

Self-Sacrificial Love and the Mind of Christ

SUBSTANCE

Our frustration has an explanation.

(And our fears have an answer)

Matthew 6:19-24

The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness! "No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money..."

Matthew 6:31-34

So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Discernment & Sanctification

Discernment:

Our eyes need to be "full of light"

Sanctified *from*:

We need to choose one master and leave another (Mammon/worldliness)

Sanctified to:

We must seek first his kingdom and righteousness



3 Fears:

- 1. I'll become religiously ugly, miserable and mean.
- 2. I'll become weak and naive.
- 3. I won't make it and I'll have nothing.

(the defensive transference of Mammon)

Promise

"To hunger and thirst is to seek him first."
(Dorky, but memorable)

Matthew 5:6

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Matthew 6:33

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Isaiah 61:3

...and provide for those who grieve in Zion —to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor.

Galatians 5:5-6

For through the Spirit we eagerly await by faith the *righteousness for which we hope*. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.

Gracious doesn't mean easy

Luke 9:23-27

Then he said to them all: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self? Whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. "Truly I tell you, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God."

How do we seek his kingdom and righteousness

become people of spiritual substance?

Substance

4 Marks:

- Self-Sacrificial Love
- The Mind of Christ
- Virtuous Freedom
- In Step with the Spirit

4 Practices/Mindsets:

- Welcoming the Ordinary
- Escaping Diversion
- Embracing Discipline
- Belonging to the Formational Community

Self-Sacrificial Love & The Mind of Christ

1. **Self-sacrificial love** is the goal of spiritual substance.

What is the puzzle box top of spiritual substance?

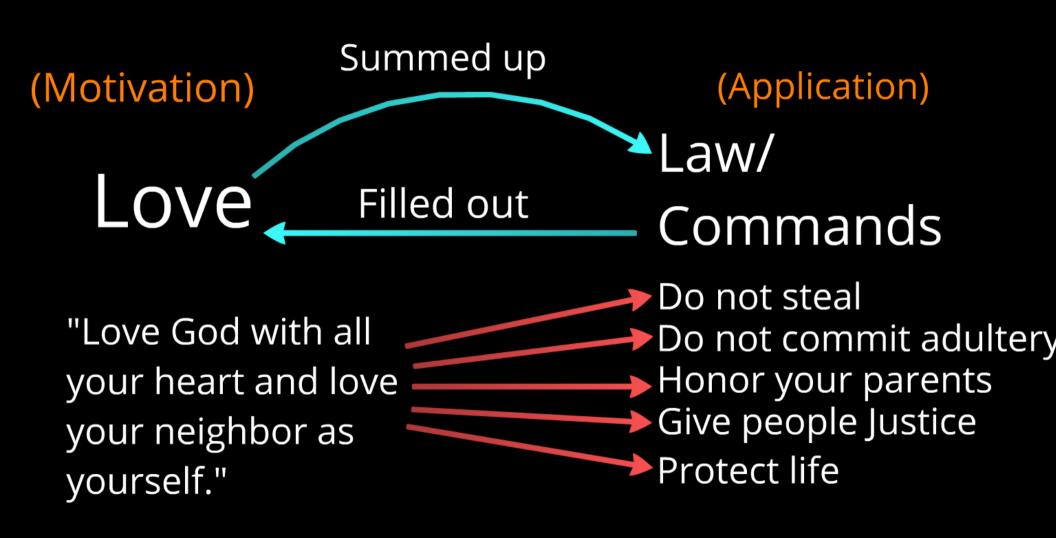
- Difficulty with Jesus: Made into our worldly image.
- **Difficulty with the Bible:** Has a lot of pieces itself.

Love is the summary of the whole law & all the virtues.

Romans 13:8-10

(see also: Gal 5:5-6, 13-14)

Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellow man has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "Do not commit adultery," "Do not murder," "Do not steal," "Do not covet," and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.



So how does Love relate to things other than commands?

Have you ever been asked:

Is love a feeling or an action?

(can you say "reductionistic binary dicotomy"?)

