

Changed - Part 4
"Changed by Love..."
October 4th, 2020

Intro:

- **Welcome to Sunday Funday!!!**
 - **We are LIVE right now to our East Location!**
 - **THANK THE STAFF & VOLUNTEER TEAMS...**
 - **They work so hard on a daily basis with you in mind!!!**
 - **They love you & do it all for you!!!**
 - **They could go somewhere else & do something else that would less stressful & pay more but they are Called to YOU & they Love you!**
- **We are continuing our "Changed" Series today!**
 - **We've been saying, "The world has changed & we are all being changed, but not all of us are being changed for the better."**
 - **Today, I want to talk about "Changed... by Love!"**

PRAY

- ? Has anybody noticed that our world is Divided right now??? - Anybody???**
- **Our world is divided & polarized in a massive way!!!**
 - **Everything is Divisive! - Everything!!!**
 - **Division, Anger & Fear are ruling our world right now!**
 - **Is it any wonder we are all so overwhelmed & stressed & discouraged???**
 - **God doesn't want us to live this way!**
 - **Jesus established His church to bring a Different way to the world!**
 - **When Jesus ascended into Heaven & the Holy Spirit fell in Acts 2, God established this New Entity called the Church of Jesus Christ,**
 - **It was designed to transcend & exist outside of any National or Political Lines!**
 - **The Church is a Family of People who belong to a Different Kingdom than the Kingdoms of this world!**

- For 2000 years the Church of Jesus has Expanded across the world in varying geopolitical climates, in Free Nations & Communist Nations.
 - The church has existed in Democratic States & Marxist States!
 - The church has existed in the Open & Underground!
- The Church of Jesus Christ was God's Idea & it cannot be stopped!!!

Matthew 16:18 "I will build My church, and the gates of Hades (Hell) shall not prevail against it." (NKJV)

- Nothing can stop the Church of Jesus Christ!!!

(Segue to Paul...)

- One of the Greatest Expanders of the Local Church was the Apostle Paul.
 - He planted churches in cities all over the known world!
 - One of those churches was in a City called Corinth.
 - Corinth was a lot like America is today.
 - Highly Charged & Politically & Religiously Divided.
 - Paul established a Church there, raised up leaders & then continued to Encourage them after he moved on to other cities.
 - He wrote the Letters of 1 & 2nd Corinthians to encourage them!
- Paul's whole appeal to them was Counter-Cultural & his exhortation was that they offer something different to the world around them!!!
 - I believe his appeal to them is applicable to us today as well...

I Corinthians 1:10 "I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought."

- Paul says, "In a world of Division, I'm appealing to you to be Unified!"
 - What??? How is that possible?
- ? Is it even possible to be unified in a world that is SO divided today?
 - The Answer is: YES... IT IS!!!
 - But our Unity doesn't come from the World's System, it comes from something different!!!

Paul addresses the Division...

v. 22-24 "Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ (is) the power of God and the wisdom of God."

- Jews are over here on one side... Greeks on over here on the other!
- We preach a 3rd Option - Jesus!!!
- His Message is LOVE!!!

- ? What will change our World? LOVE!!!

- Think about it... What has changed OUR World, Personally??? LOVE!!!

- Paul says, "Our lives are not ultimately changed, & the world around us will not ultimately be changed by knowledge, or signs or logic or politics or opinion or arguments... but by the Love & Grace & Mercy of Jesus!"

- Church Family... If our world has any hope of redemption, it will come through the Love of Jesus!!!

? So what should Love look like in this world we live in today?

- Thankfully, Paul tells us!
- Remember, Corinth was as Highly Charged as America is today!

- Paul basically says, "There's alot of noise in the world today & if you do it the way they are doing it, then you're just going to sound like them & it won't make an impact..."

- But then he tells them what Love should look like...

I Corinthians 13:4-7 "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres."

- Paul says, "This is the Posture that will change the world!"
- This is the thing that will change our families & our workplaces & our children & our schools & our cities, our Nation & our world!!!

*** Our World will be Changed by Love!!!**

2 Thoughts for us Today:

1. Love must be Encountered!!!

A. Love is not Understood Logically, it is Grasped Experientially!

- You know you've encountered love when you have, haven't you???

- A kind word. A kind act. A generous act.

 - **SOMEONE PICKS UP YOUR CHECK ILL.**

 - Lets you in in traffic

 - shows you grace when you've done something wrong.

 - A simple smile at just the right time...

- An Extravagant Gesture of any kind reflects Love, doesn't it???

B. Love encountered catches our attention, doesn't it???

C. That's what God wants us to be in a world of Division & Hate!

- God wants us to Stand Out!

- Love makes us Stand out!!!

Matthew 5:13 "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot."

- Jesus is saying: If you taste like everybody else, then you're not really flavoring the world around you.

- Our lives are meant to flavor our world!

- We flavor our world with Love!!!

2. Love must be Embodied!!!

A. Jesus was the Embodiment of Love.

- He was the Embodiment of Grace & Truth & He did it all IN LOVE!

- Jesus was full of Grace & Truth, yes, but it was His Genuine Love that people couldn't argue with!!!

B. Our Lives are to Look like Jesus!!!

Philippians 2:1 "Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion,

v. 2 "then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves,

v. 4-5 "not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus..."

C. We are to Embody Love the way Jesus did!!!

- It was the great Theologian Wonder Woman who said, "Only Love can Change the World!"

- Love must be Encountered.**
- Love must be Embodied.**

Challenge:

? Have you Encountered the Love of God in Jesus???

- SALVATION

? How are you doing at Embodying the Love of God in your world right now?

- ? How well does your life look like Jesus right now???

- Repent - Pride, Anger, Judgmental attitude toward people not like you,**
- Lack of Love...**

PRAY