"And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love."
1 Corinthians 13:13

"THE REDEMPTIVE HEART OF THE GOSPEL"

Robert W. Service wrote haunting couplet entitled "The Scribe's Prayer". That is the deep desire of every poet - to write a "radiant ringing line"; just one that shall be immortal. It has been done. A rare achievement. Paul did it; listen!

That is an excerpt from Paul's Hymn of Christian Love. Whole chapter breathes an immortality. Let's study it a little today.

Something Is Missing! "Though I speak..."
Words, words, words. Radio programs, telephone conversations, newspaper columns, political speeches - and sermons. Think of all the words. And without love it is nothing but sounding brass and a noisy gong.

"Though I have gift of prophecy and understand all mystery..." All our knowledge, all our scientific approach, all our effort to abolish mystery, all our wisdom amounts to nothing without love.

And all our philanthropy, and all our social service, without love, amounts to exactly nothing. "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor..." Hard words! But Paul's.


According to Paul, missing ingredient is love. Without that, human knowledge, human power, human kindness is as nothing.
This Love - Agape

Love is the missing ingredient. Love is the lost chord of life. It is the absence of this love that makes life go to pieces and blow up. Without it, words turn into a brazen, meaningless clamor, and life without it equals - nothing.

Paul says, "Greatest thing in world is love." What is this love? All goes back to character of God. God loves. God is love. "God so loved the world that He gave..." A great text; have not dared to preach from that verse. But story, long story behind it. Say the words so glibly - John 3:16; fail to realise the pain and the purpose behind it.

It's about a wandering tribe of Hebrews who during famine trekked down to Egypt. Became slaves and suffered. Then Moses helped them defy Pharaoh and they marched off through sands of desert. Forty years in desert. At last settled in tiny land. Then later into exile. Sang songs by waters of Babylon. A few of them returned to Jerusalem and built the city.

Centuries later a boy sat reading in Nazareth. The carpenter's Son. Poring over the past - Isaiah, Jeremiah. On hills at nighttime in fellowship with God. Comes to realization He is the promised Messiah. He leaves bench and village and goes out to do something about life. Healing brokenhearted; cleansing lepers; casting out evil spirits; preaching Good News of the Kingdom.

Then after three short years His remorseless enemies made a Calvary and crucified Him on a Cross. And why did all that happen - because "God so loved the world". In the crucifixion we have a revelation of the love of God. In some strange fashion, we believe that God suffered with His Son - just as fathers always suffer with sons.
All that happened on Calvary happened because God loved the world. All roots in the character of God - God is love. Not a benevolent grandfatherly kind of God; but a God of stern, inexorable and splendid love. Was a love that was positive and outgoing - it went the lengths of Calvary. It was a redemptive love. And that is the love Paul is talking about - not some tender emotion; but a love that tears at evil with its own hands - a love that gives and redeems.

A Positive, Outgoing Goodwill

We are called to live in terms of that love - in terms of positive outgoing goodwill. Jesus said "This is my commandment that ye love one another as I have loved you".

This love is more than mild-mannered gentleness. It is more than merely letting bygones be bygones. It is more than merely living the Golden Rule - Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you even so do unto them". It is more than just a Good Neighbor Policy of mutual helpfulness and reciprocity. It is more than just dribbling out some cast off clothing and a few parcels for the underprivileged. It is more than just merely liking people. It is a deep, unutterable love, a redemptive love that goes out to all people and to all storm-tossed lives. It has a passion for all the torn and bleeding life of the world. It cares passionately for others for their own sake.

"We live in an unideal situation"."We have irritating friends, exasperating neighbors, unethical rivals". "It's easy to sit and listen to all this on Sunday morning in church, but to-morrow is Monday. When the
emotion has evaporated and the little bittersomenesses return, what then?" "Where's all the love coming from? It isn't natural."

And you are right - it isn't natural. We are fundamentally selfish. We are egocentric. By nature we are self-assertive. This out-going love, this positive and redemptive love is not natural - it is above nature; it is a thing of grace, born in the heart of the spirit of God. Love is of God.

Which is another way of saying that we need more of God in our lives, and this world needs more of God. And unless we as individuals get nearer the redemptive heart of the Gospel, unless we get nearer heart of God, our lives will be uncreative and barren and disappointing and unhappy. And if our world fails to discover this redemptive love, then there is no hope for it.

You say, will it work? I say, God help us if it won't. But it will. Love is the only thing that can save us ultimately. "And now abideth faith, hope, love; these three; but the greatest of these is love".
"Grant that I may, O Lord, ere rest be mine,
Write to thy praise, one radiant, ringing line"

-Robt. W. Service

"We have taught people how to read, and we have the "talkies" and the 'tabloids'. We invented the radio, and listen in our homes to the music of savages and the prejudices of mobs. We gave them unprecedented wealth - miraculous automobiles, luxurious travel; only to find that peace departs as riches come, that automobiles override morality, and connive at crime. We dreamed of socialism and find our souls too greedy to make ti possible. We dreamed of emancipation and find corrupt machines and murderous gangs; these are the instruments with which we poor intellectuals planned to build Utopia".

