

Doing Without Loving Doesn't Count

By Senior Pastor Prince Guneratnam

“You can do without loving, but you cannot love without doing.”

What does the Bible say about love? “If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing” (1 Cor 13:1-3).

“There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The man who fears is not made perfect in love” (1 John 4:18).

LOVE IS OUR MOTIVATION

Love should be the motivation force in what we do. It was love that motivated God to plan salvation for mankind. He saw the hopelessness and the eternal separation of man without God. He was so moved by love that He did what He could do. He sent Jesus His precious Son to die for our sins so that we may be reconciled with Him. “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16).

Some say that we can do things without love, but we cannot love without doing.

The danger lies in doing things without love. Sometimes we perform out of a sense of responsibility. What is your reason for doing what you are doing at the moment? The Bible places great importance on love: “And now these three remain faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love” (1 Cor 13:13). Doing does not count if it is not done in love. Even if you should be willing to throw yourself into the furnace but does not have love in your heart, you do not profit from your actions at all.

One day a rich young ruler came to Jesus and asked Him: “Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” And Jesus said, “You know the commandments, ‘Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not bear false witness, do not defraud, honour your father and mother.’ ” And he said to Him, “Teacher, I have kept all these things from my youth up.” And looking at him, Jesus felt love for him, and said to him, “One thing you lack: go and sell all you possess, and give it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.” But at these words his face fell, and he went away grieved, for he was one who owned much property’ (Mark 10:17, 19-22).

Jesus is not against wealth and success, but in your successes, remembers to revere the Lord and place Him first. Our successes will only impress God if our motivation for doing things comes from love in our hearts.

Jesus in Matthew 5:20 says, “... unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven” (Matt 5:20). The scribes, Pharisees as well as the Sadducees saw to it that even the minutest detail of the law is kept but most of the time they did things out of mere legalism rather than with love and compassion in their hearts, and Jesus rebuked them for it. God wants us to love Him with our heart, soul and mind.

When God looked upon us and saw that we do not even deserve salvation, deliverance or healing, He was moved by love to reach out to us. He reminds us that our motive for doing things must be love and not hypocrisy or legalism like that of the Pharisees. It is very easy to become legalistic and be proud of our works and forget that our motivation should be love. If we get this perspective correct and move in that direction, then our testimony as a Christian will be very effective. The Lord reminds us concerning this truth in Matt 7:22-23: “Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord did we not prophecy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in your name perform many miracles?’ And I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.’ ” It was not to heal the sick and to deliver in Jesus’ name but doing them without God’s love and compassion in the heart does not count in God’s kingdom.

LOVING GOD AND LOVING YOUR NEIGHBOUR

In Matthew 22:37, Jesus says: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. “But He did not stop at that for He goes on to say in verse 39: “You shall love your neighbour as yourself.” Loving god is synonymous with loving those around us. No one is able to judge us when we say “I love God” but people can tell by our actions whether we love our neighbour.

One day a lawyer tested Jesus by asking: “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus asked him what was written in the Law and he quoted Deuteronomy 6:5. Jesus then said: You have answered correctly; do this and you will live” (Luke 10:25-28). Let God’s love rule in your heart. Genuine love for God will touch those we help and desire to bring the salvation message to.

The lawyer tried to justify when he asked the question: “Who is my neighbour?” Jesus then went on to tell the story of the Good Samaritan. “A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho; and he fell among robbers, and they stripped him and beat him, and went of leaving him half dead. And by chance a certain priest was going down on that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan who was on a journey, came upon him, and when he saw him he felt compassion, and came to him, and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine over them; and put him on his beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of

him. And on the next day he took out two denarii's and gave them to the innkeeper and said, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I return, I will repay you.' Which of these three which you prove to be your neighbour to the man who fell into the robbers' hands? And he said, "The one who showed mercy toward him." And Jesus said to him, 'Go and do the same.' " (Luke 10:20-37).

Jesus' parables always carried spiritual principles in them. What did the Good Samaritan do? Moved by love and compassion, he gave all that he had to help the wounded man. He bandaged up the man's wounds and poured oil and wine on them. He shared his donkey with him as well as gave money to the innkeeper to take care of the physical needs of the wounded man. The Good Samaritan represents the believer, the innkeeper the church while the hurting man is our neighbour or whoever we come to contact with. The Good Samaritan crossed the racial barrier and gave him all he could to help the wounded man. He even went the second mile by paying the innkeeper to take care of his need while he was gone.

WHAT KIND OF LOVE IS JESUS TALKING ABOUT?

Likewise, as believers we should let the love of Christ shine through all the actions, whether it be helping the needy or just by being a friend. Allow the Holy Spirit to fill us every day with His love. The Bible says: "... the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us" (Romans 5:5). The Bible also admonishes us in Romans 12:9-21 to: "Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honour; not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and curse not. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation. Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of men.

If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. "But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will with heap burning coals upon his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Praise God we can, because of His enablement!

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