

The Vistoso Voice

Friday, May 13, 2022

Weekly

BAPTISM AND SPECIAL MEMORIAL WEEKEND SERVICE—PLUS

I am looking forward to our worship service and fellowship on Sunday May 29th because we have so much to celebrate.

During the Service

Our service will be a time of remembrance and baptism:

- **Remembrance.** During our worship service we'll have a brief Memorial Day meditation. We will follow that by engaging in the ultimate memorial—the Communion remembrance of the person and work of our Savior.
- **Baptism.** We will conclude our service by celebrating the other ordinance of the Church—believer's baptism. This will be the perfect way to close our study in Romans for the summer, for the sixth chapter of Romans is the theological truth behind the practice of baptism.

Note. If you have questions about baptism, or are feeling the Lord's leading to be baptized, join us for a brief class on Friday May 20th at 10:00. We will go over the theological significance of baptism and address any questions you might have on the practice of baptism here at VCC.

During the Fellowship

During fellowship following the service on May 29, we will celebrate the two ends of ministry:

- **Welcome.** First, we are going to welcome Michael and Kathy Haltom as they begin their time of ministry here at VCC and Michael takes up his position as our new Associate Pastor.

- **Thank You.** Equally important, we will celebrate and say thank you to Don Collier, as he steps down from Deacon ministry after eight years of faithful ministry at VCC.



So as you are able, join us for this special time of worship and fellowship on May 29!

In His grace,
Kevin Redig



OUR GOSPEL CULTURE AND LOVE

We recently spent some time discussing what it would mean to have a *Gospel Culture* here at VCC. Specifically, this would mean that, as a church fellowship, we are fully engaged in reaching the lost and the transformation of those saved and, in turn, these things would occupy our thinking far more than the culture of the world around us. This past week, in reading our daily devotional for May 9th and 10th, I was struck by how much we need to connect the content of I Corinthians 13 to our understanding of the Gospel Culture that God is trying to produce among us. So in case you didn't make the connection, or don't follow the devotional, we are reproducing these two days with certain modifications

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thisweek

May 16-22, 2022

- **Tuesday**, 10:00 am, the last session of Roadblocks to the Gospel study.
- **Wednesday**, 2:00 pm, choir practice.
- **Thursday**, 1:00 pm, Love Thy Neighbor gathering.
- **Friday**, 7:30 am, Men's Bible study in the fellowship hall.
- **Friday**, 10:00 am, Baptism Class with Pastor Kevin.
- **Friday**, 10:00 am, Women's Share, Care, and Prayer.
- **Sunday**, 10:00 am, worship service with choir followed by fellowship and sermon Q&A.

Vistoso Community Church

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Office Hours: Tuesday-Thursday:
10 am-2 pm;
Friday: 8 am-12 noon

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OUR GOSPEL CULTURE AND LOVE (CONTINUED)

to fit the point I am hoping to make. I trust we will all come under conviction to make application to the culture that others see as they watch our beliefs fleshed out in practice.

Read I Corinthians 13

It is so common to hear the 13th chapter of I Corinthians read at a wedding that those not familiar with the Bible no doubt think the context must be marriage. How compelling to note that the real context is Paul showing the Corinthians how they are supposed to act towards one another in the Church! They are not to be squabbling over whose gift is better or who is more spiritual, but acting in the *more excellent way* defined by Chapter 13.

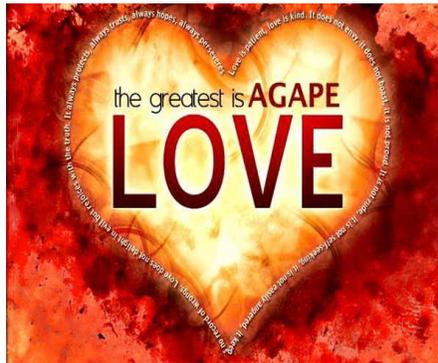
That's not to say that the chapter doesn't have application in the context of marriage and family—for it most certainly does. I just want you to realize that the actual context for this magnificent passage is the normal way we are to interact with one another in the Church! This is just another example of how much God cares about the testimony of the Body of Christ to a watching world.

List the qualities associated with love as listed in I Corinthians 13:

Love is patient, kind, does not envy, does not boast, is not puffed up (proud), not rude, does not seek its own (demand love in return), not easily angered, thinks no evil, does not rejoice in iniquity, rejoices with the truth, always protects, always trusts, hopes and perseveres. Love never fails . . . Now, abide faith, hope and love these three, but the greatest of these is love.

I Corinthians 13:4-8, 13

Now our first point of understanding is that this is not meant to be an exhaustive list of qualities, but rather a representative list. The characteristics mentioned establish a category into which many other qualities can be placed. For example, we could add compassion and gentleness to the list. God is love, and what it means to have character like His is not limited by a finite list.



Second, let me give you a working definition of love. It is an abstract term, so you may find a definition to be helpful: Love, the *agape* kind of love of I Corinthians 13, is an active pursuit of what's best (in terms of priority) for another. In short, this is a selfless focus upon another. In fact, focus on self immediately negates the ability to truly love another. This kind of love is also very personal in nature.

Read I Corinthians 13 Again

Although the context of I Corinthians 13 involves behavior in the Church, I want us to expand it today to other areas of application. Here is my thesis:

Love, as described in I Corinthians 13, is a litmus test for the Christian!

What is a litmus test? In analytical chemistry, litmus paper is coated with a chemical that, when placed in any liquid, can

immediately tell you if that liquid is an acid or a base. So then, a litmus test is any means by which something can be quickly and easily tested and an accurate result determined.

Based upon our context, if you find I Corinthians 13 love abounding in a church, that Church is operating as God intended. Now let's expand our testing. If you find this kind of love in a marriage, then it is highly likely that marriage is functioning as it should. The same is true for the family setting. Although the qualities associated with *agape* love are provided in I Corinthians 13, let me also remind you of our working definition:

Love (agape love) is an active pursuit of what's best for another.

This kind of love is so unusual, especially in contrast to the selfish love of the world, that should it be found in an entire body of believers (and it should be), it would have an astounding evangelistic thrust. How do I know this? Consider John 13:34-35:

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

Of course, you won't be surprised that of the five words for love in the Greek language, the word for love used in John 13 is exactly the same one that is used in I Corinthians 13.

So, if what is begun in the Church spills over into our marriages, families, and extended families, what a mighty testimony VCC would have to the transforming ability of the Word of God and the Spirit of God!