

# Nothing Substitutes for Love

## I. A Look at Romans 5.1-5

- A. 5.1a: *Therefore, since we have been **justified** by faith, ...*
  - 1. Declared by God to be righteous on the basis of your faith in Christ. This happened on the occasion of your baptism.
  - 2. We have **peace** with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. The animosity has ended.
- B. 5.2a: *We have also obtained access through him by faith into this grace in which we stand, ...*
  - 1. Jesus paid the price. No matter the accusation Satan hurls - your intercessor - Jesus - stands in your defense.
- C. 5.3b, 4: *affliction produces endurance, endurance produces proven character, and proven character produces **hope**. Your possession of it is not precarious, fragile, or in question.*
- D. How can we know?
  - 1. Romans 5.5: *God's love has been **poured** out in our hearts...*
  - 2. Romans 5.5: *By the Holy Spirit who was given to us*
  - 3. Love is built in. It is a reality in the life of every true Christian.

## II. A Look at 1 Thessalonians 4.9

- A. *You yourselves are **taught by God** to love one another. God-Taught ...*
- B. So What if I Don't Love?
  - 1. 1 John 2.9: *The one who says he is in the light but hates his brother or sister is in the darkness until now.*
  - 2. 1 John 3.14: *We know that we have passed from death to life because we love our brothers and sisters. The one who does not love remains in **death**.*
- C. Back to 1 Thessalonians 4.9-10
  - 1. *About brotherly love: You don't need me to write you because you yourselves are taught by God to **love** one another.*
  - 2. Agape love. God is producing that in us. It leads to the expression of brotherly love.

## III. Introduction

Now - as we move into July - after having focused on unity of the body during June - we want to talk about the attitude that undergirds it. We must not diminish or downplay any teaching on love. It is an essential. It is a basic matter of Christian doctrine. Nothing substitutes for love. How do we surrender to the Spirit's work of transformation?

## IV. 1 Corinthians 14:1: **Pursue love...**

- A. With intensity. To literally exert everything to chase after it.

## V. Colossians 3.14: **Above all, put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.**

- A. Love is like a belt or sash that pulls everything together. Love is what makes it all function together. Love is the greatest thing.
- B. Romans 13:10: *Love does no wrong to a neighbor. Love, therefore, is the fulfillment of the law.*
  - 1. It is the most important quality in the believer's life.
  - 2. It is the glue that produces unity in the church.

## VI. As We Close...

- A. 1 Corinthians 16:14: *Do **everything** in love.*
- B. Love complements everything and balances everything else.
- C. Have you made peace with God? Has God filled your heart with hope?