

MESSAGE # 2: THE TEST OF LOVE

Biblical Passages: 1 Samuel 15:22, John 14:15, 15:14, 1 Corinthians 13

I. Introducing the Subject:

Love is one of those things that is easily professed and not so easily demonstrated. In the Scripture the test of love is the matter of obedience. There are many other things associated with the study (such as giving, etc.) but this one dominates. Acts performed outside the realm of obedience are not acts of love...they may have emotional involvement but love is the unselfish giving of oneself to another and that is governed by obedience or yieldedness. If we love God we will obey, if we love others we will yield ourselves to the facts of their needs and show obedience in that way.

II. Discussion:

- A. "if" indicates it is assumed that persons will claim to love but not actually be given to love. The claim seems to give them status without the pain of compliance: the Lord knows this and challenges His disciples on this line. "If you love me....."
- B. Love is not self seeking and in that respect the giving of ourselves to others indicates whether love is real or not. It does not mean we capitulate before them...they may have some interests that are contrary to truth...in any case we are seeking their welfare and not our own.
- C. Love of God accepts no substitutes for doing His will no matter how we might try to rationalize things.
- D. The love of the Lord for us models what our response should be to Him. He "loved us and gave Himself for (us)" (Gal. 2:20) and our response should be a giving of ourselves to Him. The test of the reality of our profession lies in the doing of what He has said.

- III. Conclusion: If you love me you will do what I say....that is the essence of the Lord's words to the Apostles and disciples of His day. Obedience is the test of love and it is fruitless to say we love when we are not willing to commit and obey.