

CHRISTIAN LOVE (2)
First Thessalonians
Banska Bystrica, 5th June 2016

OUTLINE

0. INTRODUCTION: THE LABOUR OF LOVE

- 0.1. REVIEWING THE PREVIOUS LESSON
- 0.2. LOVE IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE
- 0.3. LOVE IN THE 1ST THESSALONIANS [TEXT]
- 0.4. LOVE THEMES IN 1THESSALONIANS

1. PRACTICAL EXPRESSIONS OF LOVE

- 1.1. CHRISTIAN INTEREST IN OTHER CHRISTIANS
- 1.2. MEETING EACH OTHER WITH A PURPOSE
- 1.3. HARD WORK
- 1.4. PHYSICAL EXPRESSIONS OF LOVE

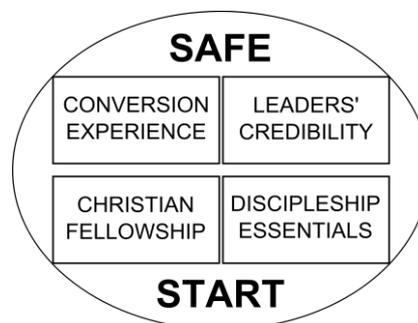
2. TO REMEMBER

0. INTRODUCTION: THE LABOUR OF LOVE

- reminder: method of exposition: theme “clusters”
- Love: “the trademark” of Christian religion (by this you will be known as my disciples...)

0.1. REVIEWING THE PREVIOUS LESSON

- faith & suffering



- impossible to distinguish sharply...

0.2. LOVE IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

- love... (1) ...& fellowship, (2) ...& discipleship essentials, (3) ...& leaders, (4) ...& conversion
- the three fundamental elements of the Christian life: (1) faith, (2) love, (3) hope → (1) ἔργον, (2) κόπος, (3) ὑπομονή. (genitives of origin [AUBERLEN & RIGGENBACH])
- κόπος – [PASSOW] a striking, beating : hence toil and trouble, suffering, ...the pain, disease... toil, weariness,
- Love: the identification sign of Christians: **John 13:35** By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another. (ἐν τούτῳ γινώσκονται πάντες ὅτι ἐμοὶ μαθηταὶ ἐστε, ἐὰν ἀγάπην ἔχητε ἐν ἀλλήλοις.)"

0.3. LOVE IN THE 1ST THESSALONIANS [TEXT]

- **1:3** remembering before our God and Father your (1) work of faith and (2) labor of love ...(τοῦ

κόπου τῆς ἀγάπης)

- **2:7-9** But we were gentle (νήπιοι¹ ἤπιοι)² among you, like a nursing mother taking care of **her own children**.⁸ So, being affectionately desirous of you (ὀμειρόμενοι ὑμῶν), we were ready to share (μεταδοῦναι ὑμῖν) with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves (τὰς ἑαυτῶν ψυχάς), because you had become very dear to us (ἀγαπητοὶ ἡμῖν ἐγενήθητε).⁹ For you remember, brothers, our labor and toil (τὸν κόπον ἡμῶν καὶ τὸν μόχθον): we worked night and day (νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας ἐργαζόμενοι), that we might not be a burden to any of you, while we proclaimed to you the gospel of God.
- **2:17-20** But since we were torn away from you, brothers, for a short time, in person not in heart, we endeavored the more eagerly and with great desire to see you face to face (τὸ πρόσωπον ὑμῶν ἰδεῖν),¹⁸ because we wanted to come to you – I, Paul, again and again – but Satan hindered us.¹⁹ For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting (ἡμῶν ἐλπίς ἢ χαρὰ ἢ στέφανος καυχήσεως) before our Lord Jesus at his coming (ἐν τῇ αὐτοῦ παρουσίᾳ)? Is it not you?²⁰ For you are our glory and joy (ὕμεις γὰρ ἐστε ἡ δόξα ἡμῶν καὶ ἡ χαρὰ).
- **3:6-8** But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and has brought us the good news of your faith and love and reported that you always remember us kindly (ὅτι ἔχετε μνησίαν ἡμῶν ἀγαθὴν πάντοτε) and long to see us, as we long to see you (πάντοτε, ἐπιποθοῦντες ἡμᾶς ἰδεῖν καθάπερ καὶ ἡμεῖς ὑμᾶς,) – [⁷ for this reason, brothers, in all our distress and affliction we have been comforted about you through your faith.]⁸ For now we live, if you are standing fast in the Lord (ὅτι νῦν ζῶμεν ἐὰν ὑμεῖς στήκετε ἐν κυρίῳ).
- **4:9-10** Now concerning brotherly love (φιλαδελφίας) you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another (αὐτοὶ γὰρ ὑμεῖς θεοδίδακτοὶ ἐστε εἰς τὸ ἀγαπᾶν ἀλλήλους),¹⁰ for that indeed is what you are doing to all the brothers (εἰς πάντας τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς [τούς] ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ Μακεδονίᾳ) throughout Macedonia. But we urge you, brothers, to do this more and more (παρακαλοῦμεν δὲ ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, περισσεύειν μᾶλλον),...
- **5:14-15** And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle (νουθετεῖτε τοὺς ἀτάκτους), encourage the fainthearted (παραμυθεῖσθε τοὺς ὀλιγοψύχους), help the weak (ἀντέχεσθε τῶν ἀσθενῶν), be patient with them all (μακροθυμεῖτε πρὸς πάντας).¹⁵ See that no one repays anyone evil for evil (μὴ τις κακὸν ἀντὶ κακοῦ τινι ἀποδῶ), but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone (ἀλλὰ πάντοτε τὸ ἀγαθὸν διώκετε [καὶ] εἰς ἀλλήλους καὶ εἰς πάντας).
- **5:26** Greet all the brothers with a holy kiss (ἐν φιλήματι ἀγίῳ).

