

EXPOSITORY NOTES.

by

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Υπερ in Gal. 3:13.

A recent theological journal contained an article expressing astonishment that any one should be found who still held to the horrible substitutionary theory of the atoning death of Christ. Now I am very far from thinking that this theory exhausts the full significance of the offering of Christ for human sin. A reference to Heb. 9:14, to go no further, is sufficient evidence of that fact. But, to my mind, it cannot be successfully denied that Paul taught the substitutionary conception of the death of Christ. One may discount Paul, if he will, but the fact is clear to one who is willing to see the facts. This passage in Gal. 3:13 is enough of itself to put the point beyond controversy. In verse 10 Paul has said that those who trust to works of law *ὑπὸ κατάραν εἰσίν*. To be justified by law (*ἐν νόμῳ*) one must keep all the law and this no one can do *παρὰ τῷ θεῷ* (verse 11). Hence all who look for relief *ἐξ ἔργων νόμου* remain *ὑπὸ κατάραν*. But we are not without hope: *Χριστὸς ἡμᾶς ἐξηγόρασεν ἐκ τῆς κατάρας τοῦ νόμου γενόμενος ὑπερ ἡμῶν κατάρα* (verse 13). See Paul's picture here as drawn by the prepositions *ὑπό*, *ὑπερ*, *ἐκ*. We are *under* (*ὑπό*) the overhanging curse suspended above us like a Damascus blade. Christ comes in *over* (*ὑπερ*) us, between the curse and us, and himself receives the punishment meant for us, himself becoming a curse (*γενόμενος κατάρα*). He not simply receives the penalty of the curse, but in a mystic sense becomes a curse, is regarded as a curse. Thus (*ὑπερ*) He purchased (*ἐξηγόρασεν*) us *out from under* (*ἐκ*) the curse of the law *under* (*ὑπό*) which we had rested. He paid the debt and we go free, to use the figure of paying the purchase money of slaves of which Paul is so fond. It is almost the picture of the auction block. Christ pays the price of the slave and the law has no further claim. We are purchased by Christ and He sets us free. Cf. Gal. 4:5; 5:1. See I Cor. 6:20; 7:23, *τιμῆς ἡγοράσθητε* where *τιμή* is the price of a slave. The price paid by Christ is His own blood. Deissmann (*Light from the Ancient East*, pp. 327f.) finds numerous instances of this idiom in the papyri and the inscriptions which record the

sale of a slave. In a Doric inscription at Delphi B. C. 200 we find *τιμᾶς ἀργυρίου μνᾶν τριῶν καὶ ἡμιμναίου* as the price of a female slave Nicaea. To come back to Gal. 3 : 13. Christ did all this *over* (*ὑπέρ*) us, we read. We were *ὑπό* the curse ; He came *ὑπέρ* us ; He thus took us *ἐκ* the curse. We go free for Christ bore the curse in our stead. In Jo. 11 : 50 *ὑπέρ* is expressly explained as meaning instead. The use of *ὑπέρ* in the sense of "instead" is very common in the papyri and the ostraca (Deissmann, Light, etc., pp. 122, 153, 335). Cf. *ἔγραψεν ὑπέρ αὐ (τοῦ) ἀξιώθεις διὰ τὸ βραδύτερα αὐτὸν γρά (φειν)*. See also *ἔγραψα ὑπέρ αὐτοῦ μὴ ἰδότης γράμματα* P. Oxy. 275 (A. D. 66). In itself *ὑπέρ* does not mean "instead" nor does *ἀντί* nor *πρό*. But it is unscholarly to say that *ὑπέρ* is not used where "instead" is the resultant idea. There is thus no reason to deny this idiom in II Cor. 5 : 14f.

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I CORINTHIANS XIII.

The Apostle Paul devotes three chapters of his First Epistle to the Corinthian church to the discussion of spiritual gifts, which was then a most important and all-absorbing theme. There was a great diversity of gifts during the apostolic era, but all were bestowed by the same Spirit. They were specially needed before the momentous problems of Christianity were solved and the New Testament Canon completed.

