

When Love Rejoices (I Corinthians 13:6)

We have already seen how I Corinthians 13 challenges our fallen ideas and narrow definitions of love and nowhere more forcefully or bluntly than in verse 6 - "love does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth." Perhaps this "word" on love reveals more clearly than any of the other verses whether our understanding of love is more cultural or more Christian. To take these words seriously would lay an axe to the root of much that is wrong-headed and destructive in our society.

...it would devastate the entertainment industry that celebrates deception, put downs, violence, sexual distortions - much of the "stuff" that television, video games, movies and even music are fueled by.

...it would revolutionize national and international political systems - if there is no cause for joy in oppression of the weak, abuse of the poor, tactics of "shock and awe", the rape of the land and its resources, we should be mourning and grieving our despotic and "democratic" systems.

...it would revolutionize what we call "humor" - what we think is fun or funny (you can tell a lot about a person by what they'll laugh at!). Love cannot rejoice in what degrades another because of their gender, race, sexuality, nationality or intelligence quotient.

...it would transform our idea of friendship entirely. If we think friends who love us are people who would never question our life style, never confront our choices, never judge our actions - in other words, "rejoice in what makes me happy" - then our "love" is a spineless counterfeit that doesn't care enough for others to tell them the truth.

Paul is making it clear that Love finds no joy in anything that breaks God's heart. Unrighteousness is not merely about breaking rules, but that which breaks Gods' heart. God knows the destruction that unrighteousness brings. Unrighteousness is simply anything that violates the nature of God who is love. Whatever is un-loving is un-righteous, and therefore, nothing to rejoice over!

Love rejoices in the truth - in what God says - because God never says what is unloving, what is contrary to His nature. Love, then, can never be neutral in matters of truth. It has no truce with error, with sin, with unrighteousness. Love will, at times, fight with someone in order to fight for them.

To defend truth without love can make us harsh and destructive. To love without the strength of truth can make us soft and vacuous. We are called to look out for one another with the eyes of loving truth, never rejoicing when one we love turns to unrighteousness, ever rejoicing when righteous and loving truth leads the way.



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GREETINGS

I often think of the many friends and supporters of OIC, both old and new. Many of you have been with us from day one (now midway into our third decade), loving and encouraging us, praying for and supporting us. Some of you we have just recently met, yet are no less dear and caring.

Together, we operate as one in Christ. Desirous to know Him and be ever refined in our expressions of Him. Sharing the conviction that He alone is adequate for all He calls us to be. In agreement that it is no longer "just us", but Christ in us.

His Spirit has invited (compelled!) us to share this part of our eternal journey together. Some of us are "up front" - out in the open. Some of us "behind the scenes" - yet all of equal value in proclaiming the great good news of the fullness of the gospel.

Thanks for being a part of our journey!

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 *For friends who journey with us*

 *For opportunities to proclaim the Truth*

 *For CCF full time pastor*

 *For loving truth to be our guide*

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