

Is Love to Blame?

By Steve Klein

Have you ever known parents who claimed that they loved their children too much to spank them? Ever known someone who tried to justify having sex outside of marriage because they loved the person? Ever known a Christian who would not rebuke and correct religious error because they loved others too much to hurt their feelings in this way? I submit that in each of these cases, love is being blamed for something that it has nothing to do with.

The Bible plainly teaches that love motivates us to do exactly the opposite of what was described in each of the preceding examples.

Love will cause us to discipline our children. "He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him promptly" (**Proverbs 13:24**).

Love demands that we abstain from sexual immorality. If we love someone, we are not going to participate with them in an act that will condemn their soul! If we do, we are being selfish, not loving. In **Ephesians 5:2-3**, God's word explains that walking in love involves avoiding fornication: "And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. But fornication . . . let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints" (**Ephesians 5:2-3**).

Love will move of us to rebuke sin and correct error. Love will not allow us to

stand idly by and watch those we care about lose their souls by committing sin or believing doctrinal error. Jesus said, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten" (**Revelation 3:19**). The apostle Paul had strongly rebuked the Corinthians. In **2 Corinthians 2:4** he explains why: "For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you, with many tears, not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you."

The right kind of love will never cause us to do the wrong kind of thing. Love "does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth" (**1 Corinthians 13:6**). Real love will never be used to justify sin; rather, it will be used to help us identify what is what is right and good. The Lord's will is "that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, that you may approve the things that are excellent" (**Philippians 1:9-10**).

Love always seeks the most lasting good for the one who is being loved. Momentary pain or pleasure is not love's greatest concern. Love is focused on the eternal welfare of the one who is loved. "My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth." (**1 John 3:18**)



Sick				January Birthdays	News and Notes
Joey Stephens (Anna Stalling's Uncle)	Owen Mauldin (Seth and Summer Mauldin's Son)	Frank Hand (Laura Humphrey's dad)	Sandlyn Fultz (Davis Fultz's Sister)		
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier)	David Hartsell (Holly and Brad's Father)	Jeffery Miller (Friend of Walker Davis)		
Emma Hettinger (William Herd's Mother)	Neal May (Manna Jones' Mother)	Roger Whatley (Daphene Whatley's son)	Andrew Hagewood (Friend of Sarah Norman)		
Pat Webb (Friend of Jared Johnson)	Quinton Addison (April Jerkins Grandfather)	Diane Hudson (Josh Hudson's grandmother)	Arline Harkrider (Nichole Pender's Grandmother)		
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Don Meadows (Ashley Miller's step-father)	Emily Stallings (Anna's sister)	Madi Wise (Friend of the Robert's)		
Marty Meeks, Russell Dickerson (Toni Herd's Nephews)	Frances Fultz (Davis Fultz's grandmother)	Judy Nichols (Suzanne's Mother)	Ann Scalf (Hannah Morris' grandmother)		

- 1 - David Ogle
- 2 - Chuck Hunt
- 4 - Phillip Box
- 6 - Daniel Rogers
- 6 - Erica Seymore
- 7 - Hunter Collins
- 9 - Liseth Aragon
- 11 - Spencer Hall
- 11 - Shepherd Hall
- 18 - Scott Vaughn
- 21 - Jacob Jerkins
- 23 - Connor Godwin
- 25 - Caleb Daniels
- 30 - Ashley Tucker
- 31 - Jennifer Daniels

- Please remember Glenn Weeks, Caralise Hunt's father, in your prayers.
- Our new quarter begins today!
- The student study on Colossians will be this Friday and Saturday. All are invited!
- Our meeting with Bob Buchanon starts next Sunday!
- The ladies Proverbs study will be on Wednesday at 12 at the Rouse's.
- Hosts and teachers are needed for the monthly young people classes. Sign up in the foyer or see Jennifer Daniels.
- We will have our group meetings tonight.

