



Learning to Love

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith

@ CBC Sunday, Feb. 11th 2018

We've recently focused on the importance of wisely "Navigating" this New Year by:

- Identifying your desired destination. (*Where do you hope to end up?*)
- Recognizing your actual position. (*Where are you (spiritually) right now?*)

Correctly identifying these two points allows us to plot a course through a world full of detours and distractions!

Plotting a prudent course requires that we have:

1. A reliable (accurate) Map.

A. There are many "maps" claiming to help us navigate this life's journey.

- 1) Many are "unreliable" for even time. Col. 2:8 *"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world"*
 - a) Jesus called the Pharisees "Blind leaders of the blind" (Mt. 15:14)
- 2) Even the "good" "man-made" maps are limited to this mortal life. 1 Timothy 4:8

B. Only one "Map" prepares us for both time and eternity!

Ps 16:11 *"Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."* (Ps. 73:24; 119:105; Pr. 3:5,6; Jn. 10:10)

- 1) To neglect this map is dangerous to both time and eternity! Mt 22:29 *"Ye do err, (plana'o: get deceived, **drift**, go astray) not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God."*

2. A Fixed point of reference (or scale)

A. This allows us to "read" (interpret) the map and measure progress.

- 1) Sailors navigate by the sun during the day and the North Star (Polaris) by night.
 - a) These reference points enable them to:
 - Accurately "interpret" their map.
 - Measure progress or **Drift!**

B. What's your "point of reference"? 1 Tim. 1:5,6 *"the end (telos: **goal!**)*

of the commandment is charity (agape) out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned: From which some having swerved (astochēō: to miss the mark by aiming at the wrong target!) have turned aside..." (Drifted off course!) Aka: "Navigated by the wrong "star!"

- 1) The Pharisees were expert map "readers", (they knew the laws {map} of God) but they missed the whole point of the map, becoming *"blind leaders of the blind"* (Mt 15:14)
 - Lk 11:42 *"ye tithe ... all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God"*
 - Mt. 23:24 *"Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel"*
- 2) God's "Map" was useless to them because they read it with the wrong "point of reference".
 - What "Map" are you using to navigate your life?
 - What is your "North Star"?

3. God's "point (frame) of Reference" is **Love!** Mt. 22:36-40

"Master, which the great commandment in the law? Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, ... all thy soul, ... all thy mind. This is the first (protos: foremost) and great (megas: hugest) commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

A. The Enemy of love is Selfishness.

1) Notice the response when Jesus Shared God's Love in Lk 10:25-29:

"but he, willing to justify himself said unto Jesus, but who is my neighbor?"

a) Jesus answered by telling the story of the good Samaritan (Vs 30-37) which is a beautiful example of *Love in Action!*

B. There are three basic types of Love referenced in the Bible.

They basically correspond to the three "parts" of humanity. (*Body, Soul, Spirit*)

1) **Eros: Physical (erotic) love.** Pr 5:18,19 *"rejoice with the wife of thy youth. Let her be as a loving... and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love."*

a) The Song of Solomon gives God's perspective on this love. S.S 4:12-5:1

"A garden enclosed is my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." On the wedding night: 4:16

"Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits. I am come into my garden, my spouse: ... I have eaten my honeycomb..." God's response: "eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved."

2) **Philos: Soul (Emotional) love** Titus 2:3-4 *"The aged women likewise... that they may teach the young women to be sober, (serious, disciplined) to love their husbands... their children"*

(Philos: affectionate, fond of) Affection can be **taught!**

While "eros" and "philos" are gifts from God (James 1:17), they are somewhat affected by the behavior of others. (Basically "conditional") See Lk 6:32-33

3) **Agape: Spirit (Charitable) love** *Agape: Benevolent (giving) affection.*

a) Agape (spiritual) love is unconditional and independent of the "**performance**" of others.

b) It is "Conditioned" on our relationship with God, who is the source of this love!

Gal. 5:22 *"The fruit of the Spirit is Love..."* As such it is "incorruptible"!

c) God is the source of Agape Love! 1 Jn. 4:7,8 *"God is love!"*

Conclusion: "What" we do (Method) is less important than "why" we do (Motive)! 1 Cor 13

1 Cor. 13:1-3 reminds us that eloquence, intelligence, giftedness, faith, and even personal sacrifice, is empty unless it is motivated by a genuine Love!

No wonder Ro. 13:10 tells us *"love is the fulfilling of the law."* Plērōma: completing.

From Pleroo: to be furnish, fill, influence (Eph. 5:18)

Application: Physical and Emotional love will fail (fade) but *"Charity never faileth!"* 1 Cor 13:8

Ekpiptō: fades or becomes inefficient.

Are you willing to learn to navigate with Love?