

Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

See service sheet online at www.knbc.org

Welcome and Opening Scripture

Hymn: MP 870 Jesus is the
Name we honour

Bible Reading: Psalm 89:1-18

Prayer of adoration and praise.

Main reading: Ezekiel 36:21-31 (p.867), 1 Cor 13:1-7 (p.1153)

Hymn: MP 676 There is no love like the love of Jesus

Sermon **Love from a changed heart**

Hymn Jesus keep me near the cross

Close -----

Listen to today's sermon by clicking on the link at www.knbc.org.

The audio file is [21_05_30.mp3](#).

Welcome and pray

Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. This morning we continue in our series looking at love from 1 Cor 13 and here v6. **Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.** Delighting in evil is what the world does all the time.....

New people have been joining the local online council meetings. Why this sudden interest in local politics? Not at all, they join hoping to see an argument flair up, hoping for a repeat of February's Handford Council meeting which descended into chaos and hysterics as councillors swore, traded insults and were ultimately booted off. Like the crowd forming on the street when there's a fight, or rubbernecking on the motorway as everyone looks over to gaze at the smashed car.

Other people's failures, mistakes, problems, bad behaviour, immorality, dirt etc. make news. Why? Because everyone loves to read it, it sells papers. Good news doesn't, bad news does, it titillates, it's enjoyable.



When the BBC reports a street robbery we understand what they mean, but they can't resist showing the CCTV footage, why because we love to see it.

- Remember poor Theresa May at the Conservative conference when she kept choking and the sign behind her fell down, it was played again and again. (Russian video of Boris all his bunglings, tripping and falling over)
- Any well-known man or women caught in moment of embarrassment can be sure that, given the chance, the TV, Media, papers will show it.

We live in a fault finding society - what was it last week?...

- 'Cummings tells all', or 'Historic forced adoption.' Here a lady's personal story focused on exposing the guilt of others, and there was genuine fault, - but all attention was on the failings of others, never her own.

We live in a corrosive, finger pointing, fault finding society.

- Rev Matt Richard, a pastor from North Dakota explains this clearly saying: People in our culture are getting points – figurative points every time they 'call out' some sort of injustice in our society. It's the 'gotcha' game. They score whenever they find somebody say something or do something politically incorrect or commits some other transgression. The more points they earn, the better they feel about their own righteousness and are applauded by those doing the same. Our culture is filled with people that are watching every aspect of society and listening intensely to the news and social media channels. Every conversation, every action and every single encounter is being examined. They are always scanning everything and everyone in society looking to accuse. Do you feel the intensity as you look over your shoulder just waiting to get smeared? These people are seeking to find fault in anyone, so when someone slips up, does something unjust, or violates a social taboo, well... there's no mercy and certainly no such thing as forgiveness. Instead, those who slip up get called out, shamed, and harassed. As a result, fear is created for everyone knows they are under a scrutinizing microscope. Businesses, organizations, churches, professionals, employees, and families are now trying to be incredibly careful in how they act, how they talk, and how they function so as not to get in their crosshairs and be called out. They need to take extra precautionary measures to insulate themselves from being sued,

attacked, dragged through the mud, accused, and condemned. They do not want to be the center of a mob's accusation. They do not want their careers ruined on social media. They do not want their businesses destroyed on the nightly news. They do not want to be cancelled, boycotted, sued, or chastised. -The result is sadness, despair, tired souls.

- It is the devil's game. It is wickedness at its best -or worst. It is the game that the great accuser has been playing since the beginning of time. The devil hates and despises the forgiveness of sins. The devil hates reconciliation, healing, restoration, and mercy. This game is advocating for a loveless world without mercy and a without forgiveness. That is what the world does, rather than forgive sin and evil it makes much of it. It is the opposite of love, it not only angers God but produces misery and division. This is now standard fare in our Godless society. (General.doc)

In the church

That is our modern society. The shock here is that in this passage Paul is talking - not to those out in the world – but to Christians. In the church he says there are also those who rather than love truth, delight in evil. They had forgotten that love does not take a malicious pleasure in the faults and sins of others. That is what wicked men do, this is not what Christians should do. Love does not rejoice when others have fallen into sin, disgraced themselves and ruined themselves. Someone who rejoices in seeing another do bad is reaching the very height of malice and taking pleasure in the misery of his fellow man. Love does none of these things.

So what was happening in the church at Corinth for Paul to say this?