In the 12th chapter Paul tells what they are, and gives their classification. In chapter 13 he presents the ruling principle in the exercise of these gifts and in all the course of life, while in chapter 14 he shows the superiority of prophecy to the gift of tongues. Chapters 12 and 14 are not very clear in their doctrine and meaning, while some of the teaching seems to have a local and temporary application. But the intervening thirteenth chapter sends forth a clear note for all ears and ages. It is like a sparkling diamond in a cavern, a shining star in the dark, a calm, sweet day between two nights, a veritable Mount of Transfiguration in the general landscape. What the 55th

Psalm is to the Psalter, the Canticles to the Old Testament, the 13th chapter of 1 Corinthians is to the New Testament. It is the Psalm of Love for the Christian dispensation.

The variety and grades of gifts in the Corinthian church aroused feelings of jealousy among the brethren. Many wished to be the head, few cared to be the hands or feet. In the close of the 12th chapter Paul tells the Corinthians to covet earnestly the greater gifts that they may be of the greatest service to others, and then promises to show unto them something still more excellent than even the gifts of the Spirit. The author in this section does not simply present a contrast between gifts and love, but also a contrast between the exercise of gifts in love and without love.

I. THE NECESSITY OF LOVE. Verses 1-3.

Without love all we may do or suffer is nothing, but with it all life is beautified and ennobled. It occupies a position in the Christian life altogether unique and indispensable, for it cannot be replaced by even the greatest gifts of the Spirit. Hence it has not been inappropriately styled "The greatest thing in the world." To show clearly the necessity of love, the Apostle mentions several things most highly prized by the Corinthians, and says that if they exist apart from love they are unprofitable.

1. *The Gift of Tongues.* The Corinthians cherished great admiration for eloquence, and for the power to speak in languages never studied. They had a special temptation to put the miraculous gifts of tongues above the quiet but potent life of love. They exalted a silver tongue above a loving heart. Speaking in unknown tongues is less valuable than living in love with God and man. An angel's voice is not equal to a loving heart. Words, even when improvised by the Spirit, are harsh and inharmonious, as mere sounding (echoing) brass or

elanging (violently confused and obtrusive) cymbals, unless a heart of love give force to their utterance. By them a man is profited nothing as to salvation; he has no reward from God, though men may bestow upon him their vain and gilded compliments. The ever-shining star of love is better than the meteoric flourish of eloquence.

2. *The Gift of Prophecy.* Prophecy was a much coveted gift of the Spirit in the early Church, but did not imply the possession of a soul which loved God with all its strength. Even Saul prophesied with the true prophets of God, yet in the end was left to go the way of his unloving and unlovely heart. To prophesy is a special gift, while to love is a fundamental principle. Hence the life of love is greater than the gift of prophecy.

3. *The Comprehension of Mysteries.* In this section mysteries refer to the deep things of God that have been made known by divine revelation. Men from Old Testament times have been endeavoring to comprehend the profound doctrines of salvation and divine providence. It is right thus to exercise our minds, if we do not neglect to love God supremely, and the souls of men unselfishly.

To understand the significance of the "wheels" in Ezekiel and the "beasts" in the Revelation is not as important as to love the brotherhood. Should all of these be accurately interpreted and the mysteries of Melchisedec thoroughly solved, everything would be wholly useless if the heart be not warmed by the holy fire of love.

4. *The Possession of all Knowledge.* This is clearly allied to the understanding of mysteries, but is more comprehensive. If the whole range of knowledge open to the inquiry of man could be grasped, its horizon completely compassed, so one could understand all things in the universe, and yet love be absent, the giant scholar would make life a tremendous failure. Universal scholarship is inferior to Christian love. All cannot be learned, but all may be loving and lovable.

5. *A Wonder-Working Faith.* A faith which works miracles is not as great as a love which silently moves to noble living. Probably Judas wrought miracles as well as John, but the former was a traitor, while the latter was the loving disciple. A wonder-working faith may not be a saving faith, but a loving soul is one where the Father and the Son come to live.