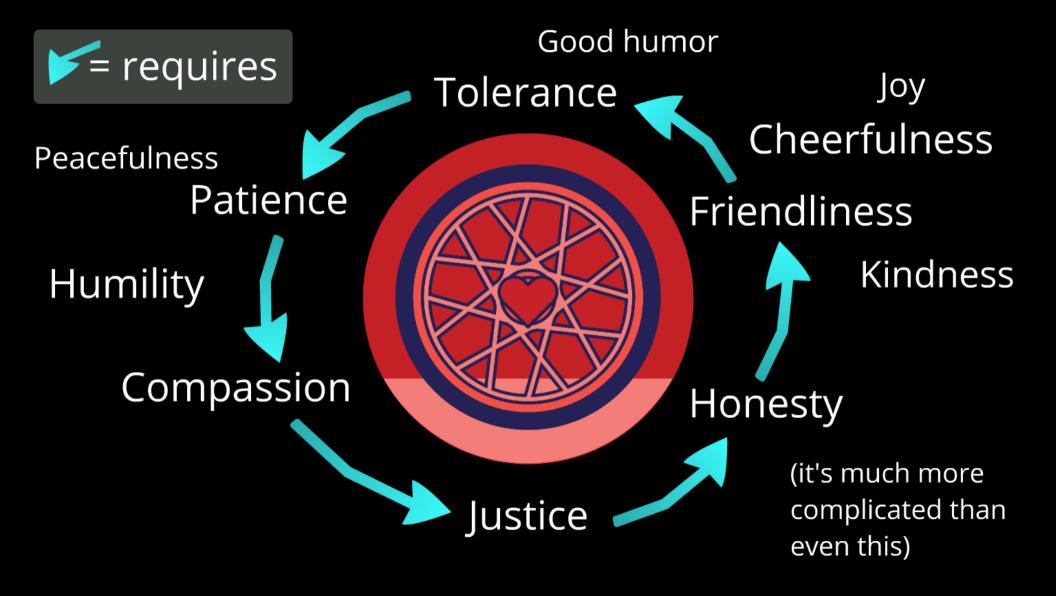
Neither.

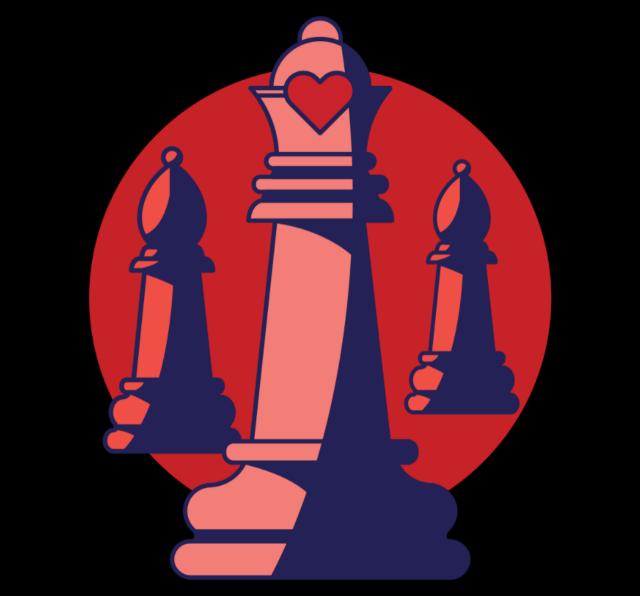
Love is a virtue.

(a mark of character and right being) (a possession of moral strength)



It is the hub of all the virtues.





We've heard (or said ourselves):

"It doesn't have to be this complicated! Can't we just

LOVE EACH OTHER?"

Exasperatingly, it turns out...



Love is the LEAST SIMPLE thing we can do

(deep down you knew this- Love requires SUBSTANCE)

How do we get love back?

We have to learn to think like God.

Having a mind for what he has a mind for...

2. **The mind of Christ** is the sight of spiritual substance.

1 Corinthians 2:14-16

The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit. The person with the Spirit makes judgments about all things, but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments, for, "Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

1 Corinthians 3:1-3

Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly--mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men?

Romans 12:1-2

Therefore, I urge you, brothers [and sisters], in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, 2 but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Colossians 3:1-7

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. **Set your minds on things above**, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived.

2 Kinds of Faith

1. I can't do anything, but Christ must do everything.

- Justification
- Adoption
- Authority
- Resurrection
- Etc.

2. I can be this, because God says I can in Christ, through faith, and by the Spirit.

Gifts of sanctification:

- Applying
- Taking hold of
- Becoming

Philippians 3:12

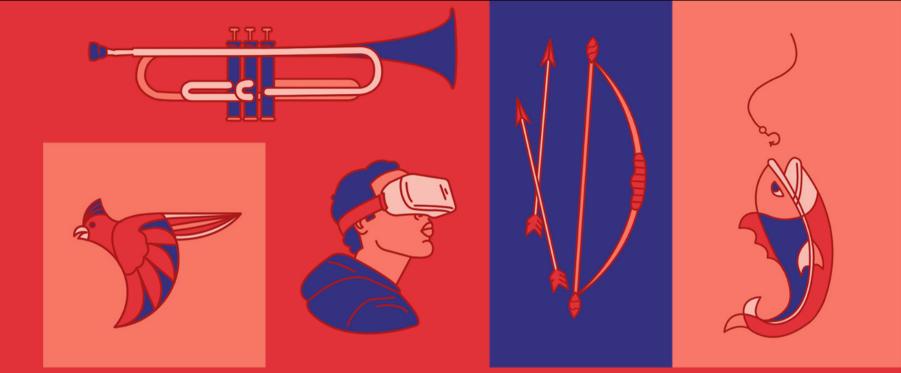
Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.

Make every effort (2 Peter 1:5)

Be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure (2 Peter 1:10)

Hebrews 12:1-2

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And *let* us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.



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