The Auburn Beacon



Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (**Matthew 5:16**)

Let's Not be Narrow

By Roy E. Cogdill



Thoughts to Ponder

The gospel is too readily heard and taken for granted, as though it contained no unsettling news... It is a truth that has been flattened, trivialized, and rendered inane.

One of the most dreadful things many people can imagine is that they will be accused of "narrow mindedness" in religion. That literally scares them to death; the very thought that they might be considered narrow drives them completely away from the truth. Yet it should not. Truth is narrow. There is nothing liberal or generous about truth; it all narrows down to just one fact. The proper answer to the mathematical summation of two plus two is four. There just isn't any other answer on earth that is right save that one. Out of all the infinite number of answers that might be given, only one is right. Every other is necessarily false. The answer is not "five"; neither is it "three." Two plus two gives "four" — no more and no less.

At what temperature does water freeze? If we use the Fahrenheit scale, it begins to freeze at 32 degrees at sea level. Of all the answers that might be given to this question, one is right; every other is wrong, just as wrong as wrong can be. What direction is Dallas, Texas, from Lufkin? If you wanted to be exact, you could take a compass and determine exactly and precisely

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how many degrees west of north the one city is from the other. There is only one correct answer to that question.

Suppose somebody wants to argue the question as to the temperature at which water freezes, or wants to dispute the geographical relationship between Dallas and Lufkin? Is it "narrow mindedness" to insist that there is only one right answer to each of these questions? If someone should prefer to believe that water will freeze at 34 degrees, or 36, or even

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Worship10:20 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM
Wednesday
Bible Classes.....7:00 PM
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33, and should accuse me of being "narrow minded" because I insist on 32 degrees, would not everybody know that truth has no alternative save to be "narrow"? It seems like many people go almost stone blind, and lose all the good judgment they ever had, when it comes to the subject of religious truth. They will accept principles in religion which they would laugh to scorn in any other area of life.

The very same man who has no difficulty at all in understanding why there can be only one right answer in scientific, or mathematical, or geographical problems, glibly assures everybody that there can be a hundred right answers to religious questions — and those answers can contradict one another in the most open and obvious fashion possible. He says, "You answer the question your way; I'll answer it mine, and we'll be brethren, and everything will be all right for both of us."

If that be the case, truth does not matter. Why have a Bible? Why not let each one believe what he wants to believe, throw the Bible away and forget all about the word of God. Why all of the preaching? If men are perfectly right in believing and following a multitude of contradictory doctrines, then why should any man want to teach anybody anything that is in the New Testament?

Does Jesus teach contradictory doctrines? Can one take the New Testament and find one page of it teaching that a child is born in sin, another page teaching that he is born in Christ "safe in the arms of Jesus"? One human creed teaches that baptism is by immersion only; another teaches that it is also by sprinkling and pouring, according to the preference of the candidate. Both creeds make their appeal to the Bible for substantiation of their doctrines. But does the Bible give any such contradictory teaching? If so, who can believe for a single minute that the Bible is of divine origin? The Lord does not teach a thing two ways, or a hundred different ways. Somebody is bound to be wrong!

Is it all a matter of "interpretation"? That is the claim that has been made. While people are talk-

ing about such a thing as interpretation, they ought not to forget that there can be also misinterpretation. Somebody has misinterpreted the truth. The Lord does not teach immersion only on one page, then turn right around and teach sprinkling and pouring on the next page. If anybody actually thinks he can read such in the Bible, he simply believes that God is not trustworthy, and His word is not reliable or dependable. No one could have any confidence in a man who would talk "out of both sides" of his mouth; neither can man have any confidence in a God who would do such.

