchmanship is essential for overcomers.
3. Pain: Christians refusing to extend gospel-love - THB p.685 LBC 26:13.
4. Divisions are sad. Jn 17 - Jesus calls for unity. Some divisions are necessary due to heresy [1C 11:19; Eph 4:21]. Some divisions, however, are due to failure of gospel-love. 1 Jn 4:7; Eph 6:23-24.
5. Let us resolve to learn & implement true gospel-love.