

For the Love of the Church—Priorities in Ministry

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I. Introduction.

- A. Text: Acts 20:1-17.
- B. Paul had tremendous love for God's people. (Ephesians 5)
- C. Jesus came to redeem the church and Paul came to serve it.
- D. Paul wanted to see the church become what it was meant to be because he loved Jesus.
- E. God is glorified when the church is maximizing its potential. (Ephesians 3:20, Colossians 1:24)
- F. Paul's love is defined as self-sacrifice.
- G. The heart of it all is to love the church.
- H. There are six things that express Paul's love.

II. His affection.

- A. Paul drew the believers to himself.
- B. People felt like they could affectionately embrace Paul. There must have been something warm about him if they could embrace him in this manner.
- C. We ought to express our love towards one another. (Romans 16:16, 1 Peter 5:14)

III. His giving.

- A. Paul was all over the place collecting an offering. He chased all over collecting money for the needs of others.
- B. Paul did not ask others for a thing. (1 Corinthians 13, 1 John 3:16)
- C. Loving is inseparably tied to giving. (2 Corinthians 8:20)

IV. His teaching.

- A. Teaching was central to the early church. (1 Timothy 4:13)
- B. Preaching is minimized today.
 - 1. There is a loss of belief in the authority of God's Word.
 - 2. Many people react to professional pulpitness.
 - 3. The church has been invaded by media, music and testimonies.

4. The church is spiritually malnourished.
5. The church seeks out pastors who are primarily counselors and social workers.
6. The church has become identified with a community organization.

V. His persistence.

- A. Love pursues its objective.
- B. Love moves against all odds.

VI. His availability.

- A. Paul preached until midnight knowing that he had to travel the next day.
- B. He gave himself all night.

VII. His concern.

VIII. Addendum: addressing Seventh Day Adventism. (Galatians 4, Colossians 2:14)

Application Questions:

1. Why is it important to show people some sign of physical affection?

2. What role does learning how people receive love play in loving people? Explain.

3. How can you best love the church with your gifts or without them?
