

Columbus Street church of Christ

Sunday Bulletin

512 Columbus Street Bedford, Ohio 44146

----- Building Phone: 440-232-2231 -----

Website: www.bedfordcoc.com

E-Mail: dave.evangelistcoc@gmail.com

Issue 2: January 10, 2021

This Is the Love that Never Fails

I got a car wash today and while going through the machine, many thoughts came to mind. First, I remembered it was six years ago when I first got a car wash in this area, the cost \$2.00 and for that two people would greet you, one would talk and guide you and give you a scented car freshener, then both sprayed off your car, both sides, used big brushes filled with thick soap, cleaned your tires and grill. The car wash has experienced many aberrations. Now you pay \$5.00, there is one person who guides you into the system, no talking, no spraying, no soapy brushes, but you still get the scented freshener. All that to say, I have also noticed some aberrations within the ranks of the members, that are cause for sadness and great concern.

First, there has been a departure from what is normal Christian love. Scripture is clear, and I know with certainty that normal Christian love begins with an unending, unrelenting first love of God. Love so powerful and true that nothing will ever come between the soul who possesses this love and their Creator. Love that is not divided, love that casts out all fear. Beloved brother and sister, God is clear about what love is, “⁴ Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not ^[b]puffed up; ⁵ does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, ^[c]thinks no evil; ⁶ does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; ⁷ bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things” (1 Cor. 13:4-7).

Secondly, this love is so powerful that it permeates the membership and spreads out like the rays of the sun to bringing warmth, encouragement and understanding to every member of the family of God, hands that lift up the weak, and a spirit that bears, “one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Gal. 6:2). This love does not seek its own and thinks no evil. This is the love that never fails.

But there is a “form of love” that always fails. In photography there is a term, “Spherical Aberration”. It occurs when all incoming light rays end up focusing at different points. In other words, the parallel light rays do not converge at the same point after passing through the lens. This results in photos that are not worth printing. There are spiritual aberrations affecting the church today because many are no longer

Knowing & Doing God's Will

Proverbs 11:14

looking through the same lens of faith, the lens of love. One sees through a lens that invokes great fear, the other through a lens that filters out fear. The result, what was once a “parallel faith”, is no longer converging, uniting, or meeting at the same point. So, when Paul said bear one another's burdens, members once understood that to mean, lift up the weak, be understanding, and be stronger than your weaker brother, and let your light spiritually converged at the same point. But now, because of rampant fear, our light is no longer singular, no longer meeting at the same place. Now, for some, there is a “re-interpretation” of what Paul said. It now means, “you must bear my burden and see things my way” or else you don't love me, and I am leaving. There is now a “re-interpretation” of what worship is, what an assembly is. Did the Word of God change?

This kind of love destroys godly love, and ultimately puts God second place behind our own lives and that is a deviation from the spiritual, biblical definition of love. When fear is our motivation, then everything is seen through the lens of fear. We once preached with solidarity, do not forsake the assembly, with unity and harmony we said, God first, love the brethren, fear no evil, nothing can separate us! Now some are straying from what was once preached with boldness and fearless devotion.

Have we forgotten what the Hebrew writer penned by inspiration? “...*Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.* ³⁶ *Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment.* ³⁷ *They were stoned, they were sawn in two, ^[k]were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—* ³⁸ *of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth.* ³⁹ *And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise,* ⁴⁰ *God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us”* (Heb. 11:35b-40).

Have we forgotten every example concerning the saints in Christ who were facing brutal persecution, death by crucifixion, burned on a stake, thrown to the lions, not to mentioned being hated for their faith? Have we forgotten some who facing such stood and said, to live is Christ, to die is gain (Phil. 1:21), or Stephen, dying by stones prayed, “*knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, “Lord, do not charge them with*

this sin” (Acts 7:60), or the Apostles after being beaten and told not to speak in the name of Jesus, “...*departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for* ^[l]*His name.* ⁴² *And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ*” (Acts 5:41-42), or that “*God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline*” (2 Tim. 1:7), and “...*I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus*” (Acts 21:13), “*But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God*” (Acts, 20:24).