What was going on? The church at Corinth was a glorious creation of Christ who had picked sinners up from the gutter, from the filth of immorality, and made them into saints. It was a glorious work of redeeming the worthless. They who were once **sexually immoral, idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes, effeminate, thieves, greedy, drunkards, slanderers, swindlers** were now wonderfully **washed, sanctified, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.**" 1Co 6:9-11

✚ **Wow - Praise God for his transforming work. Do you know that?**

These new men and women came into the liberty of the Kingdom. But their problem was that they thought: "Now I am saved I am fine, I am safe". The result was that they flirted with their former vices thinking "I can handle it".

2a

This had resulted in gross immorality in the church, rather than being horrified they thought it is "only the body" and we are told they were even '**proud**' - **when they should have been filled with grief.** 1 Cor 5:2

They were walking near the cliff edge believing they were safe – and then falling over into sin. There's a perverted thrill in seeing how close you can get.

- Here is the Christian Bungee jumper. How often is the thrill in a sport based on seeing how close to danger you can get?

It is saying I can dip into it in my heart, and still hang on to my purity. **Not so** x2. They mocked the new freedom they had in Christ. Peter exhorts us as Christians saying **do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil;** 1Pe 2:16

That cliff edge, that descent into sin, is to be kept well away from.

Scriptures gives us many warning signs "keep well back" or as Paul says: **Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness** Eph 5:11 Just as David in his desire for Holiness said: **Men of perverse heart shall be far from me; I will have nothing to do with evil.** Ps 101:4.

That freedom we are given – is to enable us to keep away from the edge.

Here Christians had neglected to guard their hearts; the result was they had allowed themselves to delight in sin - and became blind to the ugliness of it.

When it says they were **proud** it sounds like they were bragging.

- 30 yrs ago, driving past St Thomas Aquinas School in Wychall Lane I was in the back of a car coming back from midweek Bible study. I mentioned a bad practice I used to be involved with and the Elder of the church who was driving said to me "you said that without any shame" it struck home, it was a good blow and I immediate knew it was the right rebuke.

Are those past sins spoken of without shame? If so they become present sins

When it says they were **proud** it sounds like they were bragging, *however* x2 it may well be they said nothing - but that inside, deep down they liked it.

You see it is internal. You hear of some *vice*, you hear of something that someone has done or some or bad action, – and you say nothing - but in your heart you enjoy it.

The devil is behind it, he prompts jealousies, he prompts deriding others, he is glad when they fail and says to you "you see, you are better than they"

2b

In the heart

The phrase **Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth** follows on from the list above - but is different from the others, it is to do with heart.

Yes, they are all to do with the heart, but the others are also actions and conduct such as 'being patient, not boasting or being rude, persevering etc.'

Love *is* shown in action - and true love can only be the fruit of a loving heart, the source. But that action can, to some degree, be counterfeited.

Showing love to our brothers and sisters, being patient and kind is something they feel. *They* feel and experience love from another.

✚ **But this phrase is not looking at them, but me.**

The phrase: **Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth** causes me to look into my heart to see whether I am loving. - No-one else will know.although ultimately it will show itself.

It is even possible that people will feel that I am being unloving when I am being loving, - for example when I don't join in with some riske conversation - Then actually I am being loving by not doing so.

✚ **However, the converse is more often true - it is love that is feigned.**

Someone who is well brought up can be taught to do these things, they can be trained because they are the right things, and good things, and helpful things. They can give the impression that they come from a loving heart but as I say it is possible to have them to some degree - without love.

- We had an apple tree in our garden that did not produce apples for years. What if I was to then cleverly attach apples to it?

From a distance it looks like it is a good tree bearing good fruit.

The neighbours think it is, those who visit the home think so as well, even your husband or wife and family members thinks so – but only for a while, they will see the sad truth of the matter, they know what the tree is really like. And of course those apples will become rotten, they will soon go off and taste terrible because they are not genuine good fruit.

To fulfil this text: **not delighting in evil but rejoicing with the truth** requires a changed heart. To love needs a renewed heart, Genuine love is from a renewed heart – and a renewed heart can and should produce genuine love.

I don't have this of myself, there is no love in me, nor you, nor anyone, all of us are evil inside – No, it comes from God who **has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.**" Ro 5:5

Don't like what you see inside? Good, turn to Christ and confess it, seek Him to change it, and put his love in there. – Then you will have His love.

Jesus Christ showed the Fathers love. And can pour his love into your heart. Is the Spirit of Christ in you? How does it show? How will you know? Because you love your brother and sister - from the heart!

As Peter says: **Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart.** 1Pe 1:22

Love has two sides: Jesus **loved righteousness and hated wickedness** Heb 1:9 - to love what is good is also to hate what is evil, as Job did who shunned evil.

Loving others can be feigned, and in our churches where it is so often 'come on in and belong' and hopefully you will believe, what happens? People become Christianized, and learn what to say and how to act. The problem is they are not transformed. There has been no inner change done by Christ. The result is that love is feigned. - However, the tell-tale sign is that the hatred of evil is not feigned - that will be the way you know.