The Seventy rejoiced that demons were subject to them in the name of Christ, but Jesus told them rather to rejoice because their names were written in heaven. Love gives a heavenly basis for joy which the mere power effectively to command mountains to be removed into the sea can never afford. It is better to love than to work miracles; faith may transpose mountains, but love transforms hearts.

6. *Unbounded Generosity.* The Judge in the last day will emphasize the good deeds performed in behalf of men for the sake of Christ. (Matthew 25.) Yet it is important to look at the heart which prompts to acts of apparent goodness, for it is possible for one to give all his earthly goods to satisfy the hunger of the poor (literally, dole out in bits), and yet lose the crown of life. Heaven cannot be bought. The crown of righteousness is not for sale. We cannot buy our way into heaven. We must love our way thither. He who gives to get shall not receive, but he who loves and gives shall have great reward.

7. *A Martyr's Death.* The stake is not an infallible test of salvation. The gate of martyrdom is not necessarily in the way to heaven. Christ is the way, the truth and the life. The body may be burned and the soul not saved. The crown of martyrdom is very bright, but the crown of love is infinitely brighter. It is possible to die for a religion whose vital principle has never ruled the life. Self-immolation is not synonymous with spiritual self-denial. It is better truly to live for Christ than merely to die for Him. It is better to let the fire of Christian love burn in the heart than for the flames of martyrdom

to consume the flesh. Love, then, is the one absolutely indispensable condition of the proper exercise of the gifts of the Spirit, is superior to everything else in the world, and is necessary to render our services acceptable to God and our lives a real blessing to man.

II. THE QUALITIES OF LOVE.. 4-7.

1. *Negatively, or what Love is not.* In describing the essential nature of love, we shall consider it negatively and then positively.

(1) Love is not envious. Literally, "love does not boil over" with hatred at the good fortune of others, but rejoices with them who do rejoice.

The spirit of envy was often manifested among the Corinthians. Those of meagre gifts were tempted to be jealous of those more generously endowed. But envy and love are wholly antagonistic, for "love envieth not." Love can look on the brother with ten talents doing a noble work for the Master, and thank God for his achievement. It can see honors bestowed on others while it walks through the Valley of Humiliation. It can, while uncrowned, behold a diamond resting on another's head, and not grow heartsick. With a penny in her hand, love can rejoice with the millionaire. Love can work in obscurity and rejoice with those whose deeds are made known to the world.

(2) *Love is not Haughty.* "Love vaunteth not itself," "is not boastful," arrogant or insolent. It does not delight in the display of its gifts. It has a modest air, and is never self-important. It does not walk boldly to the front seat, for love will sit anywhere and do so unostentatiously.

(3) *Love is not Vainglorious.* "Love is not puffed up," is not "inflated" like a pair of bellows or a balloon. It is solid, not gaseous. Love is never pompous, however rich its treasures of heart, head or life. It is willing for

its light to burn, but never flourishes a lantern to call attention to itself. Its tongue is not swift in its own praise, lest men should fail to discover its real merit. Love is not nervously anxious about its reputation. It does nothing through strife or vainglory, but in humbleness of mind esteems others better than itself.

(4) *Love is not Discourteous.* "Love doth not behave itself unseemly," is not indecorous, not impolite. The idea in the original is *deformity*, hence out of harmony with the established method of conduct. Love is not iconoclastic. It has regard for rational customs and forms of social and religious life. Brusqueness is not essential to piety. To violate the proprieties of life, and to wound the feelings of others out of a pretense of speaking out just what you think or acting out what is in you, are doubtful signs of Christian love. Love has respect for another. It never sets at naught a brother; it seeks to do all things decently and in order. It dictates universal etiquette, not for superficial society, but for the noblest brotherhood.

