

Love Covers Over Wrongs

(study based on Sharon A Steele's book, Loving as Jesus Loves)

2020-06-10 Pastor Sharon Tidd

Read and reflect on 1 Peter 4:8. What messages does it offer on the subject of love? How is love described in this verse? How, in practical terms, can one love in that way ... in family relationships, friendships, with neighbours, with co-workers, etc.?

How does love "cover over a multitude of sins"? What does this mean, in practical terms? What about confronting sin and pursuing justice ... are these 'out-the-window'?

Read and reflect on 2 Corinthians 5:14-21. For whom did Christ die? What else has God, through Christ, done for us? What did Christ become for us and what is the result? How do these verses demonstrate Jesus' love that covers over our sin? What is the intended result? What does that mean? In what ways does this teaching speak into the concept of love covering over a multitude of sins?

Read and consider the words of Isaiah 61:10. With what are we covered according to this verse? How does this truth impact you? Is there a prayer of thanksgiving that you might want to offer to God in response?

Read and ponder the story shared in Genesis 9:18-27. In this story we find Noah in a compromising situation. What character flaws were revealed by Noah's actions? Did Ham act sinfully or righteously in response to his father's actions? How? Did Shem and Japheth respond sinfully or righteously in response? How? What was the result of Ham's response? What was the result of Shem and Japheth's response? What lessons in love can you take from this story?

Can you think of a situation when you were exposed to another's character flaws? How did you respond? Was that response sinful or righteous? Why did you respond in that way? Would you say that your love for that person covered over

their sins? Why or why not? In light of today's study, what might you do differently in future?

Often when faced with the sin of a brother or sister, especially one that directly impacts us, it is difficult to respond with love and a willingness to forgive. What right responses do these verses encourage; what wrong responses are discouraged? Proverbs 10:12; 16:28; 17:9; 26:20-22.

Read and reflect on Titus 3:1-5a. What instructions are given here in regard to speech? What is at the root of harmful speech? What makes helpful speech possible? Which of God's attributes are captured in this passage? Are these attributes possible for us? If so, how might they be expressed in our speech?

Read Psalm 32:1-5. How is the individual whose sins are covered over described here? How do these verses capture the difference between love that *covers* sin (verses 1-2) and the sinner's attempt to *cover up* sin (verses 3-5)? What is the difference? Why is owning up to our sin so important? What harm comes to us as we try to keep our sins hidden? What gifts does God grant when we confess our sins before Him?

Read and reflect on 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. How is "love that covers sin" described here? What attributes of love captured here speak to you specifically? Why? Is your love known for these attributes? Are there attributes that you need to develop?