

Pastoral REFLECTIONS

July 7, 2024

God Is Love

A four-year-old girl, hugging a doll in each of her little arms, looked at her mother and said, “Mama, I love them and love them and love them, but they never love me back.” One of the most challenging things about love is that loving someone never guarantees being loved back. This is because a person cannot love without giving. Giving or sharing is the essence of love.

There's a joke about a young man determined to win the affection of a lady who refused to talk to him anymore. He believed the way to her heart was through the mail, so he began writing her love letters. He wrote a love letter every day to this lady. He increased his output to three notes every twenty-four hours when she didn't respond. In all, he wrote her more than seven hundred letters. His perseverance paid off, albeit unexpectedly—the lady married the postman.

Loving someone is easier when the giving is shared. Even though this is true, it still does not demonstrate the true nature of love. The Bible teaches that God is love (notice not love is God; 1 John 4:7). This means that the nature of God determines the nature of love. So, it is not until God loves (John 3:16) that mankind desires to love after accepting this gift. This is why a believer needs to obey God. Obeying God shapes our nature (Romans 12:2; Galatians 2:20) and determines the fruit we bear (Galatians 5:22). One of the fruits is love. This is how we know if a person is truly saved and is a true disciple of God by the fruit they bear (John 13:34-35). "You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes nor figs from thistles, are they? So every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit So then, you will know them by their fruits." (Matthew 7:16-20; NASU)

Many people can demonstrate various characteristics of love, but not everyone, by their very nature, can consistently display love. A person can be kind, but not necessarily forgiving. So, they are kind to people as long as they do not cross them. They must be loved back. As a result, their love fails. The nature of love “bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.” (1 Cor. 13:7). The nature of love is determined by the nature of God. This is why to love God leads us to love others whether they return the favor or not (Matthew 22:36-40). We should not love because of what others do; we must love because of who God is.



UPCOMING Events

Leadership Retreat 2024
JULY 17TH - JULY 20TH
19333 David Memorial Dr, Shenandoah, TX 77385
ELDERS | PASTORS | DEACONS | DIRECTORS | STAFF | MINISTRY COORDINATORS
Register by Sunday, June 30th 12:00 p.m. at <https://bit.ly/LWFCLeadershipRetreat2024>

LEADERSHIP RETREAT—JULY 17TH-20TH
Calling all elders, pastors, deacons, directors, staff and ministry coordinators, please register for the Leadership Retreat by today, Sunday July 7th. Register at <https://bit.ly/LWFCLeadershipRetreat2024> For more information, contact Pastor Duane Lawrence at dlawrence@lwfellowshipchurch.org

LWFC KIDZ/LEGACY YOUTH ORCHESTRA WORKSHOP
JULY 8TH - JULY 12TH
Are you a LWFC Kid or a Legacy Youth? Do you play an instrument? Join us for an Orchestra Workshop the week of July 8th-12th from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. each day. The week will end with a party on Friday, July 12th from 12:00 p.m.—2:00 p.m. featuring EPIC Ministries. Register for Orchestra Workshop at <https://bit.ly/4c45hPP> For more information, contact Sylvia Edwards at sedwards@lwfellowshipchurch.org

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CENTER FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING
JUNE 25TH - AUGUST 6TH
From Pain to Promise
FOR MORE INFORMATION ON CLASSES VISIT WWW.LWFELLOWSHIPCHURCH.ORG/CENTERFORCHRISTIANLIVING

CENTER FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING
EVERY TUESDAY UNTIL AUGUST 6TH
Living Word Family join us for Christian Education classes and Bible studies every Tuesday at 12 p.m. & 7 p.m. until August 6th. Classes for Men, Women, Young Adults, Youth Kidz & Recovery & Restoration. Visit the events page of the website or contact **Jordan Washington** for more information at jordan.washington@lwfellowshipchurch.org

SUMMER TECH SERIES
YOUTH/ADULT HTML WEB DESIGN CERTIFICATION
JULY 12TH 6:30PM-8:30PM JULY 13TH 8:00AM-3:00PM
REGISTER ONLINE TO ATTEND <https://bit.ly/5D18QXV>

