

Refrigerator Notes 03 May 2015

'Fear of Love'

1 John 4:7-21 (v.18)

1. V, 18 says, "There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives our fear, because fear has to do with punishment."
2. Yet, the scripture tells us that there is no fear of God's judgment because genuine love confirms our salvation
3. God's standard of love is defined in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 –where love always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always preserves" and never hurts on purpose
4. Yet, the greatest commandment that Jesus gave us was "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this 'Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these."
5. Unconditional love for our fellow sister and brothers is the greatest gifts that the Holy Spirit gives us
6. Because we are of the flesh, we self-sabotage ourselves when it comes to loving ourselves or others
7. Lisa Firestone, Ph.D. says there are seven reasons most people are afraid of love or developing meaningful relationships with others – (including God)
8. Real love makes us feel vulnerable – we are defenseless sheep, vulnerable and the more we care the more we hurt (it is an example of our first love that did not work out)
9. Love stirs up past hurts (the ways we were hurt in previous relationships have a strong influence on how we perceive others when we get close to them, including our childhood relationships with family and friends)
10. Love challenges an old identity (the feeling of being unlovable, hurt emotional or physically)
11. With real love comes real pain (love is not always perfect, but it can be with patience)
12. Love is often unequal (we need to love without placing a value on the things we do for one another – we also love family, friends, children, parents at various levels that are different from the love of a significant other)
13. Relations can break your connection to your family – empty nest syndrome, death of a significant other, the thought of another becoming independent and not needing your love, etc.
14. Love stirs up existential fears (the more we have, the more we have to lose, the more someone means to us, the more afraid we are of losing that person (we become the doormat)
15. Jesus greatly expanded the scope and importance of love, saying love of God and love of fellowman are the most important of all the commandments
16. The point DPC is that if we learn to love ourselves first it becomes easier to love others as well as God