

THE MISSING PIECE

By: Donald G. Leavell

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails (1 Corinthians 13:1-8).

For many years I have prayed to truly understand what love is. One might say, “how is it that someone who has lived for more than seven decades is still praying and searching for this understanding?” For many of us, there has always been a missing piece in our comprehension and apprehension of this mysteriously missing piece to our lives and relationships. Almost always when one loses something, he misses it, but how does one miss what he does not know is lost or that he never fully grasped? Could it possibly be that there has always been a missing piece to understanding love in many of us, if not all of us? What is this much needed and often talked about thing called love? Everyone speaks of it in one form or another. Novels, poems, and songs are written about it. We even produce movies about it, yet we do not understand this mysterious phenomenon. Love is that one quality that we always seem to be reaching for in order to understand it more fully, but often tragically miss it. It is my view that we all have this missing piece in our lives—love. In our relationships, we search for that element, that thing, that perfection that somehow is rarely found. What is this missing piece? The missing piece of love is love itself!

When we were newlyweds, my wife wanted us to see a movie called *Love Story*. There was a line in the movie where the young wife says to her husband, “Love means never having to say you’re sorry.” Those words have stayed in my mind for many decades. I may not have, to this day, understood what the speaker was trying to say, but the meaning is much deeper than the average viewer would imagine. Today I have the courage to tackle its real meaning: when love has been consummated in our hearts, we will cease to hurt those whom God has given us to love. Jesus has never hurt me! From my first awareness of Him until now, He has always been my greatest comfort and comforter! *This* is what love is! The Holy Spirit says through Paul, “**Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy [...] is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails**” (1 Corinthians 13:4-8).

This amazing quality called love is not a thing we find but is the reality of One person: Jesus Christ! When we search for love with our whole heart, He will be found by us! He is that missing piece! In other words, the missing piece of love is the full expression of Christ in you!

With Love,
Pastor