

## Proverbs 10:12 New International Version (NIV)

<sup>12</sup> Hatred stirs up conflict,  
but love covers over all wrongs.

## 1 Corinthians 16 New International Version (NIV)

**16** Now about the collection for the Lord's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. <sup>2</sup> On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made. <sup>3</sup> Then, when I arrive, I will give letters of introduction to the men you approve and send them with your gift to Jerusalem. <sup>4</sup> If it seems advisable for me to go also, they will accompany me.

### Personal Requests

<sup>5</sup> After I go through Macedonia, I will come to you—for I will be going through Macedonia. <sup>6</sup> Perhaps I will stay with you for a while, or even spend the winter, so that you can help me on my journey, wherever I go. <sup>7</sup> For I do not want to see you now and make only a passing visit; I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord permits. <sup>8</sup> But I will stay on at Ephesus until Pentecost, <sup>9</sup> because a great door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many who oppose me.

<sup>10</sup> When Timothy comes, see to it that he has nothing to fear while he is with you, for he is carrying on the work of the Lord, just as I am. <sup>11</sup> No one, then, should treat him with contempt. Send him on his way in peace so that he may return to me. I am expecting him along with the brothers.

<sup>12</sup> Now about our brother Apollos: I strongly urged him to go to you with the brothers. He was quite unwilling to go now, but he will go when he has the opportunity.

<sup>13</sup> Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong.

<sup>14</sup> Do everything in love.

<sup>15</sup> You know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the Lord's people. I urge you, brothers and sisters, <sup>16</sup> to submit to such people and to everyone who joins in the work and labors at it. <sup>17</sup> I was glad when Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus arrived, because they have supplied what was lacking from you. <sup>18</sup> For they refreshed my spirit and yours also. Such men deserve recognition.

<sup>19</sup> The churches in the province of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Priscilla greet you warmly in the Lord, and so does the church that meets at their house. <sup>20</sup> All the brothers and sisters here send you greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

<sup>21</sup> I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand.

<sup>22</sup> If anyone does not love the Lord, let that person be cursed! Come, Lord!

<sup>23</sup> The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you.

<sup>24</sup> My love to all of you in Christ Jesus. Amen.

## Showing the Love of Christ (1 Corinthians 16:1-24) 28-June-20

This is our **last look** at the Apostle Paul's **first letter** to the Church in **Corinth**.

We'll be looking at chapter 16 - so please have your Bibles handy.

Let me ask God to give us understanding of His Word; **Let's pray...**

### Context/Love

So, we've come to the **end of** the Apostle Paul's **letter** to the Church in Corinth

What was Paul's **purpose** in writing the **letter**?

#### [PowerPoint 1-Purpose]

- 1<sup>st</sup> - to address **disunity** - there were **factions** - some people **following Paul** - others **following Apollos** - others **following Peter**.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> - to address **not following** Paul's **teaching** (which is from God/Jesus)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> - to address the **problem of not using** their **gifts in a loving way**

Throughout his letter, Paul has majored on love - He wants the **Corinthians to love God and love each other** - that's what **Jesus commanded** isn't it? (John 13:34)

Paul's point back in chapter 2 verses 8 to 10 - is if people had loved God and understood God's wisdom - they wouldn't have crucified Jesus.

When Paul addresses their (Corinthians) **disunity and disobedience** - he does it in a **loving way** - see chapter 4 verse 21 - **What do you prefer? Shall I come**

to you with a rod of discipline, or shall I come in **love** and with a gentle spirit?

Any correction should be done in a **loving way** - not a **harsh way**. This **encourages** people to **improve** and **change**.

When Paul addresses the problem of **eating food** that has been **sacrificed** to **idols** in chapter 8 - he says this in **8:1** - **Now about food sacrificed to idols: We know that "We all possess knowledge."** But knowledge puffs up while **love** builds up.

**Paul's point** is - **just because you know eating food sacrificed to idols is okay - doesn't mean the other person does**. So, don't get all puffed up and superior - instead - be loving and **explain it gently to them**.

And when it comes to how some **Corinthians think they are super spiritual** and think they have **better gifts than others** - Paul says in **12:31** - **and yet I will show you the most excellent way**.

And that most excellent way is **love** - as he says in **1 Cor 13:1-3**:

If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have **love**, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.

If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have **love**, I am nothing.

If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have **love**, I gain nothing.

The **bottom line** without love - all these **gifts** are **useless** and **nothing**

So, Paul encourages them in 14:1 to - **Follow the way of love**

And so, we come to the last chapter - chapter 16 - and again Paul finishes with love...

Three times in this chapter he uses love - verses 14, 22 & 24.

[PowerPoint 2-Agape]

The Key verse is 16:14 - Do everything in love.