0.4. LOVE THEMES IN 1THESSALONIANS

Previous lesson:

- A. [Source of Christian love
 - a. Taught by God (4:9-10)
 - b. Practice of love (“grow in it more and more” 4:10)
- B. Love Attitudes
 - a. Valuing others (“dear to us” 2:8)
 - b. Desiring (“desirous of you” 2:7; “desire to see face to face” 2:17; long to see... 3:6)
 - c. Enjoying others (“now we live” 3:8)
 - d. Self-giving – gentleness (mother-children 2:7)
 - e. Remembering others (“torn away... not in heart” 2:17; “you always remember us kindly” 3:6)
 - f. Measuring success... (hope, joy, crown 2:19)]

¹ “...as innocent (?) as a young child among them...”

² “Most of the ancient authorities, the R. V. tells us in the margin, read ‘We were babes () in the midst of you.’ If this were correct, the thought would be that Paul stooped to the level of these infant disciples, speaking to them, as it were, in the language of childhood, and accommodating himself to their immaturity. But though this is appropriate enough, the word is not proper to express it. Gentleness is really what is meant.” (DENNEY p. 76)

Today:

- C. Practical expressions of Christian love
- a. Getting information about others (“Timothy has come to us from you” 3:6)
 - b. Meeting each other 5:[13b-]14-15 (1) admonish → the idle, (2) encourage → the fainthearted, (3) help → the weak, (4) be patient → with all, (5) see to ...not revenge... but do good... (stop grudging)
 - c. Hard work (“our labour and toil” 2:9)
 - d. Physical touch (“holy kiss” 5:26)

1. PRACTICAL EXPRESSIONS OF LOVE

[[https://bible.org/book/export/html/2322:](https://bible.org/book/export/html/2322)]

(1) Love is greater than faith and hope because love is eternal, while faith and hope are temporal (see 1 Corinthians 13:8-13). Because that which God has promised cannot presently be seen, faith and hope are necessary in this life. But when the perfect comes, when our Lord returns and we are living eternally in His presence, we will no longer need faith, for we shall see Him and experience all that He has promised. Our hope will be fulfilled. Our love for Him, however, will last for all eternity, inspiring our worship and service in His presence.

(2) Love is the appropriate response to God’s love and grace, in Christ (see Luke 7:42, 47).

(3) Love is the great commandment and one of the distinguishing marks of a true disciple of our Lord (Matthew 22:37; Mark 12:33; Luke 6:27-36; John 13:35; 15:12-13).

(4) Love facilitates and contributes to Christian unity (John 17:20-26; Colossians 2:2; 3:14).

(5) Love is the lubricant which greatly reduces the friction which can build up between us and others (Ephesians 4:2; 1 Peter 4:8).

(6) Love is a key motive for our obedience to our Lord’s commands (John 14:15, 21, 23, 24; 15:10; 21:15-17; 1 John 5:2; 2 John 1:16).

(7) Love is a stabilizing factor in our lives (Ephesians 3:17).

(8) Love is the goal of Paul’s teaching as it should be the goal of all Christian teaching (1 Timothy 1:5).

(9) Love is the one command which encompasses all aspects of our Christian life (Romans 13:8-10; 1 Corinthians 16:14).

(10) Love makes our service more profitable to others and to us (1 Corinthians 8:1; 13:1-13).

(11) Love is a key element in our defences against Satan’s attacks and devices (1 Thessalonians 5:8).

(12) Our love can and should be constantly growing (Philippians 1:9; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; 2 Thessalonians 1:3; Hebrews 10:24; 2 Peter 1:7).

(13) Our love can grow cold, especially in difficult times (Matthew 24:12; Revelation 2:4).

