46-13-11-Practicing the Perspective of Love

love, good, evil, discerning, maturity, childish, childlike

1 Cor 13:6

Spiritual maturity depends on practicing Love’s perspective.

INTRODUCTION:

—[In *The Great Divorce*, C.S. Lewis describes a bus-load from Hell visiting Heaven’s outskirts. The interactions between these visitors and their former acquaintances, who come down to meet them, clearly show why the two places are divorced. But the contrast really isn’t between two locations. It’s between two differing attitudes.]

—To apply the Love Chapter, we must discard unloving attitudes and adopt loving ones. This means distinguishing between childishness and childlikeness, so we can “put childish ways behind” us and embrace Love’s maturity. 1 Cor 13:6 clarifies this distinction between two viewpoints as opposite as night and day, or as separate as Heaven and Hell: Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

—Practicing the presence of love and the peace of love will bring us the perspective of love. How does Jesus, the Prince of Peace, Who lives inside us, look at life? How does the Holy Spirit, Who makes our bodies His temple, perceive our daily attitudes and activities? Because “God is love” and lives within us, we already have full access to Love’s attitudes. But HOM.idea. To think as Love does, we must abandon...

I. Our Childish Delight in “evil” Viewpoints

A. If the Love Chapter describes God Himself, and we already know He “does not delight in evil,” why is this phrase even needed?

1. Maybe we don’t yet view holiness as we should. [Visitors from Hell in *The Great Divorce* didn’t seem so “evil” at the story’s beginning.](Sin may not look so bad, until seen in the light of the Cross.)

2. God reminds us in *Isa 55:9*, “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.” (I believe He says this not to put us down, but to lift us up. God’s will is to raise us from our low ways to walk in His high ways.)

B. The latent fruit “of the knowledge of good and evil” in fallen humanity leads us to make moral evaluations and decisions on our own.

1. By that same fruit, our first parents traded childlike receptivity to God for childish moral independence from God. (It was deadly!)

2. Instead of rising to God’s perspective on “good and evil,” they fell
II. A Childlike Delight in Our Union with Truth

A. At the outset of our Christian lives, we rejoice in learning a creed.

1. God nurtures us with many doctrinal facts and theological truths to establish us in the faith. (Yet His ultimate intention is not for us to make those foundational areas our static preoccupation.)

2. God’s goal for us is to be like Him, especially in His attitude described in v.6. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. (He wants His views on “good and evil” to become our perspective.)

   - **Heb 5:13-6:2.**
   
   Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil. Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

B. Maturing in the Christian life is evidenced by a heart that “rejoices with the truth.” (This is not talking about doctrinal truth but Truth the Person, Who told us, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.”)

1. As we grow spiritually, we become increasingly enthralled with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (His indwelling presence in us not only lets us see everything around us through His eyes, but also leads us “to distinguish good from evil.”)

2. Age has nothing to do with it! (There’ve been young believers who got to the “solid food” stage of growth in Christ and were exercising Love’s discernment, while those who led them to Christ were still making the “elementary teachings” their only focus.)

**CONCLUSION:**

- Spiritual maturity depends on practicing Love’s perspective. If our adult views are shaped by a past childish “delight” in bad attitudes or in “evil” habits, these must be discarded. A “delight in evil” and the joy of union with our indwelling Savior cannot co-exist. “God is love,” and He’s forever drawn the line dividing these opposing attitudes. Let’s each be one who “rejoices with the truth” on the right side of the line with Love.