

THE POWER OF LOVE

By Bill Irby

“THE POWER OF LOVE”

Huey Lewis and the News had a number one hit with a song by this name from the soundtrack to the movie *Back to the Future* (1985). You may remember some of the lyrics: It don't take money and it don't take fame, Don't need no credit card to ride this train. Tougher than diamonds and stronger than steel, You won't feel nothing till you feel...the power of love. Allowing for the fact that it is, after all, rock and roll, it is difficult to argue with the primary thesis of this little ditty. Love is a powerful thing.

Of course, I am relatively sure that Mr. Lewis and his co-writers had in mind the love that exists between a particular category of human beings, that being males and females. Indeed, many songs have been written on this important subject. Love has great power in this area, so much so that God saw fit to provide us ample instruction on the matter (see, for example, Genesis 2:24, Ephesians 5:22-6:4, Matthew 19:1-12, Hebrews 13:4, and the Song of Solomon).

Love's power extends beyond relationships between men and women. It is an essential power with the ability to transform life. All (and I do not overstate, I mean all) of the tragic friction between people on this planet today would be eradicated by the practice of real love.

I will return to this contention in a moment. First, let us remember that God is love (1 John 4:8). Let us also remember that love is the greatest thing (1 Corinthians 13:13). Remember, too, that love motivated God to save us (Romans 5:6-8). And remember that God taught us about love by loving us first (1 John 4:19).

Now, back to the idea that love is the solution to all this worlds man-made problems. I do not contend that love can help with the weather or natural disasters, but it can help us deal with the aftermath thereof. I do hold the view that if people would allow themselves to be motivated by love our problems with each other would vanish.

I know that this sounds a little like a hippy-dippy sixties philosophy. But it is not. Love was then and still is hijacked by folks who want to make love something it is not. Love does not demand the cessation of morality, not does it remove righteousness. Indeed, real love is the perfect manifestation of living right, pure and true (read 1 Corinthians 13).

Take, for instance, two related and difficult examples, terrorism and gangs. The last first: I was in Nashville recently and heard on the radio about a shooting at Opry Mills Mall. The announcer said that rival gangs had after each other and violence ensued. I recognize that it is naïve to talk about solving the gang problem with love. People who gravitate toward these aberrant patterns of behavior are not generally open to discussions about love and the greater good. Instead they are wrapped up in an unloving orientation toward “me, myself, and I.” That said, it is undeniable that if these people knew and practiced the rules of love (again, from 1 Corinthians 13) such foolishness would cease.

Terrorism is tearing the planet apart. We know that the motivation for terror is hate. The Shiites hate the Israelis and so do the Sunnis. The Sunnis hate the Shiites. Radical Islam cannot be called a religion of love, no matter how fervently the Imams argue that it is. If all such folks would love each other, these repetitive tragedies would cease. They wouldn't even have to like each other. They wouldn't have to agree. They would, however, in the spirit of Matthew 7:12, have to treat each other with respect.

I know gangsters and terrorists will not reform. But I also know that if they did, the power of love would make this world a much better place to live. Pie in the sky?..... Absolutely! But I am sure that love is still the only effective ultimate answer to the problems of the world (John 14:15).