1.1. CHRISTIAN INTEREST IN OTHER CHRISTIANS***1.1.1. INTERESTED IN THE POSITIVE***

- But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and has brought us the good news of your faith and love and reported that you always remember us kindly and long to see us, as we long to see you
 - (1) faith → Are they *in Christ* (ie. safe, alive, witnessing...)?
 - (2) their attitude to fellowship with other Christians (judgmental? → fear, rejection, separation)

1.1.2. TALKING FRANKLY ABOUT THE NEGATIVE

- “the house of Chloe” **1Cor 1:11** For it has been reported to me by Chloe’s people that there is quarreling among you, my brothers. (ἐδηλώθη γάρ μοι περὶ ὑμῶν, ἀδελφοί μου, ὑπὸ τῶν Χλόης ὅτι ἔριδες ἐν ὑμῖν εἰσιν)

1.1.3. NOT BEYOND THE INTERESTS OF THE KINGDOM

- **2Thes 3:11** For we hear that some among you walk in idleness (**ἄτακτος**), not busy at work (ἐργαζομένοι), but **busybodies** (περιεργαζομένοι).
- **1Tim 5:13** Besides that, they learn to be idlers, going about from house to house, and not only

idlers, but also gossips and busybodies (καὶ φλύαροι καὶ περίεργοι)³, saying what they should not.

1.2. MEETING EACH OTHER WITH A PURPOSE

- today's slogan: *Jesus 'yes', the church 'no'!*
 - **Mal 3:16** Then those who feared the LORD spoke with one another. The LORD paid attention and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who feared the LORD and esteemed his name.
 - **Mt 18:19-20** Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where **two or three** are gathered in my name, there am I among them."
 - **Heb 10:24-25** And let us consider how to stir up one another⁴ (κατανοῶμεν ἀλλήλους εἰς παροξυσμὸν) to love and good works, ²⁵ not neglecting to meet together (μὴ ἐγκαταλείποντες τὴν ἐπισυναγωγὴν ἑαυτῶν), as is the habit of some, but encouraging (παρακαλοῦντες,) one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.
- Purposes of meeting together: [**1Thes 5:13** ...Be at peace among yourselves!!] → vv. 14-15: [**Gal 5:26** Let us not become conceited, **provoking** one another, envying one another.]
 - (1) admonish → the idle, (νουθετεῖτε τοὺς ἀτάκτους)
 - ἀτάκτος out of order, esp. not in battle orders not in one's place in battle, no part in the war, 2. undisciplined, disorderly, — 3. esp. of sensual excess, irregular, — 4. uncivilized, lawless,
 - νουθετέω to put in mind, hence to remind, warn, advise, admonish, hence joined with κολάζω *punish* (Ac 4:21; 1 Pt 2:20 v.l.; 2 Pt 2:9.)
 - (2) encourage → the fainthearted, (παραμυθεῖσθε τοὺς ὀλιγοψύχους)
 - ὀλιγοψύχος (**Ex 6:9** וְלֹא שָׂמְעוּ אֶל-מֹשֶׁה מִקִּצְרֵי רוּחַ) (**Ps 55:9** סָעָה רִוּחַ) (**Pr 14:29** Whoever is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who has a hasty temper (ὀλιγόψυχος) exalts folly. אֲרֹךְ אַפַּיִם רַב-תְּבוּנָה וְקִצְרֵי-רוּחַ מְרִים אֵלֶּת. (**Pr 18:14** נִכְאָה רוּחַ crushed spirit)
 - παραμυθέω ()
 - (3) help → the weak, (ἀντέχεσθε τῶν ἀσθενῶν)
 - ἀσθενής [PASSOW]: (1) in body or frame; (2) in mind, and. the like; (3) in power; (4) in property poor; (5) insignificant
 - ἀντέχομαι [PASSOW] to hold on by (persist, hang on), hold to, cling to, cleave to, keep close to

"The weak" and "fainthearted" stand in contrast with "the disorderly." The latter are **overbold**, and need to be checked; the former are **despondent**, and need stimulus and help. Fainthearted men think themselves weak, but perhaps are not so; and encouragement may make them bold.⁵

- (4) be patient → with all, (μακροθυμεῖτε πρὸς πάντας)
 - μακροθυμέω – "long fuse"
- (5) see to ...not revenge... but do good... (μὴ τις κακὸν ἀντὶ κακοῦ τιμι ἀποδῶ)
 - **Rom 12:17** Repay no one **evil for evil**
 - **Rom 12:14** Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them
 - **Mt 5:44** But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you
 - **Acts 7:60** And falling to his knees he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them."
 - **1Cor 4:12** ...and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure;

[FINDLAY] It is a reproach to all, a discredit to the common faith, when a Christian gives back wrong for wrong.

