

When Love Facilitates Sin

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

Introduction:

A. 1Cor. 13:4-7

B. It is common to hear folks use love as an excuse for doing harm and committing sin.

1. Some parents use love as an excuse for being hyper-critical or hyper-protective of their children; others use love as an excuse for not correcting or disciplining their children; both raise damaged children.
2. Some mates use love as an excuse for abusing their spouse; others use love as an excuse for facilitating an abusive spouse.
3. Some folks use love to excuse foolish choices and behaviors in themselves and in others; there is nothing romantic about sin.
4. Some young men and women use love as an excuse for seducing others or for yielding to seduction; it is still accurately called fornication.
5. Some use love as an excuse for refusing to practice local church discipline for family or friends; it is no less sinful than using love as an excuse for fornication.

C. Love is one of the most powerful and noble of emotions and motivations; but it will never be powerful and noble enough to justify sin.

I. LOVE AS AN EXCUSE TO DO WRONG

A. A young man says to his girlfriend: "If you really loved me" as a means of breaking down her resistance to fornication.

1. Our culture foolishly equates sex with love. They have never been, nor ever will be the same thing; they are not even necessarily connected with each other.
2. Love can move two people to marry, and in the bond of marriage intimacy takes place; but, sex and love are not the same thing.

B. 1Cor. 13:6 - Love does not rejoice in unrighteousness.

1. Sex outside of marriage is wrong and always will be sin - 1Cor. 6:15-20

II. LOVE AS AN EXCUSE TO PERMIT OTHERS TO DO WRONG

A. The current Presidential administration and the news media speaking in defense of recognizing homosexual unions: "They really love each other, so how can you stand in their way?"

1. It is used to justify unscriptural marriages: "They love each other. You can't ask them to live apart."
2. It is really saying, "We want to do this, so stop calling it sin."
3. Psalm 10:3-4; Prov. 28:4

B. 1Cor. 13:5 - "Love does not act unbecomingly, is not self-seeking" (NASB)

1. Sinners glory in their shame and then call it love - Phil. 3:17-19
2. We cannot give approval to those who sin - Rom. 1:32
3. As Israel deteriorated, they reveled in their sins - Hosea 4:6-11

4. People would rather redefine righteousness than rebuke sin and denounce the suffering it causes - Isa. 5:20-21
- C. Occasionally, members of the church say to the elders: "If we really loved him..." as a means of preventing local church discipline from being practiced.
 1. 1Cor. 5:5
 2. God said, "If we really love him, we will discipline him." I'll take God's objective definition of love over others' subjective opinions on love.
 3. Our culture equates love with the voiding of consequences.

III. LOVE AS AN EXCUSE TO DISMISS ACCOUNTABILITY

- A. Many often say: "A loving God would not send people to hell."
 1. It is so popular a viewpoint that a number of religious groups have taken the doctrinal stance that there is no hell.
 2. Pop culture believes that a civilized and loving people would not practice capital punishment; ironic how that the same people who oppose capital punishment defend abortion. Wouldn't a civilized, loving society want to protect the rights of innocent unborn children?
 3. This misguided form of love wants to forgive people who refuse to repent. What they refuse to understand is that love that withholds discipline, whether for a misbehaving child or an impenitent, erring Christian enables them to persist in their pattern of sin until it becomes an embedded way of life.
 4. Enabling love is unhealthy love. Is it love when we support behavior that will end in harm, pain, and sorrow?
- B. We cannot emphasize love and ignore truth, justice, and salvation.
 1. Rom. 11:22; Ez. 18:24-29
 2. Many folks want God to forgive them when they leave sin behind. But, they also want God to overlook their sins when they leave righteousness behind.
 3. Where is the reward, honor, or fairness in saying faithful children of God go to heaven and so do those who choose sin and shame? If it doesn't matter, why bother being a good person?
 4. Why would God command righteous living if He doesn't care?

IV. TRUE LOVE SERVES GOD AND OTHERS

- A. When people leave righteousness, they leave love behind - Rev. 2:4-5
 1. It is not possible to have true righteousness without love.
 2. It is equally impossible to have healthy love without righteousness
- B. Loving God is manifested by following His will - John 14:15; 1John 5:1-3
 1. True love is about giving in return what is needed and right.
 - a. 1John 4:9-11, 3:16; John 15:12-13
 2. God loves us in spite of our sins; however, God's love does not permit us to remain in our sins, because He knows what sin does and will do to us. All of His works in this matter are concerned with removing our sins from us for our own good.

3. Is it really love when we choose to sin and remain in it, demanding that others accept our sins and the harm they create?
4. Is it really love for others when we accept their sins and allow them to hurt themselves and others and ultimately be lost?

Conclusion:

A. The ancient Greek physician Hippocrates is considered to be the father of Western medicine. He understood the importance of following moral principles in the practice of medicine, and is credited with writing the Hippocratic Oath, which still serves as an ethical guide for today's medical doctors. One key concept of the oath is "to do no harm." It implies that a physician will do only what he thinks will benefit his patients.

The principle of love doing no harm must define our relationships with others in everyday life. In reflecting on the law of God, Paul teaches that love is the intent behind the Bible commands: "Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law" (Rom. 13:10).

Every day that we follow Jesus Christ our Savior, we will be faced with choices that will affect the lives of others. When we choose a course of action, we should ask ourselves, "Does this reflect Christ's love and healthy concern for others, or am I only concerned for myself and selfishly holding onto my relationships at the expense of others greater needs?"