

“LET LOVE BE WITHOUT DISSIMULATION”

Recorded in Romans 12 is a list of characteristics and qualities that must be practiced and embodied in every Christian. The list begins with the admonition, “let love be without dissimulation” (Rom. 12:9). The word, *dissimulation*, means hypocrisy or deception. Sadly, the apostle Paul knew that some individuals would put on a “show” of love but would have ulterior motives prompting their actions. The apostle Peter reminds, “seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto *unfeigned* love of the brethren, see that ye love one another *with a pure heart* fervently” (1 Pet. 1:22, emphasis B.G.). The word, *unfeigned*, means true, bona fide, or sincere. An unfeigned love is one that is not just for “show,” rather it is one that is exhibited “with a pure heart.” The Christian should want to love one another and should desire good (as defined by God) for others.

The Scribes and Pharisees showed forth a hypocritical or deceptive love. They would walk around parading their “faithfulness” to God by making “broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi” (Mat. 23:5-7). Jesus rebuked this superficial performance proclaiming their love for God, saying, “all their works they do for to be seen of men” (Mat. 23:5). One Pharisee stood proudly in public “and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican” (Luke 18:11). Jesus responds, “every one that exalteth himself shall be abased” (Luke 18:14).

Some people feign or pretend to love someone in order to get something in return. After performing a miracle to feed more than 5,000 people, a crowd stalked Jesus to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. “Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek Me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled” (John 6:26). Jesus performed miracles to prove that He was the Son of God, the Savior of the World. Rather than seeking Jesus because He alone could save, these individuals sought him to fill their physical (not Spiritual) needs and desires. Many today seek a “Church” not to receive Spiritual nourishment from the Word of God, but to fill their social and physical desires of having “stuff” to keep the kids occupied while the adults socialize and “catch up” on the news (or gossip) of the day. This crowd, like the one mentioned in John 6, practices a love full of dissimulation. Further, many faithful Christians have been taken advantage of by individuals who they thought were their friends. Peter warns of false teachers (and wicked people in general) who, “through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you” (2 Pet. 2:3).

Jesus is our perfect example. Jesus’ love is without dissimulation. He left Heaven and put on a body of frail and feeble flesh and bone (Heb. 2:16-17). He “was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Heb. 4:15). He suffered and died the cruelest of deaths in order to save man from sin (1 John 2:2). He did these things with a pure heart and a true love for mankind. “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). True love is demonstrated by actions. Jesus says, “if ye love Me, keep My commandments” (John 14:15).

Let our love be without dissimulation. Let us “love one another *with a pure heart* fervently.”

- Brad Green

