

Truly Loving Others – 1 Thessalonians 2:7-12 – November 3rd, 2019

- I want to talk to you today about what it means to truly love one another and what that Christian love will look like and be like.
- This because the Apostle Paul is opening up and pouring out his heart to these believers about how much he truly loved them.
- What follows are 3 ways, woven into the fabric of our text, that love will be known and shown when we truly love one another.

1. Caring (Verses 7-8)

7 Instead, we were like young children among you. Just as a nursing mother cares for her children, 8 so we cared for you. Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well.

- Here again, I have to confess that what the Apostle Paul says is very searching and convicting to me personally as a pastor.
- The question I have to ask myself before the Lord is that of “Do I love you as a nursing mother loves and cares for her infant?”
- Doubtless many of you have heard the saying, “they really don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.”

2. Sacrificing (Verses 9-10)

9 Surely you remember, brothers and sisters, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you. 10 You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed.

- What Paul says here is interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is he is telling them to remember what he did.
- Namely, that of the sacrifices he made working day and night so he wouldn’t be a financial burden to this new body of believers.
- It’s important to understand that Paul could have rightfully and Biblically been financially supported but chose not to with them.

3. Encouraging (Verses 11-12)

11 For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, 12 encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

- Here, the Apostle Paul goes from the love of a mother in verse seven to the encouraging and urging of a father in verse twelve.
- The reason being is that we need both in the sense that the mother is usually the one who nurtures and the father who exhorts.
- To me this speaks to the paramount importance of a loving family dynamic that’s here on earth, as it’s a microcosm of heaven.

- I suppose the question becomes one of how is it possible to truly love one another this way, and the answer is, it’s God’s love.
- Paul didn’t try to be more loving; it was God’s love Who forgave him for the Christians that were martyred when he was Saul.
- I would suggest that Paul had to defend himself against the many false accusations, which likely included his questionable past.

- Paul doesn’t emphasize what he did for them in order to prove that he was the real deal; instead it is how much he loved them.
- The word Paul uses for love in the original language of the Greek New Testament is the word, “agape,” the highest form of love.
- Unfortunately in English we only have one word for love whereas in the Greek there are four words, eros, philea, storge, agape.

John 13:34–35 - 34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

As one so aptly said it, “at no other time in the history of Christianity did love so characterize the entire church as it did in the first three centuries, and Roman society took note. Tertullian, an early Church leader, reported that the Romans would say, “See how they love one another!”