(5) *Love is not Selfish.* Love seeketh not her own exclusively, but lives for others, is utterly altruistic. Selfishness and love cannot dwell in the same heart, for love acts without undue thought of self, not that a man acts without any regard to his own soul or destiny, but he never pursues a course which will injure others, while on the stepping stones of their ruined selves he moves on to fortune. Love looks not only on its own things, but also on the things of another, and that not to behold imperfection, but to render assistance. Love is not self-seeking, but self-sacrificing. Love is not a miser, but a giver.

(6) *Love is not Irritable.* Love is not provoked. Literally, "love does not go into paroxysms." It does not fly into a rage. It controls the rising temper, that it may not reach the boiling point. Love has something besides nerves. It does not belong to the sensitive-plant species.

Love does not have much acid in its constitution. It does not try to say sharp and cutting things. It never seeks to exasperate. Love and anger cannot long abide in the same heart.

(7) *Love is not Retaliative.* Love thinketh no evil. Literally, "does not compute the evil" that exists, much less magnify it. Love does not cherish malice toward anyone. It does not rashly impute the evil that is reported, but puts the best construction possible on unkind rumors. It does not make a mental memorandum of evil done, but lets it pass by unrecorded. It refuses to be a bookkeeper, for it dislikes to register the debit column. It does not treasure up wrath and threaten the offender with a day of reckoning. It refers vengeance to God and tries to overcome evil with good.

(8) *Love is not Indifferent.* It rejoices not in iniquity, or rather it rejoices not upon or over righteousness. When a question of right and wrong is raised love cannot be neutral, nor does it take the side of the majority when that is in the wrong. In no case can love rejoice in unrighteousness. The wicked may flourish, but love cannot rejoice in their unholy devices and ungodly successes. It sees that iniquity ruins the soul, and so can never be glad when unrighteousness prevails. Love can never find joy in any imperfections and sins, though they be found in the life of an enemy. It is love's grief, and not its joy, to see iniquity abound.

2. POSITIVELY. WHAT LOVE IS.

(1) *Love is Long-suffering.* It quietly and passively abides the crisis. Love is slow to wrath, and prolongs the visitation of anger, holds back the fierce clouds and checks the rising hurricane. It would rather suffer long than instantly to send forth deadly darts. It practices patience like our Savior, and controls its spirit when the world would resent. It will quietly suffer rather than quickly injure.

(2) *Love is Gracious or Actively Kind and Useful.*

Love is not rash, but mild and pleasant. It is more like a zephyr than a cyclone. It is gracious, benign and practical. It has a good heart and does its offices in a tender way. Love is not only kindness at rest, but kindness in motion. Like our Saviour, love goes about doing good. It is kind in thought, word, act, life.

(3) *Love is Seemly.* Love rejoices in the truth, or literally, love rejoices with the truth; love and truth are in sympathetic fellowship. It is no function of love to compromise the truth, or to be indifferent to its progress, but to rejoice in its triumphs and to weep in its defeats. Love is not all feeling, yet it has a noble heart; it can clap its hands and shout Hosannas or sing Doxologies. It is not cold principle, yet its basis is everlasting truth. The God of love is the God of truth. So love and truth should clasp hands and march on to endless victory.

(4) *Love is Forbearing.* "Love beareth all things," literally, covers, protects, bears up as a roof. Love bears up and wards off whatever may threaten evil. This roofing out has reference to provocations, slanders and all manner of injuries. Love makes the best tiling for all our homes.

There is not only a roofing off, but also a roofing in. Some people are rather fond of uncovering everything, but some things need not be ventilated. They had better be kept in the air-tight chamber of the soul. The heart of love is the best safety vault. Love alone endures without divulging, and preserves its treasures in silence. True love keeps many secrets.

(5) *Love is Trustful.* Love believeth all things. That is, it has an attitude of faith. It believes in God and men. It is not skeptical. Being guileless itself, it is not suspicious of others. This does not mean that love is blind and indiscriminate. Envy is blind, love has two good eyes. This rather means that love will believe the best of people until there is good evidence to the contrary. It does not consider a man a thief until he proves himself honest.

It entertains a good opinion of men and deeds until facts require a modification. It is graciously inclined to believe what is true and to discredit what is evil. It gives goodness the benefit of the doubt.

