***Hello Valley Heights Ladies!***  Reviewing our June 10th Bible Study

Chapter 13 --- “The Attitudes of a LOVING Heart”

“It’s that time of the year when fireworks are a guaranteed sight!” Hundreds of thousands of people gather together with excited anticipation to see, hear and experience spectacular, colourful displays of light and noise. We are *awed* by the brilliant ‘stars’ of intense light painted in the sky by the efforts of ‘firework technicians.’ They put endless hours into planning and strategizing such a momentous occasion for us to enjoy. We ‘celebrate,’ as all eyes are fixed on the beauty of these pyrotechnic ‘stars’ fueled to explode and shine so brightly in the night sky.

It is almost a guarantee at the end of all firework events to showcase a nonstop display of multiple plumes of shapes and colours. It’s called the finale! It’s the highlight and epiphany of the evening. The voices and applause that rise afterward most often reflect a satisfaction in what was just experienced. Well, Martha says that the **“ATTITDUDES of a LOVING HEART”** is not last in this section of her book because it is the least of the attitudes, but it is last because it is the best!

Let’s look together with anticipation at some of the distinctive and dynamic truths that delighted our eyes, dazzled our ears and now demand a response:

**A** loving heart has a desire and acts in a way that results in wanting the very best for another person

**T** o biblically love others first, though, begins with loving God with every part of our being Mat.22:35-40

**T**  here is an “inseparable connection” between loving God and joyfully obeying Him 1 Jn.2:3-5, 5:3

**I** t is a supernatural grace gift from God to us when we willingly obey & sacrificially show love to others

**T**  o worship God, to desire not to grieve the Holy Spirit & to serve Christ reflects in how we love others

**U** nderstand this: “We love *[MOTIVATION]* because He first loved us” 1 John 4: 7-10, 19-21

**D** aily remembrance of Jesus’ death on the cross brings us to the supreme example of *how* love acts

**E** xtra grace is required to love and pray for those who speak against us and oppose us Matt. 5:43-48

**S** elfless love looks at Christ’s life and teaches us to “pursue love” & “walk in love” 1 Cor.14:1,Eph.5:2

**O** ut of the scriptures, 1 Cor. 13:4-7 clearly challenges us to **“PUT ON LOVE”** as an act of our will

**F** rustrated when things don’t go your way & something interferes with your plans? *LOVE IS PATIENT*

**A** ggravated and tempted to yell, push away and tear down those who only want to help? *LOVE IS KIND*

**L**  iving in fear of being replaced by another person, or thing? Becoming resentful? *LOVE IS NOT JEALOUS*

**O** bsessed with talking excessively about yourself; ailments to achievements…? *LOVE DOES NOT BRAG*

**V**  ocally opinionated and defensive when disagreed with, reproved, or corrected? *LOVE IS NOT PROUD*

**I**  rritated and disrespectful to those in authority over you; dad, husband, elders…? *LOVE IS NOT RUDE*

**N**  egative/critical of others because you are not getting what you think you need? *LOVE IS NOT SELFISH*

**G**  ot to be in control of others and your circumstances? *LOVE DOES NOT BECOME EASILY ANGERED*

**H** olding onto bitterness by replaying the hurt over in your mind? *LOVE KEEPS NO RECORD OF WRONGS*
**E** nticing others to doubt God’s Word? *LOVE DOES NOT DELIGHT IN EVIL but REJOICES IN THE TRUTH*

**A** re you talking negatively about your husband’s struggles and weaknesses? *LOVE ALWAYS PROTECTS*

**R** eady to assume the worst about what others say and do? Perceived wrongs? *LOVE ALWAYS TRUSTS*

**T** ired and always disappointed that your expectations haven’t been met? *LOVE HOPES ALL THINGS*

Do you see that the trials and pressures you are facing today have come into your life to give you a special opportunity to become more like the Lord Jesus? *LOVE ENDURES ALL THINGS*

**“Beyond all these things, *PUT ON LOVE*, which is the perfect bond of unity.”** **Colossians 3:14** When we see a spectacular display of patience, compassion, kindness, humility, selflessness, gentleness, forbearance and forgiveness in the family of God, we are truly *AWED* by the beauty of Christ and the powerful evidence of the Holy Spirit at work in us, fueling us to shine brightly against the backdrop of this dark world. God does get the glory! Prayers and praise rise upward to reflect the saving faith and satisfaction we have in Christ!

Ladies, let’s remember though that biblical love in all its splendor and array *must never* compromise the truth and the standard of living by which our Master calls us to live within the pages of scripture. Christ commands us to **PUT ON** ‘character’ and ‘conduct’ consistent with our calling.

Let’s not forget, “**A** *loving heart* has a desire or acts in a way that results in wanting the very best for another person.” In relation to others, love doesn’t just cover a multitude of sins, it deals with the sin first ‘in love,’ *THEN* covers it. We have been called to be like Christ and He ALWAYS spoke the truth in love. “*We cannot promote unity* by elevating love, downplaying truth and repressing sound doctrine.” (Pastor MacArthur) True biblical love must rise above tolerance, error, lies, deception and lack of submission to His Word and those in authority over us. A heart that truly loves Christ desires to obey all His commands.

1 John 2:3-6 says, “By this we **know** that we have come to ***know*** *Him*, if we **keep** His commandments. The one who says, “*I have come to* ***know*** *Him*,” and does not **keep** His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in Him; but whoever **keeps** His word, in him the *LOVE of GOD* has truly been perfected. By this we **know** that we are in Him: the one who say he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.”

Pastor MacArthur explains that, “God’s redeeming, ***saving love is perfected*** in the person who fully obeys His truth. Obedience is the external, visible proof of salvation (James 2:14-26, John 14).” He says, “You say you belong to God, you say you are a child of God, then you ought to be marked out as a person who walks in the truth because that is how Christ walked. How did Christ walk? By keeping and obeying the Word of God. Jesus’s life of obedience is the Christian’s pattern. Those who claim to be Christians ought to live as He did (Jn.6:38) since they possess His Spirit’s presence and power.”

Ladies, when Christ first saved us, there is no doubt that there was a ‘spectacular display’ of God’s love, grace, mercy and forgiveness in our lives for all to see and hear. Everyone saw the ‘shining’ transformation in our lives and heard about our ‘stunning’ Saviour. It truly was like a ‘fireworks’ display; a ‘momentous’ event for all to experience! But salvation *is more* than a ‘momentous’ event, it should be a ‘non-stop’ display of Christ-like attitudes and actions. The question is, “Who or what is hindering us from displaying the beautiful ‘plumes’ of biblical love and vibrant Christlikeness as seen in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7? It’s time for us to stop and ask the Holy Spirit for His help. Will you?

As firework displays are the *focal point* of many cultural and religious celebrations around the world, may *Jesus Christ Himself*, His Word and His divine power at work in us be displayed as the *focal point* of our lives for all to see and hear as ***“HE HIMSELF comes to have first place in EVERYTHING. (Col.1:18)***

May we together be known by our love for Christ and one another, Christyn