



Sunday April 28, 2019
Faith
Part-10 : Faith Works By Love

This is our final message in this series on Faith.

Galatians 5:6

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.

The whole issue in Paul's epistle to the Galatians is about keeping the law and its associated rules and rituals. The apostle Paul then point out that in Christ, what really matters is faith working along with love. Faith and love being expressed through the believer, who is in Christ.

We are talking about '*agape*', the God-kind of love.

This love is different from the '*storge*' which is family love, '*philia*' which is friendship love, or '*eros*' which is sexual love. '*Agape*' is really love that lays itself down for the other. It is what leads to self-denial for the sake of the other person. This is the God-kind of love the Bible is teaching us.

Faith works through *agape*, the self-denying, sacrificing, putting-the-other-person-first, God-kind of love.

1 Corinthians is a wonderful description of '*agape*' the God-kind of love.

1 Corinthians 13:1-2,13

1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.

2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

13 And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

The call is not an either or, but a call to walk in both, faith and love.

Notice what the Word states in vs 2, that even if I have mountain-moving faith, but do not walk in love, I am nothing. The word 'nothing' in the Greek simply means '*not even one*'. That is zero. Of no value, no existence, no consequence.



Without agape, I am zero. So if we multiply this zero with great faith, or great prophetic ministry, or anything else, we still end up with nothing, zero, not even one. In other words, not walking in agape, renders everything else useless, void, of no effect.

vs 13, as we journey towards meeting the Lord, we walk in faith, hope and love. The greatest of these, the best of these is love. That means we give priority, preference, importance to love.

1 Corinthians 13 is of course in the context of expressing the gifts of the Spirit and exercise of our ministry and functions in the Body. All these require faith. It is through faith that we yield to the Holy Spirit in the manifestation of the gifts and it is through faith that we operate in our ministries and functions. But even as we do, God's Word directs us to first walk the way of love.

So how do we know we are walking in agape-love when we are exercising faith or the gifts of the Spirit or any of our individual ministries or functions? Well, some useful questions to ask ourselves are: Am I being motivated with love for the person (or people)? Am I putting the other person first? Am I doing this for their good or am I doing this just for my own self interest?

Further, the Word reveals what walking in agape-love would look like, in 1 Corinthians 13:

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

4 Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up;

5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, 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.

8 Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away.

To paraphrase this: *Love, God's love in us, is patient, kind, is not jealous, is not boastful, competing or trying to out-do the other. It is not arrogant or vain-glorying. God's love is not rude or ill-mannered. It is not self-seeking, self-promoting, or self-centered. It is not irritable or easily angered. It is not malicious, cunning, conniving, and has no evil intent. Love, God's love does not celebrate or promote sin or ungodliness. Love celebrates truth, righteousness and holiness. Love endures through all things. It believes the best for every person in*



every situation. It hopes, envisions and see the best, the good in the midst of every situation, and can stand through any trial or hardship. This kind of love, the God-kind of love, expressed through us, will never fail or fall short of affecting God's will and purpose, and its fruit will remain.

So this is what walking in agape-love is about.

Now, think about all of this in the context of exercising faith for your own self or in ministering to others.

Imagine you have faith in God for something big for yourself and God brings it into your life. Now if you are walking in love, you do not go about boasting how great a person of faith you are. You do not go about wanting everyone else to recognize your achievement of faith, pat you on the back, etc. If you get into that kind of an attitude, that is not being motivated by love. And that great accomplishment of faith, not being coupled with agape-love, will cause you to remain a 'not even one', a zero, not amount to anything.

Similarly, if you are ministering to people in faith - whether ministering healing or some other ministry - but are full of pride, self-seeking, self-promotion, then that is not being motivated by agape-love.

The good news is that as believers we have the capacity to love.

Romans 5:5

Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

God's love has been poured into our hearts by His Holy Spirit. So now we can express faith in love.

In the same chapter of Galatians 5, where we read verse 6, earlier, learning that faith works through love, we learn about walking in the Spirit. When we walk in the Spirit, that is walking yielded to, submitted to, led by and under the influence of the Holy Spirit, we bear the fruit of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit, meaning the result of our spirits being yielded to the Holy Spirit will result in love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control, expressed in and through our lives (Galatians 5:22-23). So the key to walking in love is to walk in the Spirit who floods us with the love of God and dispenses the love of God in us and through us.



Love, Pure Heart, Good Conscience, Sincere Faith

1 Timothy 1:5

Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith,

Love must come from a pure heart, a good conscience and sincere faith.

Pure heart and a good conscience is only possible as we seek to glorify God, walk in righteousness, and walk with no evil in our hearts (no evil motivation, no evil intent, etc.). Our faith must be sincere or without hypocrisy.

Be motivated by love, as you exercise faith for others.

Be guided by love, in how you deal with people, having exercised faith for them

MINISTRY TIME | SALVATION CALL



LIFE GROUP STUDY GUIDE

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This is a simple guide for use in Life Group discussions. Our objective is to focus on the application of the Sunday sermon - how each one is becoming a doer of the Word and building their life on God's Holy Word. The Life Group meeting would normally last for 2 hours. Each Life Group would have up to 12-15 people.

Preparation

To prepare for the Life Group meeting, you can listen to the Sermon Key Points (sermon summary in five minutes) or the full length Sunday sermon. You can also review the Sunday Sermon notes. All these are available in the "All Peoples Church Bangalore" mobile App or online at apcwo.org/sermons. Pray for the Life Group meeting and invite the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Welcome

The Life Group meeting may commence with a time of prayer, worship and a fun activity.

LISTEN to God's Word

Read the following Scripture passages: *Galatians 5:6; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13*

INVESTIGATE God's Word Together

Please discuss a few of these together, giving time for people to share their insights. We encourage each one individually to make notes of their personal learning during the Group discussion.

#1, Why is love greater (better) than faith and hope?

#2, How can I know that I am being motivated by love, while I am exercising faith for someone else?

While we know all of these statements are important, which one of these really stands out for you, in the matter of exercising faith in God?



If time permits, each one takes a few (3 minutes max) to share one or two key learning and how they see themselves applying it into their specific life situations. Encourage each one to participate and share.

FELLOWSHIP by sharing your life and spiritual journey

Each one takes a few (3 minutes max) to share anything from their walk with God, something God has been teaching them, a testimony of answered prayer or a specific challenge that they would like prayer for. Encourage each one to participate and share.

ENCOURAGE each other by praying and ministering to one another

Get into small groups of two or three and take turns to thank God and pray for each other in the light of what was learnt today. Listen to the Holy Spirit. Expect the gifts of the Holy Spirit to flow bringing healing, releasing miracles, prophecy, etc.

Regroup and pray together for:

- 1, families to be protected and strengthened*
- 2, a mighty outpouring of God's Holy Spirit on us as a church and through us to bless many others in our city and nation. Nothing but a mighty work of God's Spirit can change our city and nation.*
- 3, for the BUILD TO IMPACT project - for God's hand to guide us through the land search and acquisition process, and for finances to be more than enough to get this project done.*

Close by thanking God together.