

Sunday, February 13, 2022

1 Timothy 4:13, "Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching."

Title: The Love of God Constrains Us

Text: 2 Corinthians 5:1 - 21

Series: Valentines Sunday 2022

Purpose: I want to PERSUADE my congregation to BELIEVE that the LOVE for God and for one another is an act of our will, independent of our emotions, and is EMPOWERED by the Holy Spirit.

Introduction:

The devotional from three weeks ago was entitled "Crossing Our Red Sea," and the key texts were from Exodus 14:1 – 31 and 15:1 – 19, 1 Thessalonians 1:1 - 10:

1. Crossing Our Personal Red Sea Requires True Worship
2. Crossing Our Personal Red Sea Requires Faith Filled Obedience
3. Crossing Our Personal Red Sea Invariably Involves Partnerships
4. Crossing Our Personal Red Sea Results in Renewed Praise

~ Valentine's Day is tomorrow. I want to assure you that I have nothing against Valentine's Day; my only concern with it is the emphasis on "romantic love." Romantic love is a wonderful emotion; but in our society today it seems to lack a sense of commitment.

~ "In 2021, there were about 2.74 million people who had obtained a legal divorce and not remarried in Canada. This figure has been steadily increasing since 2000, when there were about 1.88 million divorcees in Canada." <https://www.statista.com> > statistics

~ The love of God for us is not an emotional love but a deep committed love that imparts His life to all who call on His Name; a love that finishes what he starts: Philippians 1:6, "And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ."

1. The Love of God is Not...:

~ The love of God is not "erotic or sensual"!

"Sensual: adjective; relating to or involving gratification of the senses and physical, especially sexual, pleasure." Definitions from Oxford Languages
1 Corinthians 6:18, "*Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.*"

1 Thessalonians 4:3 – 6, "*For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; (4) that each one of you know how to control*

his own body in holiness and honor, (5) not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; (6) that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you."

~ The love of God is not "romantic love"!

Merriam-Webster: "a feeling of strong or constant affection for a person."

Psychology Today, "What is Romantic Love? Is it an evolutionary adaptation, a social construct, or something else?"

The Bible idea of "romantic love" goes much deeper than emotional feelings or attractions that we are unable to control

~ The love of God is not a "self seeking love"!

1 Corinthians 13:4 – 7, "*Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant (5) or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; (6) it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. (7) Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*"

2. The Love of God IS...:

~ The love of God is a product of the Holy Spirit!

Galatians 5:22 – 23, "*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, (23) gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.*"

2 Timothy 1:7, "*for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.*"

~ The love of God seeks the best for the believer!

2 Corinthians 3:18, "*And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.*"

~ The love of God never fails!

1 Corinthians 13:13, "*So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.*"

3. The Love of God is to Control Me:

~ 2 Corinthians 5:14, "*for the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all therefore all have died (15) and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.*"

~ Our love for God can achieve what the law could never accomplish.

John 14:21, "*Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.*"

Conclusion:

Communion