Paul teaches, “⁷ *For we walk by faith, not by sight.* ⁸ *We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord*” (2 Cor. 5:7-8). Jesus said, “²⁴ *For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.* ²⁵ *For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?*” (Luke 9:24-25). Now I hear I will save my life, count my brethren who disagree as unloving sinners, leave the body of Christ to attend somewhere else, and that somewhere else is often where solid doctrine is not always obeyed. I turn my back on those who I have always counted worthy, those who have been loving to me for years, those who have prayed, sent cards, visited me, shown their love, greeted me with love every Lord’s day?

We must ask, what changed? The devil certainly has not changed, his stripes are the same, he wants division, he wants hate, unforgiving hearts, he wants fear to rule. On the other hand, God has not changed, He still wants unity, forgiveness, and love without fear.

Christian love does not change, it speaks not to



Behave Like a Christian
“Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.”

belittle or condemn brethren for having different points of view. That is a characteristic of the devil and is a digression from the normal Christian definition of love.

Let me be perfectly clear, if sin is the issue, if doctrine is being perverted, then discipline must be administered, “¹⁴ *And if anyone does not obey our word in this* ^[a]*epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed.*” But even in cases of disobedience Paul said, “¹⁵ *Yet do not count him as an enemy, but* ^[b]*admonish him as a brother*” (2 Thess. 3:14-15). Christian love does not “*count him as an enemy*”. Yet that is exactly what some are doing. If you don’t see it my way then you are unloving, uncaring, unconcerned for me, for my health, for my point of view, therefore, I put you away, I count you a sinner, and anathema,

and I am leaving to go to another church where, they all agree with me. And that other church, often liberal, and teaching error but that doesn't matter. Where is the forgiveness, where is the love, where is mercy and understanding? Why is your brother's feelings, and point of view so much less valuable than yours?

We are not talking about false doctrine that must separate, we are talking about one person seeing and feeling a matter differently than another. I have listened to members who have been faithfully attending worship and have not one time heard a single brother, or a sister, describe any member with terms like unloving or uncaring because they differ. Christian love does not speak in a way that belittles or condemns brethren for having different points of view about certain issues. That is a characteristic that has deviated from the normal Christian definition of love.

Beloved, if you feel as though you cannot attend worship together with the saints because they don't all see things the same way as you do, by all means do what you think is right, follow your conscience and no one will condemn you. But do not condemn others, do not make them the enemy, for your enemy is the devil, not your brother. Remember, what goes on in the world, goes on in the world, the way of the world is the way of the devil and this will never change as long as we are in this physical world. Remember, what goes on in the church goes on in the church, the Way of the church is the Way of Christ and this will never change, not in this life, not in the life to come.

The Lord knows that concerning my love for the saints, He is my witness, that regardless of what mean and angry things have been said to me, and about others, I have zero ill feelings, and the Lord knows that I love each of you. I did six years ago, and I do today, concerning this, nothing has changed.

In Christian Love

David Scarpino

Welcome One and All!

Our faithful Creator is worthy to be praised in this assembly. All praise to Him who reigns above in majesty supreme! He gave His Son to die, for all mankind, that He might redeem all. Our blessed Redeemer suffered and died for our sins and is now risen and sitting at the right hand of God as only Head of the church. Let us offer the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, knowing that He is the author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him (Hebrews 5:9). *“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!”* (Isaiah 6:3)

“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.” (Eph. 5:2)

Times of Our Services

Sunday Morning Bible Study	9:00 AM
Sunday Morning Worship	9:50 AM
Sunday Evening Worship	6:00 PM
Wednesday Evening Bible Study	7:00 PM

What Jesus Said I Must Do to Be Saved?

1. Hear the gospel ----- John 6:45
2. Believe the gospel ----- John 8:24
3. Repent of sins ----- Luke 13:3
4. Confess Christ ----- Matthew 10:32
5. Be baptized ----- Mark 16:16
6. Remain faithful until death ----- Matthew 10:22