Just as certainly as there is religious division in the land, just that certain it is that someone has taught something which is not in God's book. The Lord does not teach, and did not teach, contradictory, doctrines. Christ is not divided in the message he gives. When all men speak "as the oracles of God," they will "be of the same mind, and speak the same things." Suppose we could get all the preachers in a certain city to agree that for one year not a one of them would preach anything save that which is clearly set forth in the Bible. They would lay aside their respective creeds, distinctive doctrines, and peculiar names, and all of them preach only that which they can find in the Bible. Is it not obvious to all that there would soon be complete unity and harmony prevailing among all? The Bible reads alike to all of us; it does not tell you one thing, and tell me something different. If all of us will determine to speak only that which the Bible speaks, leaving out all human tradition, we will soon find the believers completely united. There can be no other alternative.

When preachers and teachers are content to confine their preaching to those things for which they can furnish a "thus saith the Lord," religious division quickly disappears. It would be so in any city in this nation where it might be tried. Christ is not divided in message. The different "messages" that are taught in the name of Christ are not truly messages of the will of Christ. For his will is contained for us in his word. When we have his word, and understand what it says, we will soon overcome the turmoil and division which have disgraced the religious world for these many centuries. - Gospel Guardian - June 9, 1955



It's Your Life, You Know

By Dee Bowman

Life is filled with perplexities, puzzlements of various sorts. It has odd turns: seemingly insignificant things sometimes turn out to be terribly significant; things that aren't supposed to work out, but sometimes do; and things that seemingly should work out, but don't. Life is a tangled web, a knotty, mostly inexplicable web. Man seeks to describe it, to explain it, and he can't. All he can do is live it.

But don't despair. There is more to life than just an inexplicable maze of un-related and un-controllable events. Actually, God made life, and it is to Him that we must turn for information concerning its proper management. Life can be a zesty, fulfilling experience, even in the face of difficulty or adversity, if it is lived in accordance with the designs of the Maker. Otherwise it's just an empty shell lived without meaning and with little genuine happiness attached to it.

First, let it be carefully observed that a life divorced from God has little meaning. Solomon paints a sordid picture of life in Ecclesiastes. He says that the sun rises and goes down over and over. He says that one generation comes and another passes away. He says that the weather forecast really doesn't change that much—that one cold front follows another, that "that which is crooked cannot be made straight and that which is wanting cannot be numbered" (**Eccl. 1:15**). Paul the Apostle echoes the same sentiment when he exclaims, "if in this world only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable" (**1 Cor. 15:19**). So let it first be noted that a good life begins by getting in touch with God.

Life has meaning when it generates service. Service is the essence of life. To put oneself at the disposal of others is to bring meaning to life, to be a part of society, to bring honor to the Creator. We are "all members one of another" (**Rom. 12:5**). That means that we are joined in service to one another. We don't all have the same talent, but we all have some talent with which to serve. Want a fulfilling life? Put yourself at

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the disposal of others. Get out of yourself and get involved in serving others.

Life has meaning when it is motivated by love. Love is the divine energizer. It brings things about. It generates the motion necessary for everything from good marital relationships, to good congregations of God's people. Actually, what is not motivated by love is of little value in the ultimate reality. Love broadens, softens, actuates, disciplines, clarifies, joins, repairs, and is behind every sort of human happiness. Love and you'll be loved. Love and you'll be blessed—even when things go wrong.

Furthermore, life has meaning when it is pointed in the right direction. "I am the way, the truth, and the life," is Jesus' way of saying "point your life toward me or it will have no real meaning." The Hebrew writer must have had this concept in mind when he said we should run the race "with patience, looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." To look in the wrong direction is disastrous, folks! You'll have a wreck for sure.

Finally, faith is the substance for giving life real meaning. A life that has been lived without any connection to the life hereafter is foolish indeed. More than that, it's a terrible waste! Even the light afflictions are made easier to bear, the disappointments easier to shoulder if there is faith in the Eternal. "Our light affliction worketh for us a far greater and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal" (**2 Cor. 4:17-18**). You should know by now that "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (**Heb. 11:1**). Our faith is the basis for our hope. If we look in the right direction, we will see it—off in the distance there—eternal life. Now that's a life worth living!