FREE HTML WEBSITE CODING CERTIFICATION CLASS
Living Word on July 12th-13th join our Two-Day HTML Website Coding Certification Class. Youth Ages 16+ and Adults come and receive FREE HTML Website Certification. Get Job Skills, Enhance Your Resume, and Learn how to code websites and receive FREE Certification. Please bring a laptop, tablet or mobile smart phone. If you do not have any of these devices, please still come and contact **Shani Smothers** at shani.smothers@lwfellowshipchurch.org

CPR Training
AUGUST 24 9:00AM-12PM
HOSTED BY THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION
\$65 PER PERSON • MUST REGISTER BY AUG. 11 • OPEN TO ALL AGES
"Be the heart to save a life"
Register before & after each worship service or contact Mrs. Lulu Hayes for more information at luluhayes1@gmail.com

CPR TRAINING—AUGUST 24TH 9AM—12 PM
Have you ever wanted to be CPR certified? We have a CPR certification course coming up August 24, 2024 from 9 am to 12 p.m. Must register by August 11, 2024. Cost is \$65 per person. Receive CPR, AED, and First Aid Certification. To register, contact **Lulu Hayes** for more information on Sundays after service or at luluhayes1@gmail.com



ORDER OF WORSHIP

Announcements

Communion

Worship In Giving

Offering boxes are located at all perimeters under crosses

Special Music

“Grace”
1 Corinthians 15:9-11

Click “Sermon Notes” on the Website

Call to Discipleship
Please remain seated at this time

Visitor’s Welcome

Benediction

LWFC KIDZ

Children are now required to check-in upon arrival. Please report to the registration desk located in the children’s wing.

Infants—6th grade



MIDDLE SCHOOL - HIGH SCHOOL

2:30 4:00 & TUESDAY NIGHTS

SUNDAY 7:30 PM

Grace
1 Corinthians 15:9-11

A. Reflects (v. 9):

- 1. Paul was not physically in Christ’s presence while Christ walked on earth with His disciples. For this reason, Paul views himself as needing to receive less (like very little) recognition among the brethren than the other disciples.
- 2. In preaching to a church that challenged Paul’s authority and integrity, Paul states that because his call to apostleship was unlike the other disciples, he did not feel adequate to be considered the same way as the other disciples.
- 3. Paul’s past constantly plagued him, especially when those in the church community had to respect his authority after this very person persecuted them horribly.
- 4. People will oppose God’s power and authority, but God, especially in the midst of these circumstances, allows this to expose our faith (Revelation 2:8-11; 3:7-13) and eventually convert or remove our enemies or enemies of the church. This works for our blessing (1 Peter 3:8-17).
- 5. When the Lord saves us, He transforms us into a brand new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17), deposits a spiritual gift (1 Peter 4:10), and all of the Holy Spirit into us (Titus 3:4-6), providing to us all spiritual blessings (Ephesians 1:3-4). We now have the inner ability to walk in His might (Ephesians 3:16; 6:10), enabling us to “do all things through Christ” (Philippians 4:13). However, we have a choice as to whether we “work out our salvation,” (Philippians 2:13), as we battle the sinful nature of the flesh (Romans 6:12-14; 7:14-25; Galatians 5:16-19) or walk in the Spirit (Ephesians 5:15-18). If we choose the Spirit, we must renew the mind (Romans 12:2), control our tongue (James 1:26; 3:2-12), manage the eye (Matthew 6:22-23), and focus on “whatever we do in word or deed bring glory to God” (Colossians 3:17). Even though our past life may have been filled with horrible sinful acts the transforming, powerful work of the Holy Spirit makes new again.

