

Walking in Love - The Surprising Life of Grace

Ephesians 4:25-5:2

Second Sunday in Lent

February 17, 2008

I. *Two Crucial Relationships of Love*

A. Members of One Another – 4:25

- We are one new man
- Salvation is inescapably personal and ecclesiastical
 - the Life of Love and Grace cannot be lived in isolation
 - the Life of Love and Grace can only be embraced in community

B. Beloved Children of God – 5:1

- How we live grows out of who we are
- Paul's Total Gospel – in Christ Jesus
- Paul's Method – Indicative → Imperative
 - I am not behaving myself so I can become God's child
 - Rather, because I am God's child – his beloved – I must live from and for him

II. *Four Crucial Characteristics of Love*

A. Loving Speech – Ephesians 4:25, 29-30 (Proverbs 18:21)

- Defiling speech “grieves the Holy Spirit;” Isaiah 6:1ff
- Grieving the Spirit will make God your enemy – Isaiah 63:10 (Israel's experience in the wilderness)
 1. “corrupting”: putrid and filthy (note: Matthew 12:34)
 2. the tongue and the fires of hell – James 3
 3. truly salty language – Colossians 4:6; Job 4:4

Love gives Grace through Edifying Words

B. Loving Peace – Ephesians 4:26-27 (Psalm 119:53; Mark 3:5)

- Anger is not always sinful, but sinful anger is always a magnet for the enemy
- James 1:19

Love gives Grace through Reconciliation

C. Loving Generosity – Ephesians 4:28

- Study by the American Psychiatric Association identified the fact that 60% of inventory shortage in the U.S. was due to employee theft
- “Will a man rob God” – Malachi 3:1ff
 1. The Purpose of Wealth – Deuteronomy 8:15
 2. The Purpose of Work – Abundance to Share (note: Psalm 67:1-7)

Love gives Grace to Others through Generous Sharing of Resources

D. Loving Forgiveness – Ephesians 4:31-32

- Can't embrace the life of hope if you are trapped in a prison of resentment
- Can't love now if you are bound through fear because of past wounds
 1. Bitterness – a refusal to be reconciled
 2. Wrath and Anger – passionate rage and hostility
 3. Clamor – Shouting and Screaming
 4. Slander – Defaming Reputation of Another
 5. Malice – Wishing for or Plotting Evil against Another

Love gives Grace through Continuous Forgiveness

III. ***One Crucial Truth of Love*** – Ephesians 5:2

- It is because Christ gave himself for us that these sins are all forgiven
- It is because Christ gave himself for us that we will have the grace to love as he loved