

MATURITY OF LOVE

Page 1

INTRODUCTION

- A. Thought begun in chapter 12, “Now Concerning Spiritual Gifts.”
1. See last weeks lesson.
 2. An important subject and one that was giving trouble to the church.
 3. Therefore Paul proceeds step by step in his discussion of “gifts”.
 4. “The Body” in chapter 12.
 - a. Many members.
 - b. Each has his own responsibility, and all work together for the good of the whole.
- B. NOW CHAPTER 13, LOVE AND MATURITY.
1. The importance of love.
 2. Helps us understand the use of different gifts, and their importance when we understand and appreciate the *Maturity of Love within the family*.
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CHILDISH

- A. There are certain characteristics that mark us as childish regardless of our age.
1. Little children are much given to tears.
 - a. They weep over trifles as well as over things that really matter.
 - b. Their crying is always over some personal calamity.
 2. An infant loves attention. Center of the stage, etc.
 - a. Willing to work, but only when he is in the lead.
 - b. Is willing to play, but only when he chooses the game. ‘
 - c. By demanding appreciation. If no one applauds he quits.
 3. Takes life’s blessings as a matter of course. No gratitude.
 4. No sense of Obligation. Thinks in terms of what the world owes them. Never in terms of what they owe the world.
5. Childish folks are selfish. All small children are self-centered.
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MATURITY OF LOVE

Page 2

MATURITY

- A. What are some of Paul's marks of Maturity?
1. Paul still weeps, but he no longer weeps over petty trifles. (Acts 20:18).
 - a. His tears are born of his heartache for other.
 - b. They indicate that self has died under the stroke of the Cross, and that he has truly learned to rejoice with those that do rejoice and to weep with those that weep.
 2. Paul can now carry on when nobody applauds. (II Cor. 12:15).
 3. Paul has a deep sense of gratitude. "In everything give thanks".
 - a. For the books,
 - b. Or for a coat.
- B. Sense of Obligation. "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise." Paul is a Giver.
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HOW TO MATURE

- A. GROWTH IS AN AMAZING MIRACLE. How did Paul grow. How may we grow? We grow by meeting the conditions. Naturally,...Grow or die!
1. He Eats. We often fail to get the right kind of food. We make little or nothing of prayer. Seldom look into God's Word. *Feed the body 21 times a week, how often do we feed the soul?*
 - a. One might as well expect to become a strong athlete by feeding on the wind as to become a mature Christian by feeding on a diet that has in it no food for either mind or heart.
 - b. How many are sick or die because they eat that which has no physical value?
 2. By Exercise. Baby develops his lungs, kicks, and crawls and grow.
 - a. The low state of health of many church members may be explained by the fact that they never take any exercise.
 - b. "For the son of man is come to seek and save that which is lost." Set yourself for a single day on that same mission and see what happens.
 3. Sleep.
 - a. The purpose of sleep.
 - b. To rest and rebuild.
- B. The rest of which I am thinking now is the **inward rest that Jesus promised when he walked among men.** "Come unto me,.....and ye shall find rest unto
your souls."
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MATURITY OF LOVE

Page 3

MATURITY IN LOVE

- A. Perhaps no greater passage has ever been written on Love than the 13th Chapter of First Corinthians.
1. How many times have we heard it?
 2. How often it is used.
 3. But how do we best understand *the description of love*?
- B. First Corinthians Thirteen is a “Grown Up”, Mature Love.
- C. Consider the examples of Love as seen in a Parent to their child.
1. Love is Patient. Consider a parent rearing a child. The physical, mental, and spiritual development.
 2. Love Envieth Not. Can you imagine a parent envious or jealous because their child succeeds. Receives a degree....Doctor, Lawyer, etc. How does a parent, grandparent, brother, sister respond.
- D. Look at the rest of the things listed about Love in this type of setting.
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CONCLUSION

- A. We recognize the “Lordship of Christ.”
- B. We function as a body. Each member has its own responsibilities.
- C. When we Mature In Love we will respect and rejoice in the gifts of each member. NEXT WEEK WE WILL LOOK AT GIFTS IN PARTICULAR.
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