

SERMON FOCUS: Christian love is displayed in the right attitude toward others.

SERMON FUNCTION: The hearer will commit to applying the teachings of Christ better in the New Year.

BACKGROUND: Paul wrote the book of Colossians from prison in Rome in about 60-61 A. D. He was writing to correct some false teaching that was taking over.

SCRIPTURE READING: Colossians 3:12-17

INTRODUCTION:

As we are about to go into a new year, my encouragement to you for the upcoming year is to be more like Christ. Let us take a look at how we should be.

MESSAGE:

1. BECAUSE JESUS IS COMPASSIONATE, WE ARE COMPASSIONATE

- a. Jesus demonstrated His compassion to us in His earthly life.
  - i. Compassionate: He suffered the things we suffer.
  - ii. Kind: Jesus was never unwilling to help those in need.
  - iii. Humble: Even though He never sinned and is the eternal judge, He refrained from judging.
  - iv. Gentle: Jesus was never mean-spirited.
  - v. Bearing with others: How often did Jesus explain the same things over and over again patiently?
  - vi. Forgiving others: "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do."
- b. Jesus' compassion to others is our example to follow
  - i. We bear the burdens of those who are suffering.
  - ii. We are willing to help those in need.
  - iii. We refrain from judging, knowing that we are not the rightful judge.
  - iv. We carry ourselves gently.
  - v. We are patient with each other.
  - vi. We forgive each other.

2. BECAUSE JESUS LOVES, WE LOVE

- a. (14) "Above all put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.
- b. If we are united in our love, we will not let artificial distinctions divide us.
- c. Christ's love has called us to be *one body*. We must not let that body be divided.
- d. As a demonstration of Christ's love, we are a people of peace. Especially with each other.
- e. Too many people want to be like Jesus flipping the tables, not like Jesus washing the feet.
- f. But, contrary to how many would see it, this love does not cause us to gloss over sin, but instead to teach and correct it.

3. BECAUSE JESUS TEACHES AND ADMONISHES, WE TEACH AND ADMONISH

- a. (16) “Let the word of Christ dwell richly among you, in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another through psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.”
  - i. In order for the word to dwell richly in us, we have to submit to its teaching.
    - 1. We cannot be taught if we are not present.
    - 2. We cannot be taught if we are not engaged.
    - 3. Being taught is useless if we are unwilling to act on what we are taught.
  - ii. We have opportunities to be taught.
    - 1. Sunday School, worship service, Wednesday Bible Study
    - 2. We must also spend time with God alone.
  - iii. When we submit to hearing God’s word, we plant it in our minds and hearts giving it the opportunity to start to dwell.
- b. For this to work, we have to teach each other.
  - i. Some of us are teachers who are simply unwilling to teach.
    - 1. We know it takes time
    - 2. We know it takes effort
    - 3. We lack confidence
  - ii. Some agree to teach then do not give it the effort that is required.
  - iii. We teach each other to live like Christ taught and commands that we live.
- c. We also correct each other.
  - i. “Admonishing one another through psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.”
  - ii. This only works because the words of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs are about Christ. Those words convict us because they remind us of who Christ is and what He has done for us.
  - iii. These words convince us to be compassionate because Jesus is compassionate, to love because Jesus loves. They teach us and allow us to teach others.
- d. Teaching others is what we do when we share the gospel.

4. THE GOSPEL IN SIMPLE FORM (adapted from Dr. James Merritt).

- a. Bad News: We are all sinners separated from God.
- b. Worst News: There is nothing we can do about our sin problem.
- c. Good News: Christ did for us what we cannot do for ourselves.
- d. Best News: Salvation and eternal life are a free gift, but you must receive it.

INVITATION HYMN # 87 Joy to the World