Each use of love is the **Greek Word** - agape

*Agape = unconditional, sacrificial love - not necessarily expecting anything in return'*

This is the love that Jesus showed on the cross

(pause)

In our chapter this morning - Paul encourages the Corinthians and us - to show love in Christ.

So, what does showing love in Christ look like?

It looks like 3 things...

1. Showing love - practically
2. Showing love - spiritually
3. Showing love - verbally

### 1. Showing love - practically (vv1-4)

[PowerPoint 3-practically]

First then, showing love practically - that's verses 1 to 4

- Paul has organized a collection for the Lord's people in Jerusalem
- We know from Acts 6:1-6 - there were many widows in Jerusalem - and there was no Centrelink
- We know from Acts 11:27-30 - there was a **famine there** too

- And from **Romans 15:26** - that **some** in the church in Jerusalem were **poor**
- Paul has asked the **Galatians** and now the **Corinthians** to **set aside** a sum of **money** - each **Sunday** (first day of the week) - in **keeping with** their **income**
- When Paul arrives in **Corinth** - he'll send men from **Corinth** to **Jerusalem** with the **money** collected
- Notice Paul keeps the **handling** of the **money** all **above board** - he's not **handling** the **money** himself
- Paul is **teaching** 4 things here about **giving** money for the **work of the Lord**:
  1. **Giving** should be **regular** - each **Sunday**
  2. It's each **individual's responsibility** - there's no third party involved.  
What an individual gives, is **between them** and the **Lord**
  3. The giving is laying aside money for a special use - and it's **separate** from **all other possessions**
  4. Giving is in **keeping with one's income** - so everyone **gives something** - **no matter how small**. And it also means **as we prosper** and our income increases - **giving** should be **adjusted accordingly**
- Paul's also **teaching** the **principle** of **supporting** the **Lord's people** in need - even in **other churches**
- **We've seen** this in our own **Presbyterian Church**
  - Where **Jericho Road** - have had **appeals** for **Bush fires** and **floods**
  - And where **Presbyterian Aid** - each **Easter** - **appeals** for money for different **mission projects** throughout the **world**
  - And the **recent appeal** for funds to **rebuild** the **Talua Bible College** in **Vanuatu** which was severely **damaged** by **Cyclone Harold**

- As well as **supporting** our **Mission Partners** - like **Mick Alley** in Kenya
- And **let's not forget** our own **local church family** - when people are in need
- Just **recently one** of our **members** - **Patricha Stapleton** & her children **Brianna and Liam** - **lost their home** in a house fire
- The **generosity** of our **church family** was amazing
- **Patricha** - had so much **practical help** - money, furniture, food, clothes and help with moving
- **She really** did **experience** the **love of Christ** in a practical way
- So much so - that she **shared with me** the other day - **how much** she **appreciated** all the **love and help** she **received** - **she was blown away** - and said *"she really felt part of the church family - it has brought her closer to many people in church that she only knew to say hello to"*
- To **God be the glory!**

## 2. Showing love - spiritually (vv5-18)

[PowerPoint 4-spiritually]

Second then, **showing love** spiritually - that's verses 5 to 18

- **Paul intends** to **come** to **Corinth** via **Macedonia**
- His **intention** is to **stay a while** with the **Corinthians**
- He doesn't want it to be a **flying visit**
- Why is he **coming?**
- Well this letter tells us he is **concerned** for their **spiritual well-being**
- He wants to **encourage** the **Corinthians** **spiritually**
- As verse 13 says:

- **Be on your guard** - because the **Corinthians don't know when Jesus is returning** - and also they don't know what temptations may come their way
  - **Stand firm in the faith** - The **Corinthians must not be derailed by false teaching** or doubts or disunity
  - **Be courageous and strong** - when persecutions and opposition come their way
- But this spiritual love is not just to be given by Paul
  - It's team work
  - Paul will send his protégé Timothy to love them spiritually - v10
  - Timothy has the same work to do as Paul - the Lord's work
  - Timothy is young, lacking in confidence (1 Tim 4:12) and has a weak stomach and frequent illnesses (1 Tim 5:23)
  - But that doesn't mean the **Corinthians** should mistreat him or disrespect him - he is still Christ's ambassador
  - Paul's plan to love the Corinthians spiritually - also includes his intention for Apollos to come to them too -
  - And it's interesting that **despite** the **Corinthians** having groups that prefer Apollos and groups that prefer Paul - Paul does not see himself in competition with Apollos - they are equal and part of a team
  - Paul's team also includes his first converts at Corinth - Stephanus and his household, which includes Fortunatas and Achaicus
  - The bottom line is a church family needs to be loved and supported spiritually by all the churches - which are the body of Christ

