***Decorating the Cross, Pt.4***

**1 Corinthians 13:8** 3-14-21

*Bottom Line: Love is not an important part of our walk with God, it is our walk with God.*

**Introduction:**

A. We would all have a difficult time talking without cliches in our communication.

1. A cliché is a saying or idea that has become overused to the point of losing its original meaning and even becoming irritating. That’s hitting the nail on the head!

2. What was originally regarded as striking, lost its force through overuse! A famous French poet said, *“The first man who compared a woman to a rose was a poet, the second an imbecile.”* He could sure spin a phrase!

3. Usually they are metaphors, analogies, or sayings.

B. We have our own church cliches! Almost catechisms!

1. Preaching cliches:

2. Prayer cliches:

C. Have familiar scripture become cliches? Lost meaning?

1. John 3:16 is the heart of the gospel. Overused?

2. “Love never fails” 1 Cor.13:8 – elicit yawns?

D. IS, ISN’T, ALWAYS, and now NEVER. Only one! Why?

1. Never is an absolute! Always might have exceptions!

2. Never means it is the umbrella over all the others.

E. Two simple questions: Why does love never fail? & Why does love fail? Contradiction? Let’s see…

**1. Why does love never fail?**

A. Paul has already explained it to us.

1. Love is the greater gift, the most excellent way, and greater than even faith & hope!

2. Love is the ONLY way service glorifies God! Vs.1-3

3. Love is patient and kind and how God wants love shown. Always right & true: at work, home, car, & church!

4. Love means that envy, boasting, pride, rudeness, self seeking, anger, record keeping (grudge), & delighting in evil are NOT THERE! Vs.4-6

5. Love can be counted on to protect, trust, hope, and persevere! Vs.7

6. Love lasts! Vs.8-13 Perfects, mature, & is godly

B. Love never fails because God is love! 1 Peter 4:19 in the NLT. *“So if you are suffering in a manner that pleases God, keep on doing what is right, and trust your live to God who created you, for he will never fail you.”*

**2. Why does love fail?**

A. Never only applies if love is present! It can disappear.

B. Satan wants love to fail, and he is good at it! Individuals and for entire church families

1. He turned a top priority into an extracurricular activity! Optional!

2. He separated doing church from loving one another!

3. He buried love in the garbage of doctrinal correctness!

Vs.13 says love is first. 1 Peter 4:8, Peter did too!

**Conclusion:**

A. We all love the Beetles singing, “All you need is love.”

B. So true, but we must understand that Paul is talking about godly love. It is what God wants!

**Bible Study for Sunday, March 14, 2021**

**Decorating the Cross: 1 Corinthians 13:8**

1. What are some cliches that you use a lot?

2. What are some of your favorite church-life cliches?

3. A cliché is an overused saying that has lost its meaning. Are there some Bible verses that have become cliches? Why?

4. In 1 Corinthians 13, Paul’s description of love includes only one thing that qualities as a “never”. Why is there only one?

5. How does “love never fails” impact the meaning of vs.1-3?

6. Is there a connection between love being patient and kind, and love never fails?

7. What does “love never fails” tell us about all of the things that love is not? (vs.4-6)

8. The biggest reason why love never fails is because of what? Who?

9. Why is love seen by many Christians as an extracurricular activity?

10. Is it possible to be a faithful “church goer” and not see the need to grow in love for one another? Why does that happen?

11. What are some things that you think have been given a higher priority than love in the church? Why?

12. Why, or why not, is it true that “The single most important and defining characteristic of a church family is love?”