

The Practical Matters – Part 6: Tough Love

1 Corinthians 16:13-24; Coast Community Church; Earl Miles; 5-12-2024

Happy Mother's Day

The theme of good motherhood is love and that is also the theme of our message today in light of 1 Corinthians 16:13-24.

- The Courage of Tough Love*: To love as God calls us to love, it takes a heart of courage in action.
- The Submission of Tough Love*: To love as God calls us to love, it takes a heart of submission according to God's design.
- The Satisfaction of Tough Love*: To love as God calls us to love, it takes a heart that is satisfied or pleased with God.

1. The Courage of Tough Love (13-14)

To love as God calls us to love, it takes a heart of courage in action.

Five (5) present imperatives (commands for continuing action or lifestyle) in these two verses!

- 'be on the alert'* = 'Work hard at staying awake or alert to danger!'
- 'Stand firm in the faith'* = 'Don't move away from the gospel of Jesus Christ!'
- 'act like men'* = 'Act courageously in the face of danger!'
- 'be strong'* = 'Be made strong by God's grace!'
- 'let all that you do be done in love'* = 'Let love be the motivation for all you pursue, the atmosphere in which you live, and the goal or end of all you do!'

The Courage of Jael – Judges 4:17-24; 5:24-27. Only two women in Scripture are referred to as 'most blessed among women': Mary, the mother of Jesus, and Jael! Both were courageous in action. One to bring about a death to save (the nation through a tent peg)! One to bring about a death to save (through a birth leading to the cross)!

Application: We can't love as God calls us to love without courage in the face of opposition and suffering and danger. But this can be tough to do! We need to pray for grace to act courageously in loving others and not simply avoid offending people or avoid our own suffering. (Psalm 27:11-14)

2. The Submission of Tough Love (15-18)

To love as God calls us to love, it takes a heart of submission according to God's design.

- 'devoted'* = 'To make it your business to serve a particular group in a particular way!'

- *'ministry'* = 'To be involved in lowly service for high purposes!'
- *'I urge you'* = 'Don't fail to do this!'
- *'to be in subjection to such men'* = 'Fix yourself under their direction for the sake of love!'
- *'acknowledge such men'* = 'Know who they are and their value to the body of Christ!'

The Submission of Sarah – 1 Peter 3:1-6. Submission to imperfect leaders according to God's design requires fearless submission to God rooted in a hope in God, not in the leaders themselves!

Application: We can't love as God calls us to love without a readiness to submit to others as God has designed. But this can be tough to do! We need to pray for grace to be ready to submit to others according to God's plan for the church and the family and society even when we are uncertain about the ability and wisdom and spiritual maturity of those we are called to submit to. (Ephesians 5:18-21)

3. The Satisfaction of Tough Love (19-24)

To love as God calls us to love, it takes a heart that is satisfied or pleased with God.

- *'greet'* = 'Show warm affection and respect to them and welcome them into your life!'
- *'If anyone does not love the Lord'* = 'To be pleased with Him and live to please Him!'
- *'he is to be accursed'* = 'Let the Church beware of him and, if he does not repent, let him be rejected by the God of love that he has rejected!'
- *'maranatha'* = 'Our Lord Jesus come and judge all men and usher in the kingdom of heaven on earth!'

Mary's Being Pleasured with God – Luke 1:26-38. Mary was told that she would carry the Messiah (she was not asked to) and she was pleased with God in it!

Application: We can't love others as God calls us to love without submitting to and being pleased with God's sovereign providence over our lives. But this can be tough to do! Being pleased with God in all circumstances is not the same as being pleased with all the circumstances themselves. It is an act of faith in the God who promises to fulfill His good purposes and to keep His good promises and especially to save sinners in the exaltation of His Son. We need to pray for grace to trust God's heart even as we see His hand at work in the world, whether producing good or permitting evil and suffering that He intends for good. (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)