



# Northside Proclaimer

*Proclaiming The Word Of The Lord*

1 Thessalonians 1:8

**Northside Church Of Christ Welcomes You!**

**April 10, 2016**

## **Love Lets Us Be Free**

**Gary Henry**

“. . . pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart” (2 Timothy 2:22).

Love liberates us from the main thing we need to be liberated from: absorption with ourselves. Sin turns us entirely inward; it twists our thinking into a selfish shape. And if we’ve been sinning long enough that it’s become a habit, our thinking and our values, motives, desires, and goals have probably come under the control of one basic consideration: what we want. Even when we do good deeds for others, we may do them because, basically, such acts of kindness help us to feel about ourselves the way we want to feel. Sin captures us in a very selfish cage.

One of the grand effects of the gospel of Christ is that it frees us from this preoccupation with ourselves. Paul said that the goal or object of Christian teaching is love: “The purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith” (1 Timothy 1:5). This kind of love is the very antithesis of selfishness. It lifts us out of the bog of self-centered thinking and sets us free to enjoy a new and better focus. It gets us out of ourselves and into a connection with all those things external to ourselves that we were meant to be related to.

Love is clearly vital to our connection to other human beings, especially our fellow Christians. Without the self-sacrificial love produced by the gospel, we wouldn’t be able to love others, at least with the highest kind of love (John 13:34, 35). But what a difference the gospel makes! “Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart” (1 Peter 1:22).

But more importantly, love is vital to our connection to God. Sin is the root of the problem, certainly, and until that barrier is removed by the gospel, we can’t have any fellowship with God. But even with our past sins forgiven, there can be no fellowship if we remain self-centered. So if we’re Christians, we need to let our hearts be transformed — opened up — by love. “Let all those who seek You rejoice and be glad in You; and let those who love Your salvation say continually, ‘Let God be magnified!’” (Psalm 70:4).

Northside  
*church Of Christ*

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## Announcements

- Remember the shut in's.
- Pray for the church and one another.
- Remember the spiritual sick among us.
- Call or email Bryan to add announcements, thanks.
- **We need volunteers for door knocking. Please see Bryan.**
- **We need volunteers for picking folks up. Please see Bryan.**

Five Day A Week Reading Plan

Mon: 1 Chron. 13-17

Tues: 1 Chron. 18-22

Wed: 1 Chron. 23-27

Thurs: 1 Chron. 28-2 Chron. 3

Fri: 2 Chron. 4-8

## Strange

Terry W. Benton

The world should think us strange. After all, our principles have changed from theirs to a whole different set of values and guiding principles.

1 Peter 4:3-5 - For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles — when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. 4 In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you.

We changed from a set of values guided by selfish lusts and desires, worldly aims, and pride to a relationship with a Holy God that matters more now to us than anything else. Whereas we “fit in” before, we cannot enjoy the profanity, the drinking, the immodesty and lasciviousness that guided and controlled our hearts before. Now we “fit in” with holy people, but no longer fit in with worldly people.

We must not fear being different and even being rejected as “strange” to worldly people. Woe to us if all men speak well of us. If we can fit in with everyone we are able to do what Jesus could not do.

Jesus was misunderstood. He was strange by other people's standards. We would rather be strange to people than strange to God and His will. The Early Church was misunderstood. They did not set on a mission to be despised and rejected, but when their own internal values changed so drastically to “proving what is acceptable to the Lord” instead of “conforming to the world” (Rom. 12:1-3) they became "strange" to former friends..

Previously we were estranged from Christ and had nothing in common with His holiness. Now, our sense of holiness has changed our sense of modesty and dress, our vocabulary and choice of words, our places of interest, our activities and behavior is in a growing process. Now those we once had so much in common with are thinking us strange that we do not run with them, drink with them, dance with them, talk like them, or think like them. We are strange to our old way of living, thinking, dressing, talking, but we love the new things we have come to know and enjoy in Christ. Everything is new, different, and better (2 Cor. 5:17)

Now we think it strange that we were so blind for so long, and wish others could have their eyes opened by the gospel. Don't be afraid or ashamed of being strange to the world. We should be ashamed if we are not.