✚ **Love that comes from God shows in both loving what is right and also hating what is evil - as Christ so clearly did.**

Have you that renewed heart? How is it showing?

Christ alone can give a renewed heart.

Christ's purpose in coming into this world is to Glory the Father. In doing this he purchased a people who will glorify the Father. To glorify Him we must love him. No-one will naturally love him without a remade heart.

It is Christ's finished work on the CROSS that enables the purification of my sin. Now He gives those who seek Him his Spirit who unites me to Christ and make his merit my merit - and infuses his character into my character - so I become like Him. **PENTECOST has just gone when Christ came down to dwell in the human heart.** Wow. With this heart of love I can now love the Father and bring Him the glorify! This love for him is seen in your love for righteousness and truth - and hatred of evil. Do you have this renewed heart? Yes/no? Let it show in genuine love for God & for others.

This love is shockingly at odds with the way the world works. Never, never underestimate the power of the love of God to break down and transform the most amazingly hard individuals.

- A great example of this is in the musical version of *Les Misérables*, Victor Hugo's magnificent novel. Sentenced to a 19 year term of hard labour for stealing bread, Jean Valjean becomes a hard and bitter man. No-one could break him; everyone feared him. Released from prison, Valjean finds it difficult to survive, as innkeepers will not welcome him and work is scarce. Then a kind bishop welcomes him into his home. But Valjean betrays the trust. During the night he creeps off into the darkness, stealing some of the family silver.
- But Valjean is brought back next morning to the bishop's door by three policemen. They had arrested him and found the stolen silver on him. A word from the bishop, and the wretch would be incarcerated for life. But the bishop instantly exclaims, 'So here you are! I'm delighted to see you. Had you forgotten that I gave you the candlesticks as well? They're silver like the rest, and worth a good 200 francs. Did you forget to take them?'
- Jean Valjean is released, and he is transformed. When the gendarmes withdraw, the bishop insists on giving the candlesticks to his speechless, mortified, thankful guest. 'Do not forget, do not ever forget that you have promised me to use the money to make yourself an honest man,' admonishes the bishop. The detective Javert who couldn't understand or cope with grace, a grace triumphs over justice, a grace, grace that goes against every instinct for revenge jumps off a bridge and drowns in the Seine. Valjean is however, a new and changed man.

This is Christian love. This is how it should be, God's love so transforms us that we mediate it to others, who are thereby transformed. We love because he first loved us; we forgive because we stand forgiven. Taken from 'The difficult doctrine of the love of God' by Don Carson see 'general.doc'

Love in the heart shows in that you do **not delight in evil but rejoice with the truth.** But why **truth?** In contrasting 'evil' why don't we find the word 'good'? Surely the opposite of 'evil' is 'good', good and evil.

The Geneva bible commentary: - by 'truth' the Jews mean 'righteousness'

Frederic Godet, the [Swiss Protestant](#) theologian b.1812 supports this by saying: "we could understand 'truth' as the preaching of salvation; but it seems more natural here to give it a general meaning, the subject in question is truth as opposed to falsehood. *Love chooses to see the truth coming to light and triumphing - than to see evil prevail.*"

So if you love the *truth* you will stand opposed to sin. You will love virtue, piety, goodness. Love does not rejoice in the vices, but in the virtues of others. x2

Do you have this? Are you not just glad of seeing 'good' in some abstract way. Will you rejoice - not when something goes wrong for someone – but when things go well. Do you rejoice deep down when another, maybe a work colleague or someone in the church, is favoured or blessed? And say from your heart with the apostle John "**Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well.** 3 John 1:2 That is a sign of my love for God.

This is the wonderful triumph of the gospel that it enables a man to rejoice that even his enemy and persecutor in any respect does well. Human nature, without the gospel is gleeful and happy at the sin, misery and failings of others especially an enemy. It is only as the heart is subdued by the gospel, and filled with Christ's love, that it will rejoice when all men do well.

A man or woman made new by the Spirit of God does not now delight in sin wherever it is found, neither your own, nor in others; but rather you are grieved by it; you mourn over it and hate the corruption of your own heart, the failings and those secret sins, which none know of but only & and God.

As for the profaneness and immorality of those around - including the sins of those who profess faith - while others delight in it, are you greatly troubled by it?

Finally - **whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.** Php 4:8 So think about them, that is fill your heart with them - and rejoice in them.

What do people say of you? what will people say of you when you are gone? Will they say he or she is/was a man or woman who **never delighted in evil but always rejoiced in the truth?** May these be the Lord's words about on that Day. _____END