

July 4, 2010 – “What Is Love?” (part 1)

- I. **4th of July – A Unique Day in our history...**
- A. Today is the 4th of July – _____ Day – our Day of Freedom
 - B. Commemorates the Continental Congress' adoption of the Declaration of Independence
 - 1. Formal announcement that _____ American colonies were no longer part of British Empire
 - 2. _____ members of Continental Congress signed the Declaration of Independence
 - 3. Each person put their lives on the line – signing was considered act of _____...
 - C. Signing of Declaration of Independence completely changed the course of history & our lives...
- II. **Galatians 5:1 – A Different Kind of Freedom...**
- A. This freedom is way more profound than the freedom we celebrate on July 4th.
 - B. Christians are _____ because of what Jesus did some 2000 years ago...
What did Jesus do to set us free?
- III. **The Gospel According to John – Understanding Love...**
- A. John 15:13 – Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his _____ for his friends.
 - 1. Lays out the standard of love that followers of Jesus are expected to show one another.
 - 2. Points forward to His impending death on behalf of His friends.
 - a) He became sin who knew no sin on our behalf; He laid down His life on the Cross for us
 - b) Demonstration of God's love for us while we were yet _____ (Romans 5:8)
 - 3. Why doesn't Jesus say – “lay down his life for enemies”?
 - a) Note the context & purpose here – speaking with friends, establishing future behavior...
 - b) Wrong to begin to do down the “who is my friend” line of questions (Think Luke 10:29ff)
 - B. Jesus commands our love for one another “just as I have loved you.”
 - C. John 14:15 – If you love Me, you will keep My _____.
 - D. John 13:35 – By this all men will know that you are My _____, if you have love for one another
 - E. Genuine love for God ensures genuine love for the Son ensures obedience to Him...(to love).
 - F. “By an unbreakable chain, love for God is tied to and verified by love for other believers.” (Carson)
 - G. John 13 – Jesus exemplified His love for His disciples by washing their feet...
 - 1. We are called to be selfless, humble servants of one another...
 - 2. We are called, commanded and have modeled for us – love one another...
- IV. **The Importance That Christians love:**
- A. 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 – All these things without love: clanging cymbals, nothing, & have no _____
 - B. 1 Timothy 1:5 – The goal of Paul's instruction is _____...
 - C. 1 Peter 4:8 – Above all, keep fervent in your love...because love covers a multitude of _____...
- V. **How Do We “Get” Love: Not Automatic or Natural**
- A. Only God can cause it & yet Paul commands it (1 Thess. 3:11-12; 4:9)
 - B. 1 John 4:7-12 – Love is the product of our new _____...
 - 1. Commands us to love one another; tells us that love comes from God.
 - 2. Only way to love is to be _____ of God, to know God...
 - 3. God is the giver of love – He abides in us and He is love...
 - 4. Supreme manifestation of God's love for us – sending Jesus as the propitiation for our sins.
 - 5. Our response – We _____ to love (not merely external compulsion...it is who we are)
- VI. **What If We Don't Love As We Should:**
- A. It's possible that we really do not know God...do you know God? Do you believe in Jesus?
 - B. It's possible that we are allowing our _____ to hold sway – we are to walk by the Spirit...
 - C. When we don't love as we should – shows others God is not here or reflects the God we follow!
- VII. **What Does Such Love Look Like: Luke 7:11-13**
- A. First, Jesus _____ her; He noticed her, the one who was in pain.
 - B. Second – He then felt _____ for her; His focus/attention changed upon seeing her...
 - C. Third – He then offers her hope (a true, real hope...) (See Hebrews _____:23-25)