³ φ. to talk folly, or nonsense ... π. to busy one's self with trifles, to waste one's labour (PASSOW)

⁴ κατανοεω notice, observe Mt 7:3; Lk 6:41; Ac 27:39. Look at, consider, contemplate Lk 12:24, 27; Ac 7:31f; Js 1:23f; Hb 3:1. See through (one's) tricks Lk 20:23.

⁵ FINDLAY, G. G. *Thessalonians*, Cambridge : CUP, 1861, p. 118.

1.3. HARD WORK

- Christian attitude to work → **2Thes 3:10** If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat.
- **2:9** For you remember, brothers, our labor and toil: we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, while we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. (μνημονεύετε γάρ, ἀδελφοί, τὸν κόπον ἡμῶν καὶ τὸν μόχθον· νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας ἐργαζόμενοι πρὸς τὸ μὴ ἐπιβαρῆσαί τινα ὑμῶν ἐκηρύξαμεν εἰς ὑμᾶς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ θεοῦ.)
 - For the Lord (**Luke 17:9-10** Does he thank the servant because he did what was commanded?¹⁰ So you also, when you have done all that you were commanded, say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty.'")
 - For the church (**Gal 6:10** let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith)
- **3:5** For this reason, when I could bear it no longer, I sent to learn about your faith, for fear that somehow the tempter had tempted you and our labor would be in vain. (μὴ πως ἐπιείρασεν ὑμᾶς ὁ πειράζων καὶ εἰς κενὸν γένηται ὁ κόπος ἡμῶν.)
- **1Cor 15:58** (ὁ κόπος ὑμῶν οὐκ ἔστιν κενὸς ἐν κυρίῳ)
 - [BEALE] “Paul uses the same root (kopiaō) elsewhere to describe his own hard work of manual labor by which he financially supported himself (1Thess 2: 9)”
 - **1Thess 5:12** ...respect those who **work hard** among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you (εἰδέναι τοὺς κοπιῶντας ἐν ὑμῖν καὶ προϊσταμένους ὑμῶν ἐν κυρίῳ καὶ νοουθετοῦντας ὑμᾶς)

1.4. PHYSICAL EXPRESSIONS OF LOVE

- **5:26** Greet all the brothers with a holy kiss (Rom 16:16; 1Cor 16:20; 2Cor 13:12; 1Thess 5:26)
- **Phil 4:5** Let your reasonableness (τὸ ἐπιεικὲς)⁶ be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand;

The kiss, a general mark of salutation, especially in the East, was here to be hallowed as an expression of brotherly love, and of the common joy in the Lord. It had its place especially after prayer, and before taking the Holy Supper, &c. According to TERTULLIAN it was omitted on Good Friday (on account of the kiss of Judas). Later ecclesiastical rules (with a view particularly to cutting off every pretext for heathen calumnies) insisted that only men should kiss men, and women women. The custom remained till the middle ages, and it still prevails in the East at Easter.⁷

- “Hugs, back rubs, handshakes, pats on the back, and hand holding can all make a person feel safe and loved when done appropriately.” (<https://familydiscipleshippath.com/2012/11/23/expressions-of-love-physical-touch/>)
- “Dr. Gary Chapman, author of *The Five Love Languages* ...This does not exhaust all possible expressions of love (e.g. commitment, protection), but these are some of the most important expressions of love.”⁸
 - → family relationships

The close link between the two suggests that a holy kiss is a symbolic expression of a condition of peace among people. KLASSEN proposes that Paul repeatedly encourages Christians to kiss to underscore that former antagonistic barriers of gender, race (Jew and Gentile) and social rank (slave and free) have been broken down by Christ's work and to express a new unity in Christ. Moreover, since kissing in the Greco-Roman world was a sign of close familial relationship or, at times, reconciliation between antagonists, it indicated for Paul that all diverse people-groups in Christ are part of a newly constituted spiritual family at peace with one another. Of course, this fits right in with the notion of peace woven throughout 5: 12-24.⁹

⁶ [PASSOW] not insisting on strict justice, making allowance... as is meet... → acquiescence; indulgence; compliance; submissiveness

⁷ AUBERLEN, C. A. – RIGGENBACH, C. J. *Thessalonians*, New York : Charles Scribner, 1868, p. 102

⁸ http://www.swiftcreekbaptistchurch.com/Sermons/Romans5_5-8_Expressing%20Love%20in%20the%20Family.pdf. “At least 3 of the 5 are found in Luke 7:44-46: service (44), affection (45), and gifts (46).”

⁹ BEALE, G. K. *Thessalonians*, Downers Grove : IVP, 2003, p. 177.

2. TO REMEMBER

- Keywords in Christian love: (1) know, (2) meet, (3) work, (4) touch
- Be careful your loving interests do not become a cover-up for meddling and gossip.
- Non-judgmental attitude should not mean a lack of discernment.