B. Heals (v. 10):

- 1. Paul, as a believer, struggled with the flesh (Romans 7:14-25), even having a thorn in the flesh making him weak; his history dominated how people viewed him, even the disciples, to the point in the passage he would say ‘he is the least of the apostles.’ Paul accepts that he is weak (2 Corinthians 12:7-12), and no matter what he achieved in this life, when it interferes with his walk with Christ, he counts it as lost (Philippians 3:1-7). Paul now accepts who he is because it only energizes him to be faithful to his call.
- 2. God’s generous favor towards Paul blessed the very community he persecuted because Paul worked intensely hard to serve God to the point of being poured out like a drink offering (2 Timothy 6:6-8).
- 3. Paul decided once and for all to work to the point of exhaustion, no matter how difficult the circumstances he encountered (2 Corinthians 11:21-29; 1 Timothy 6:12).
- 4. God’s matchless grace should inspire us to love and serve Him, not make us apathetic so that we sin more (Romans 6:1-2) or live a carnal Christian life (1 Corinthians 3:1-3).

C. Inspires (v. 11):

- 1. Because of the powerful work of the Holy Spirit, who mightily worked within Paul, he was able to habitually proclaim with a very loud voice the Word of God to everyone. He discharged the office of a herald continuously for the glory of God.
- 2. What the Lord did for us should make us more passionate about serving Christ.
- 3. How does what God did for us powerfully affect others so that their faith in Christ grows to such a deep conviction that their lives are transformed, thus inspiring others to do the same?

Summer Reading Fun! Drop Everything & Read!

Friday, July 12th 12:00 – 2:00 p.m. Legacy Sanctuary
7350 W. TC Jester Blvd. Houston, TX 77088

EPIC

ARE YOU READY FOR SOME FUN?

High-Energy Games
Hilarious Mascot Skits &
A Powerful Gospel Message

For more information, contact Sylvia Edwards at sedwards@lwfellowshipchurch.org

COUNTY CONNECTIONS IS FUNDED IN PART BY HARRIS COUNTY, CASE FOR KIDS, AND HARRIS COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION. THE PROJECT IS BEING SUPPORTED, IN WHOLE OR IN PART, BY FEDERAL AWARD NUMBER S8RPP1806 AWARDED TO HARRIS COUNTY BY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

JULY 12TH	YOUTH / ADULT	AGES 16+
6:30 PM-8:30 PM	HTML WEB DESIGN CERTIFICATION	
JULY 13TH	YOUTH / ADULT	AGES 16+
9:00 AM-3:00 PM	HTML WEB DESIGN CERTIFICATION	
JULY 27TH	GOOGLE SUITE & LWFC FORMS	ALL AGES
10:00 AM-2:00 PM		
AUGUST 24TH	YOUTH CODING CAMP	AGES 12-18
9:00AM-3:00 PM		
AUGUST 24TH	CANVA WORKSHOP	ALL AGES
10:00 AM-2:00 PM		

REGISTER ON THE EVENTS PAGE OF THE WEBSITE & FOR INFORMATION ON TECH WORKSHOPS AND MARKETING CONTACT MARKETING@LWFELLOWSHIPCHURCH.ORG

PRAYER REQUESTS

Grieving: Bailey Mier-Nava & family, Nikisha Doyle & family, Nathan Harvey & family, the family of JoeAnn Hayes, Mignette Dorsey & family, Deidra McKoy & family, and Nedra Chew & family.

Health and Healing: Lurlean Lane, Florence Wiggins, Retha Amos, Margaret Baptiste, Cici Sharpe, Eunice Johnson, Jeffrey McQueen, Eric White, Pat Crawford, Birdie Williams, Tanisha Collins, Jon Heard, Rutha Patrick, Kevin Carey, Sherri Love, Elizabeth Clarke, Clara Williams, Kathryn Ford-Cheatham, Anthony Thomas, Beverly Austin, Joshua Williams, Ruby Hunter, Elizabeth Bean, Patsy Gatterson, Joyce Newsome, Arleatha Housley, Patrina Johnson, Elvis Anderson, Cheryl Walker, Walter Banks, Carolyn Hadnot, Angelique Hudson, Sheryle Crowe, Arnie Glover, Clarence Coleman, Joyce Denman, and Diana Doyle.

Grace

1 Corinthians 15:9-11