- An **example** of this is our **local group** of **Presbyterian churches** - called the **Presbytery** - which **includes 5 churches**: Gosford, Woy Woy, Terrigal, The Entrance and us here at Toukley
- These 5 churches **support** each other spiritually
- Last year we had a **Presbytery visit** - which amongst other things was to **check how we were going spiritually at Toukley**
- But we shouldn't just rely on the **other churches** in our Presbytery - to **encourage us spiritually**
- **As a church family** we need to be **diligent** in **loving each other spiritually**
- Do you know someone in church who's **struggling spiritually** - **finding it hard to pray, or struggling and doubting God is there to help - or finding it hard to understand God's word - or even read it? Why not offer to help - pray with them - read the Bible with them - and mentor them - one on one**

### 3. Showing love verbally (vv19-24)

[PowerPoint 5-verbally]

Third then, **showing love verbally** - that's **verses 19 to 24**

In these **final verses** Paul

- **Passes on greetings from** the **churches** in **Asia**
- **He passes on greetings from** his fellow **tentmaker friends**, husband and wife team, **Aquila and Priscilla** and **their house church**
- These greetings I believe **imply** these **other churches** are **thinking and praying for** their **brothers and sisters** in **Corinth**

- These **greetings** are a sign of the love other churches have for fellow **believers** and there is an **encouragement** in v20 to greet with a **holy kiss** - a sign of love and **affection** in **Christ**
- Oh, how we are **missing** that **loving affection** during this **pandemic**
- It's a **great feeling** to feel the love of our church family through **loving greetings, hugs and kisses**
- I reckon **when we get back to normal** - we'll have to have a **hug service**
- **Paul finishes** by writing in his own hand - having **dictated** the letter to a scribe
- And he must finish with the **theme of love** - as it's his **major theme**
- See v22 - Paul says - **loving the Lord Jesus is paramount** - anyone who **doesn't love the Lord** - Paul says **should be cursed**. In fact - without **loving our Lord Jesus** - a person has no hope of **forgiveness** or **eternal life** in **heaven** - and are **cursed anyway**
- **Paul's prayer** for himself and the **Corinthians** - at the end of v22 - is **for the Lord to come** - that is **for Jesus to return**
- Why?
- So that **judgment comes** and **resurrection occurs** - and **heavenly residence** can begin
- **Paul concludes** - with the **desire** for the **grace** of our Lord **Jesus** to be with all in **Corinth**
- That should be our heart's **desire** - we should **communicate** our **desire** for everyone we meet to have the **grace** of our Lord **Jesus** - because that means that **person has acknowledged** that God the **Father** in his love, **sent Jesus to**

die for that person's sins to be forgiven and rose again so that person has the certain hope of eternal life -

- Paul sends his love - that love in Christ - that he has expressed in his letter from beginning to end
- The question for us is - are we showing that love in Jesus verbally - to our church family?
- This week I've had a couple of people encourage me with loving words - I cannot tell you how much it means to me - it is so so encouraging and reduces me to tears of joy
- That's what showing the love of Jesus verbally can do

## Challenges

Let me finish with three challenges for us to consider this morning:

### [PowerPoint 6-1<sup>st</sup> challenge]

1. 1<sup>st</sup> challenge - Identify someone(s) in our church family that you can show the love of Jesus to - in a practical way - not just financially, but perhaps - help in the home, help with their computer or phone, or their garden - take them shopping - drive them to an appointment - so many ways we can show that love practically

### [PowerPoint 7-2<sup>nd</sup> challenge]

2. 2<sup>nd</sup> challenge - A number of our members are isolated at home or Aged Care or in hospital or facing surgery - they'd love a phone call or visit - they'd love you to chat with them, to read the Bible with them, to talk about the sermon with them and to pray with them. If you were to phone one person

each day - or visit one person per week; what a difference that would make to so many people's lives.

[PowerPoint 8-3rd challenge]

3. 3<sup>rd</sup> challenge - **Identify someone(s)** in our church family - **you can show the love of Jesus to - verbally**. Give them words of encouragement. If you were to do this for **one person each day**, again what a difference that would make to so many

**If you're not sure who** might need help or a phone call or visit or who needs encouraging - **let me know - I can give you some ideas**.

### Conclusion

To finish up then,

As Paul said in v14 - **Do everything in love.**

[PowerPoint 9-v14]

And remember that love is **agape love** - sacrificial love like Jesus showed - without any expectation of return - and that love will also **show people we are disciples of Jesus.**

By showing this **agape love of Jesus** - practically, spiritually and verbally

**It will be infectious** - people won't be able to help themselves but respond to being loved - by showing that same agape love to others

It would be **great to start a love pandemic** - how good would that be?

Let's pray...