

# Coach House Church **BEACONS**

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## **LOVE COVERS SINS**

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**2ND SEPTEMBER 2020**

1 Peter 4:8: "For love covers a multitude of sins."

This truth is so important that it is also taught in many places in the Bible including the Old Testament in Proverbs 10:12 (NLT) "Hatred stirs up quarrels, but love makes up for all offences.." Sometimes the very thing that makes loving others challenging to you is the fact that they have weaknesses. So the Bible says what you have to do is overlook some sins, cover those sins - not in the sense of pretending that they don't exist or condoning them, but as is seen in the context, you have to love others in spite of their faults and failures. You have to love them and not be judgmental, not turn your back on them just because they do or say stupid things or because they don't always act the way you want them to.

We all know that Jesus commanded us to love one another – so we've got to find a way, His way, of accomplishing that love for each other. We've got to find a way of loving others even though they act strange sometimes.

We've heard through our Beacons that Jesus taught us to love others as He loved us, and He certainly loved us in spite of our defects and mess-ups - God loves us unconditionally. So we have to love others in spite of the fact that they get on our nerves sometimes; in spite of the fact that they fail; in spite of the fact that they aren't perfect and are difficult to get along with at times.

The church, the body of Christ, is the place for all of us to experience unconditional love. This is the place to pass on God's unconditional love for others. And when I say this is the place, I don't just mean the church building, I mean this body, this fellowship, US.

The programme, "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" is a US programme about deserving families getting a new home because they are in need. Once they aired

an episode, about the makeover of the home of a single lady who had adopted seven children with disabilities. A couple of the young people were in wheel chairs; some were challenged in other ways. I don't know whether or not the lady in this episode is a Christian but I do know she was exhibiting Christlikeness. What she was doing was very heroic. They did a makeover of her house, which included a lot of helpful amenities for these children with disabilities. I thought to myself, "these kids feel love and safety in this lady's home in spite of their physical challenges."

That reminds me of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. The church is a place where people are to be loved and feel safe in spite of their imperfections. If you ought be able to go anywhere and be loved in spite of your warts and blemishes it ought to be where people gather to worship the True and Living God! But in order for that to happen we've got to look beyond the faults and mistakes of others. Just like the lady in the home makeover episode who loved those kids in spite of their physical disabilities, we've got to love one another in spite of social disabilities.

We've got to learn and practice behaviour that pleases God. We can't just say, "so and so is nice one time when you see him and grumpy the next time, so I'm avoiding him," or, "I don't want to have anything to do with her because she behaves so immaturely in this area or that area." You have to love others even when they are hot and cold in their behaviour. Someone may act cold one day because they are facing a private battle. You never know what people might have on their minds. You have to cut them some slack.

We should all work on the areas in which we need to grow but we should also all work on loving others while they're growing.

The big question we're going to look to God's Word for answers is: how can you do that? How can you "cover" the sins of others – how can you love them in spite of the fact that they sometimes do and say wrong things? When you see they've done something wrong, and you want to show them but don't know how to tell them. It is essential that we learn and practice looking beyond the faults and mistakes of others because you have to do this to work together, and work well as a team.

Romans 15:7 "Therefore, accept each other just as Christ has accepted you so that God will be given glory."

When we read the word therefore in the bible we should go and find why it's there. In Verses 1 - 3: We who are strong must be considerate of those who are sensitive about things like this. We must not just please ourselves. We should help others do what is right and build them up in the Lord. For even Christ didn't live to please himself.

Thank God Jesus didn't wait for us to achieve perfection before He accepted us. And we don't have to wait for others to be perfect to accept them either. You don't have to be perfect for others to accept you. If they don't accept you then they're not being like God – they're not being "godly."

Don't make someone's life more difficult than it already is. Life can be tough. And you know, we don't always need to hear someone say to us, "Life is tough – so you've got to be tougher." Sometimes we may need that but most of the time we need someone to say, "Life is tough so I'm going to be your friend. I'm going to help you carry your burdens. I'm not going to make your life more difficult, I'm not going to nitpick at your faults and mistakes."

Everybody has his or her peculiarities and eccentricities. You don't have to resent them for it. If you hold resentment in your heart at the oddities of others or because they didn't do what you wanted them to do or act how you wanted them to act your life will become intolerable.

"One way to get high blood pressure is to go mountain climbing over molehills." (Earl Wilson).

You have a choice! You can decide to cover the sins of others or you can choose to nitpick. You can decide to "cure" the weaknesses of others or you can choose to "cover" others' weaknesses.

**THE BIBLE DOESN'T TELL YOU THAT LOVE "CURES" THE SINS OF OTHERS – IT TELLS YOU THAT IT "COVERS" THE SINS OF OTHERS!**

Listen carefully to the following words of Jesus.

Mark 9:50 (NLT) "Salt is good for seasoning. But if it loses its flavour, how do you make it salty again? You must have the qualities of salt among yourselves and live in peace with each other."

Before the days of refrigeration salt was essential as a preservative. The chemical qualities of salt would enable people to store foods for longer periods of time. But Jesus was pointing out the fact that if salt loses those chemical properties it is no longer a preservative. His point is that He doesn't want His followers to lose their peace-preserving qualities. "You must have the qualities of salt among yourselves live in peace with each other."

You will be tempted to forfeit the peace with others – but Christ says don't be like salt that lost its saltiness. Preserve the peace. Satan will lie to you and tell you things about why you need to quit trying to get along with others – but don't you fall for his scheming against you.

Your own weaknesses will betray you when it comes to preserving the peace. At times you will want to give up trying to get along with others. It's then you need to remember the words of Jesus - "You must have the qualities of salt among yourselves and live in peace with each other."

A wise physician once said, "I have been practicing Medicine for thirty years, and I have prescribed many things. But in the long run, I have learned that for most of the ills of the human creature, the best medicine is patient understanding of another's problems." When someone asked him, "What if it doesn't work? What if someone doesn't respond to patient understanding?" He replied, "Double the dose!"

Who do you need to double your dose of patient understanding with today? Who needs you to cover their sins? Maybe someone at home. Perhaps someone on the job or at school. Maybe someone at church. Maybe a leader. Wherever it is, "love covers a multitude of sins."

Maybe today the Holy Spirit is talking to you through the Word of God about forgiving someone. Maybe He's telling you to quit nitpicking. Maybe He's brought someone to your mind that you need to accept even if you have a great dislike for their weaknesses. Maybe He's reminding you that you need to be a peace preserver – you need to stay salty.



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