

True Godly Love: Rejoices in Truth, not Unrighteousness

1 Corinthians 13:6 (NASB 2020) *it does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth;*

Paul is drawing a sharp contrast between two ways the human heart can respond to the moral and spiritual condition of others. True, Spirit-filled love—the kind God shows and the kind believers are called to practice—has a very specific posture toward right and wrong.

I. It's speaking to the heart

Jeremiah 17:9 (NASB 2020) *"The heart is more deceitful than all else, and is desperately sick; Who can understand it?"*

Ezekiel 36:26 (NASB 2020) *Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.*

Psalms 51:10 (NASB 2020) *Create in me a clean heart, God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.*

Proverbs 4:23 (NASB 2020) *Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it flow the springs of life.*

Proverbs 23:7 (NKJV) *For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. "Eat and drink!" he says to you, But his heart is not with you.*

This verse is saying that a person's true nature isn't always visible, sometimes they appear to be something they are not.

Truth and righteousness are the acid test for love!

II. Rejoices in Truth

1.) What does God say about truth?

Proverbs 12:22 (NKJV) *Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, But those who deal truthfully are His delight.*

Leviticus 19:11 (NKJV) *You shall not steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie to one another.*

Proverbs 6:16-17 (NKJV) *These six things the LORD hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him: A proud look, A lying tongue,*

2.) Righteousness and Truth

Psalms 89:14 (ESV) *Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; steadfast love and faithfulness go before you.*

Psalms 15:1-2 (NKJV) *LORD, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill? He who walks uprightly, And works righteousness, And speaks the truth in his heart;*

3.) New Testament Righteousness

Matthew 5:20 (ESV) *For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.*

Matthew 6:33 (AMP) *But seek (aim at and strive after) first of all His kingdom and His righteousness (His way of doing and being right).*

Romans 3:31 (NLT) *Well then, if we emphasize faith, does this mean that we can forget about the law? Of course not! In fact, only when we have faith do we truly fulfill the law.*

The Law demanded righteousness but could not empower it; faith in Christ does. Through the Holy Spirit: We receive a new heart (Ezek. 36:26–27). The righteous requirement of the Law is fulfilled in us (Rom. 8:3–4). We begin to live God's moral law from the inside out.

1 Corinthians 1:30 (NKJV) *But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption...*

1 Peter 1:22 (NLT) *You were cleansed from your sins when you obeyed the truth, so now you must show sincere love to each other as brothers and sisters. Love each other deeply with all your heart.*

III. Unrighteousness = Anything Contrary to God's Character

The NT uses "unrighteousness" as a general term for: Sin, Injustice, Moral evil, Corruption, Behavior that violates God's standard and thoughts and motives that oppose His holiness.

Romans 1:18 (AMP) *For God's [holy] wrath and indignation are revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who in their wickedness repress and hinder the truth and make it inoperative.*

Matthew 15:19-20 (AMP) For out of the heart come evil thoughts (reasonings and disputings and designs) such as murder, adultery, sexual vice, theft, false witnessing, slander, and irreverent speech. These are what make a man unclean and defile [him]

All unrighteousness is exposed in how we are willing to treat one another! So, if you find it easy to gossip, slander someone, steal for your own gain, show favoritism... all of these unrighteous act are committed to each other!

Getting back to the heart of the matter!

Romans 13:8 (NLT) Owe nothing to anyone—except for your obligation to love one another. If you love your neighbor, you will fulfill the requirements of God's law.

Galatians 5:14 (NKJV) For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Matthew 22:37-40 (NASB 2020) And He said to him, "'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.' This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' Upon these two commandments hang the whole Law and the Prophets."

Romans 12:9-10 (NASB 2020) Love must be free of hypocrisy. Detest what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor.

James 2:1 (NKJV) My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality.