

Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church

Charity and Its Fruits Class

Week 1 – June 6, 2021, “Love, the Sum of All Virtues”

Introduction and Context

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. (2) And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. (3) If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Lecture 1: Love, the Sum of All Virtues

1. Observations

1.1. *First, that something is spoken of as of special importance, and as peculiarly essential in Christians, which the apostle calls charity*

1.2. *Secondly, what things are mentioned as being in vain without it, viz. the most excellent things that ever belong to natural men; the most excellent privileges, and the most excellent performances.*

Doctrine: That all the virtue that is saving, and that distinguishes true Christians from others, is summed up in Christian love.

I. The Nature of Truly Christian Love

I.1. All true Christian love is one and the same in its principle.

II. The Truth of the Doctrine

II.1. What reason teaches

II.1.1.1. Love disposes all proper acts toward God and man.

II.1.1.2. Whatever performances or virtues there are without love are hypocritical.

II.2. "The scriptures teach us that love is the sum of all that is contained in the law of God, and of all the duties required in his word."

II.2.1. Of the Law and word of God in general (Rom 13:8, 1 Tim 1:5, Matt 22:40)

II.2.2. Of each table of the Law in particular (Matt 22:38, Rom 13:9, Gal 5:14, James 2:8)

II.2.3. By apostolic teaching (Paul) (Galatians 5:6)

II.2.3.1. True love an ingredient in true and living faith (practical faith v. speculative faith)

II.2.3.2. All Christian exercises of the heart are from love (Galatians 2:20)

III. Application

III.1. Self-Examination (Does this spirit dwell in us?) (1 John 3:16-19)

III.2. Instruction

III.2.1. Shows us what is the right Christian spirit.

III.2.2. Professors taught whether their experiences are real Christian experiences or not.

III.2.3. Shows the amicableness of the Christian spirit.

III.2.4. Shows the pleasantness of the Christian life.

III.2.5. Learn why contention tends so much to the ruin of religion.

III.2.6. Shows what a watch or guard we should keep against envy, malice, and bitterness of spirit towards our neighbors.

III.2.7. Shows why Christianity so strongly requires that we love our enemies, even our worst enemies.

III.3. Exhortation: Exhorts us to seek a spirit of love, grow in it more and more, and abound in the works of love.