Today, Samaritan would have deferred poor man to Council of Social Agencies in term-salent. Would have died. Instead he did something himself. There was concern. And love."
Prepare to Live

Many a person would tell us that the all-important problem today is not to prepare to live but to prepare to die. These prophets of doom call attention first of all to the atomic bomb and to the appalling possibilities of bacterial warfare. They ask whether you are ignorant of the fact that we are in the midst of "a race with catastrophe." Whether you have read the book, *Five Minutes to Twelve*. Whether you know that in view of the potentialities of atomic rocket bombs, scientists have expressed the opinion that "death is forty-five minutes away." Whether you are aware that some authorities are convinced that if war is not outlawed and peace placed on a permanent basis, it is quite possible that within five years ninety per cent of the people of the United States will have been destroyed, together with a corresponding number of our cities, our industries and commerce. Our civilization will then virtually be wiped out.

Of these and similar predictions and warnings we have both heard and read. Nevertheless, or perhaps, just because of this, the emphasis, especially among the Christians, must be on preparation for living. For to him, living pertains to both time and eternity. If a man has learned the fine art of Christian living, he is prepared for life on earth and at the same time is assured of living with his God in all eternity.

Living as the Christian thinks of it, is not to "eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die." Rather it is to be concerned about walking with God and with the age-old problem of living and getting on with your neighbor in every human situation and relationship. It is on this basis we want to think about preparing to live.

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ORDER OF MORNING WORSHIP

Enter in Silence - Wait in Reverence - Unite in Worship

ORGAN PRELUDE - "Fugue on the 'Kyrie'", Couperin
"Grave", "Adagio", Mendelssohn
INTROIT - "Grant Me True Courage, Lord", Bach
INVOCATION - By the minister
HYMN 381 - "The church's one foundation", Aurelia
S URSUM CORDA:
Minister: Lift up your hearts.
People: We lift them up unto the Lord.
Minister: O Lord, open thou our eyes.
People: That we may behold wondrous things.
Minister: O Lord, open thou our lips.
People: And our mouth shall show forth thy praise.

DOXOLOGY - To be sung by all

RESPONSIVE READING - 36th Sunday - page 603
GLORIA PATRI - APOSTLES' CREED

SCRIPTURE LESSON - 1 Corinthians 13, sschn Ah
ANTHEM - "But the Lord is Mindful of His Own", Mendel-
PASTORAL PRAYER - LORD'S PRAYER
OFFERTORY - "Larghetto", Handel
PRESENTATION OF OFFERINGS AND TITHES
HYMN 173 - "Holy Spirit, truth divine", Mercy
SERMON - "The Redemptive Heart of the Gospel"

HYMN 147 - "Ask ye what great thing I know", Hendon
BENEDICTION - By the minister

ORGAN POSTLUDE - "Allegro Maestoso Vivace", Mendelssohn

* Interval for Ushering

SEPTEMBER 7, 1947 - CALENDAR FOR TODAY

10:30 Morning Worship. Sermon, "The Redemptive Heart
of the Gospel". Anthem by the Fremont Choir.
10:30 Church-time Cherub Hour.
11:55 Church School Hour. Classes for all age groups.
5:30 Youth Fellowship. Covered Dish Supper followed
by election of officers. All youth invited.
7:30 Union Evening Service at Trinity Episcopal Church
with the Rev. Arthur W. Jennings, Emmanuel Baptist
Church, Albany as the preacher. This service
will be the Baccalaureate Service for the graduating class of the Littauer Hospital.

The altar flowers are given by Eli Smith in loving memo-
y of parents and wife.

THROUGH THE WEEK

MON. 11:00 Weekday School; grade 10.
6:00 Council of Churches dinner and meeting.
7:00 Boy Scouts dinner and meeting.
TUES. 7:30 Fremont Choir rehearsal.
8:00 Anna Mosher Class meets at the church.
WED. 7:30 Weekday School; grades 4, 5 and 6.
7:30 Mid-week Service; everyone invited.
8:30 September meeting of the Official Board.
THURS. 6:00 Venner Class corn roast at Kennedy Camp.
6:30 Epworth Workers covered dish at church.
8:00 Berean Class meets at the Y.W.C.A...
FRI. 11:00 Weekday School; grade 9.
1:00 Weekday School; grades 7 and 8.
6:30 Douglass Class supper and meeting at church.
7:45 DISTRICT RALLY for youth and adults at the
Trinity Methodist Church, Albany with Bishop
G. Bromley Oxnam as the main speaker.

OUR BEST Wishes are extended to Miss Davis as today she
begins her ministry in our church and midst.

Visitors are urged to sign the guestbook in the hallway.