

**SERIES: "CHOSEN AND EXILED"- -5/19/24 (#5)
PASTOR LEE**

LOVE ONE
ANOTHER...

1 Peter 1: 22-25 - Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, (23) since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding Word of God; (24) for "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls (25) but the Word of the Lord remains forever." And this Word is the good news that was preached to you.

As Jesus
LOVES US!

- Pastor Lee offers two complementary passages.....Jesus said: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, you are also to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." (John 1:34-35) He also said: "Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. (John 15: 13)
- Focus today is on V22 and the theme around one word: "LOVE".

Assure Its
Genuine

- We consider ourselves to be a 'church of love'....as a Church and as individuals, we think we do a pretty good job. Yet, there are many of us who live with the fear of being unneeded, separated, lonely.....absent any feeling of real, unconditional love. The word itself is often tossed around frivolously: eg. You hear: "Love is love".....whatever does that really mean?
- Remember, Peter writes these two Books around the time of Nero's Christian persecution, in which the Holy Spirit, through Peter, is guiding with the message: 'BE PREPARED'. In doing so, Peter is cognizant, and overwhelmed, just as prophets were, of salvation and its overriding effect. Ie. We, who were separated from God, were made right with God through Jesus Christ- -who wants us to be holy just as He is holy.

Extending
LOVE---
The Challenge'

- Just as Jesus loves, he wants us, as believers, to love (eg Gal 5:22- -"The fruit of the Spirit is love....."). Peter's message: the result of being a Christian and being obedient to God is love. Considering this conundrum...ie. we 'think we all extend love....but many of us don't feel loved.....a genuine 'dis-connect'! So, **HOW COULD WE AS A CHURCH, AND WE AS INDIVIDUALS** (in roles as spouses, parents, friends, neighbors, etc.) **EXTEND LOVE?** (More than we think we're doing now).
- Pastor Lee uses the story of 'Hitchbot' to underscore the dichotomy of 'professing love' versus real, genuine 'love in action' (ie. After this AI-promoting Robot successfully travels all around the world, Hitchbot wound up in "the City of Brotherly Love"where he was torn to pieces!)
- Back to V22 and the word "SINCERE BROTHERLY LOVE". Ironically, in terms of the robot story, the name "Philadelphia has, at its root, the Greek word 'Phileo' which means: 'to love'.....in a family connotation...we are brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ. We are 'born again'...to the same Father and under the righteousness of Jesus.

Holiness &
LOVE

- Message last week: 1. Obey the Truth (God's Word); 2. Be Holy (as God is Holy), thus having "purified your souls". Ques: How do you know that 'holiness' is starting in your life??.....
Answ: when you start loving people in a way you never did before! (Same phenomena with "truth".....tendency to lie, cheat, be fraudulent spirals down).
- Pastor Lee: In order for us to be a healthy Church, we have to be a group of people wanting to follow the truth of God...which leads to holiness.....which manifest itself in love of others.

What Love

Looks Like-

- V22 ends with 'love one another earnestly (without hypocrisy) from a pure heart'moving from phileo (brotherly) love to an 'agape' kind of love (attempting to mimic the unconditional love God has for us).
- Reference to 1 Cor 13: 4-8 ("The Love Chapter")....heart-warming passage.....God's love is: patient, kind, not envious, boastful, arrogant, rude, or selfish. How can I advantage you even at my own expense...considering others as more important? Continuing: God's love is not irritable or resentful. Also: God's love does not insist on having its own way nor rejoice at wrong doing.
- Our current culture says: love equals tolerance....we say: love God's way which embraces all of the above AND obedience)....so...."tolerance" verses having the courage/faith to call out sin....which represents true, Godly love? So, God's love rejoices in the Truth. We love ALL people.....because ALL PEOPLE ARE MADE BY GOD AND IN HIS IMAGE. God's love hopes and endures all things. All of these notions connect so well to the following:

Made Manifest

Phil 4:8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, what ever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

Applying
These
Principles

- Lets focus on these qualities outlined in all this Scripture.! As a Church, we need to stick together, love collectively and individually, applying all these Godly attributes outlined above...and especially caring for and loving each other! (Pastor Lee gives living examples). As families, and in all our other foundations, we need to do the same. Agape Love! As believers, His love is in your life.....tap into it and watch this love mature!
- Billy Graham: "I am convinced that the greatest act of love one can ever perform for people is to tell them about God's love for them in Christ."

LOVE GOD AND LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS HE LOVES US!