(6) *Love is Optimistic.* Love hopeth all things. It can never be pessimistic. Christianity is a religion of optimism, because it is a religion of love. Love points toward the rising sun and cloudless day. Its golden day is yet to dawn. Love hopes for the best. If evil reports are sent abroad, it looks for the possible good. It searches for the wheat in the chaff; it never throws chaff in the wheat. Love has a brave heart and wears a smile. Love is the life of hope, and when it dies despair takes the sceptre.

(7) *Love is Brave.* Endureth all things. Literally, "it remains under" the task or the burden, too brave to flee, too strong to be crushed. Nervous energy and restlessness may prompt a man to daring deeds, but only love can make the soul stand still, suffer and grow strong. Love endures with a patient, uncomplaining spirit. It carves pillars for the Christian temple. Love can sit up through the starless night and smile amidst the gloom.

III. THE PERMANENCE OF LOVE.. 8-13.

1. *The Permanence of Love is asserted in unequivocal terms.* "Love never faileth. Literally, the love never at any time fails. It occupies its place; is never shelved, never out of date. Neither in life nor death, nor even in the future world, can love cease to exist, for God alone inhabits eternity, and God is love. It is very comforting to know that the best thing in the world shall last forever.

2. Then, too, *the permanence of love is illustrated by way of contrast with spiritual gifts.*

(1) *Prophecies.* Prophecies must fail. Literally, become inoperative, because the necessity for their continuance will cease, whether they are considered as direct

predictions of future events or immediate interpretation of Scripture by divine inspiration.

(2) *Tongues.* The miraculous gift of tongues will cease, says the Apostle, and we are quite sure his assertion has been historically verified. Men must study the languages of the different peoples of the world in order to preach the gospel in all the world, for tongues have ceased. But love prompts to the mastery of the tongues of all the nations and to the service of God in every land.

(3) *Knowledge.* Knowledge shall vanish away. Literally, become inoperative, like prophecy. Shall we lose earthly knowledge in heaven? This passage does not teach it. Reference is here made to knowledge, supernaturally bestowed, for the Apostle is speaking of the several gifts of the Spirit. That marvelous method of acquiring knowledge has long since vanished, but love still inspires to heroic deeds. Love is evidently contrasted with supernatural gifts, and is regarded as superior to them, for they are temporary; while it is eternal. It has a place through the church's earthly history, and will reign forever and ever in heaven, while they belong only to the church in its primitive, earthly life.

(3) *The permanence of love is also implied in the relation it sustains to the perfect Word.* One reason why supernatural gifts are bestowed is because we only know in part, literally, from a part, in fragments, and prophesy in part. Hence, too much emphasis ought not to be placed on supernatural endowments. Paul considers them as being merely the growing understanding and developing speech of childhood, whereas love belongs to the whole process of life, and can never be outgrown. In manhood he puts away childish things, the badges of immaturity, but never ceases to live by the law of love.

Paul now passes from his own individual experience to that of Christians throughout their earthly career. In this life where supernatural gifts are necessary to arouse us to thought and faith and service, we look into an enig-

ma, and that through or by means of a mirror, which may be obscured, but bye and bye, when that shall cease, and love alone abide, the enigma and the mirror shall pass away as useless. Even our present Biblical revelation is like a dark saying, very imperfectly understood, in comparison with the full divine revelation in the light of eternity. Then we shall see face to face, and shall know by direct vision and holy intuition, even according to the knowledge in which we are kere known by the Lord Himself.

Love is the same in kind here as hereafter, but different in degree, while knowledge differs both in kind and degree. But no one can in time or eternity advance beyond the holy and imperial sway of love. Therefore, the love which the Corinthians neglected was shown to be superior to all the gifts which they so much esteemed, because of its necessity, its character and its permanence.

The Apostle now crowns love as queen of the three greatest Christian graces, which are alike in that they shall live forever.

Love more nearly expresses the essence of God than any other one word, for God is love. Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one toward another." "See then that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently," "for love is the greatest thing in the world." B. H. D.