

SECOND PETER CHAPTER 1

Lesson 13

CHARITY

31 October, 2014

Add to your faith...charity.

Love: To lay down your life for someone else. It is a complete sacrifice of self-will and self-interest for the wellbeing and betterment of others without any demand or any expectation of return. Love can be demonstrated by saved and unsaved people.

- Love can fail. It can come to an end between a man and a woman, a parent and a child, and other friendships.

Charity: This is love—but in the KJV, this word is only used to describe the love as demonstrated by *saved people*. Lost people cannot manifest charity. That distinction is removed in modern bible translations.

- Charity never fails: The reason charity is exclusive to saved people is because it is the love of Jesus Christ working in and through us toward others. God's charity never fails.
 - Side note: Some have taught that charity has more to do with giving. But charity is love and LOVE is about giving. **"For God so LOVED the world that He GAVE..."**

1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Believers who only have knowledge, but not charity, are at risk of becoming "puffed up" (sinfully proud). If you can skillfully point out the errors in somebody's religion because of your great knowledge, but you don't have the charity to help them come OUT of that vain religion and into a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, your knowledge didn't bear fruit. It just made your head big.

Don't let your Christians liberty harm or mislead another person. There are things we ought to abstain from, even though we know it is lawful for us to eat, drink, or participate in. Why? Because some lost soul or weak Christian who is observing us, may be offended and view us as a hypocrite, rendering our testimony for Christ powerless.

The charitable Christian will always consider others: "How will my actions affect someone who doesn't know what I know?" (1 Thess. 5:22).

Colossians 3:1-15 It is important for the Christian to "**put off**" all the bad things they used to do, but that is not enough. That leaves you spiritually naked and prone to pride ("I don't do this, I don't do that).

After that, you must "**put on**" the GOOD things (mercy, kindness, humbleness, meekness, longsuffering, forbearance, forgiveness).

"Above all these things put on charity (vs. 14)." This is "**the bond of perfectness**" in the body of Christ. Without it, we are like a disease in the body, hurting and hindering the body. We must always consider others and how our actions will affect the body.

First Timothy 1:5 If charity ruled your heart, there would be no need for commandments. Knowledge of commandments isn't the end of the matter; charity is. You've got to get beyond the commandments to caring about others more than yourself.

First Peter 4:8 **“Charity shall cover the multitude of sins.”** If you have knowledge of a brother or sister's sins, you won't broadcast that information. The goal is to help that person get victory over the sin and get back on track. Charity will enable you to keep it to yourself and be a help in the situation because this is what you do for people you love.

Second Thess. 1:3-4 When the charity of ALL the members of the church abounds, it is reason to give thanks.

First Corinthians 13 There is a great contrast between works—and works done in charity. In fact, if the heart is not right, the works will not be right.

Many gifts of the Spirit “shall fail” (vs. 8), but not faith, hope, and charity (vs. 13). Of those three abiding traits, **“the greatest of these is charity.”**

We need to be diligent about adding charity to our faith. We ought to love people the way God loves them. Charity is something that will not fail you.

Don't limit your charity to only the people you already get along with. If you want to ADD charity—you'll have to exercise it on people who are difficult to love.

Second Peter chapter 1 lays the foundation for chapters 2 and 3.

- Chapter 1: get your heart right so it rules your thoughts and actions.
 - Chapters 2 and 3: False teachers, false living, false doctrine are coming.
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Become so diligent in the pursuit of these spiritual traits that people look at you and think you're crazy!