

# The Anatomy of a Church (51)

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[Acts 20:28](#)

(Continuation from 03/01/15)

## The Internal Systems-2

### LOVE

**Only those who are humble can show love.** I'm not talking about the worldly kind of love that is counterfeit and object-oriented. That's the reason many marriages don't last. Worldly love is only an emotion, and when the emotion is gone the relationship is over. **That kind of love seeks only to get and not to give.**

Biblical love is not like that. It's not an emotion; **it is an act of sacrificial service.** It's not an attitude; **it's an action.** Love always *does* something. The words used to describe love in [1 Corinthians 13:4-7](#) are *all verbs*. **Love is an act of service that flows from a heart of humility.**

#### **1 Corinthians 13:1-7 (NASB)**

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> And if I give all my possessions to feed *the poor*, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.

<sup>4</sup> Love *is* patient, love *is* kind *and is* not jealous; love **does not** brag *and is* not arrogant,

<sup>5</sup> **does not** act unbecomingly; it **does not** seek its own, **is not** provoked, **does not** take into account a wrong *suffered*,

<sup>6</sup> **does not** rejoice in unrighteousness, **but** rejoices with the truth;

<sup>7</sup> **bears** all things, **believes** all things, **hopes** all things, **endures** all things.

Biblical love meets people's needs. Jesus says in [Luke 10:27](#), "Thou shalt love ... thy neighbor as thyself." A lawyer replied, "And who is my neighbor?" ([v. 29](#)). Jesus answered with the story about the Good Samaritan ([vv. 30-35](#)). The Samaritan was walking along a road and came upon a man who had been badly beaten. He helped the man and met his needs. Who is your neighbor? Anyone who has a need that you are able to meet. Who are you to love? Anyone who has a need. How do you love him? Meet his need, even if you don't feel an emotional attachment or an attraction for him.

**Luke 10:25-29 (NASB)**

<sup>25</sup> And a lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

<sup>26</sup> And He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?"

<sup>27</sup> And he answered, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND; AND YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF."

<sup>28</sup> And He said to him, "You have answered correctly; DO THIS AND YOU WILL LIVE."

<sup>29</sup> But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

**Luke 10:30-37 (NASB)**

<sup>30</sup> Jesus replied and said, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, and they stripped him and beat him, and went away leaving him half dead.

<sup>31</sup> "And by chance a priest was going down on that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

<sup>32</sup> "Likewise a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.

<sup>33</sup> "But a Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion,

<sup>34</sup> and came to him and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on *them*; and he put him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn and took care of him.

<sup>35</sup> "On the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I return I will repay you.'

<sup>36</sup> "Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers' *hands*?"

<sup>37</sup> And he said, "The one who showed mercy toward him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do the same."

A classic illustration of the humility of love is in [John 13](#). Jesus and the disciples were to have supper together.

**John 13:1-4 (NASB)**

<sup>1</sup> Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.

<sup>2</sup> During supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon, to betray Him,

<sup>3</sup> *Jesus*, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come forth from God and was going back to God,

<sup>4</sup> got up from supper, and laid aside His garments; and taking a towel, He girded Himself.

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The disciples were arguing among themselves about who was the greatest ([Luke 22:24](#)). In those days, people ate meals in a reclining position, which meant that a person's head would be about eight inches from someone else's feet. It was common courtesy for everyone's feet to be washed before they reclined for eating. But no servant was available to wash the disciples' feet. None of the disciples was willing to assume that chore because they were all arguing about who was the greatest.

[Luke 22:24-27 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>24</sup> **And there arose also a dispute among them *as to* which one of them was regarded to be greatest.**

<sup>25</sup> **And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who have authority over them are called 'Benefactors.'**

<sup>26</sup> **"But *it is not this way with you, but the one who is the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like the servant.***

<sup>27</sup> **"For who is greater, the one who reclines *at the table* or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines *at the table*? But I am among you as the one who serves.**

So Jesus took off His outer garment, put a towel around His waist, and washed their feet Himself ([John 13:4-5](#)).

[John 13:4-5 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>4</sup> **got up from supper, and laid aside His garments; and taking a towel, He girded Himself.**

<sup>5</sup> **Then He poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.**

He taught them an unforgettable lesson. When finished He said, in effect, "You're to love one another as I have loved you" ([v. 15](#)).

[John 13:14-15 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>14</sup> **"If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.**

<sup>15</sup> **"For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you.**

How did He show His love For them? Not with an emotional attachment. Probably the only emotion He had was disgust because the disciples were full of selfishness and pride. He showed them His love by meeting their need. Likewise, we should meet the needs of others.

We should meet other people's needs spontaneously and voluntarily. **Our love should be like a reflex from a humble heart.** That kind of heart will always manifest itself. The following is a letter Grace Church received that illustrates spontaneous sacrificial love: (shared with permission)

Some time ago my husband and I had the opportunity to visit Grace Community Church and I want to tell you what your church is like from a visitor's point of view. Our church is large, too, and our motto is, "The church is where love is." I have never felt more welcome anywhere than I did at Grace Church. The people were terrific.

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They treated us like royalty. One gentleman gave me an early morning tour. During the break between the first and second services, I talked with another man for a while. He asked me if I would like a tape from that morning's service. I said yes! A few weeks later, I received not just one tape, but the whole series on Jesus' teaching on divorce. Many of my friends have listened to that series and had many questions answered for them. I just wanted to let you know how wonderful your congregation is.

That is wonderful, isn't it? I know the people she was talking about. The person who gave her the tour didn't really have the time to do that because of his many responsibilities. The person who sent her the tapes didn't really have the money to do it, but that's how love acts. Love flows from a humble heart. Love seeks the comfort and joy of others.