



The following document is a rough copy of Pastor Drost' sermon notes

from December 29th, 2019

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+ This Christmas our subject has been: **Home for Christmas.**

- The idea that I (we) belong at God's table
- At Candlelight I used a scripture from **Psalm 23**

“Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies.” (Psalm 23:5)

God is inviting us to His home, to His table!

Illustration: My mother-in-law prepared a wonderful feast for the family for Christmas... “Verner, you can sit here”

“God has a place for you at His table!”

YOU belong, WE belong, THEY belong (Invitation!) **He wants His table full!**

- There is a famous Spanish saying: “*Mi casa es tu casa*”
It means: My home is your home; it's inviting you to make yourself at home! **God is saying: “*Mi casa es tu casa*”**

+ Have you ever noticed that we never say, “House sweet house!” We say, “Home sweet home!”

- What makes a house a home? What makes home a “sweet home”?
- The word “home” has a much deeper meaning than the word “house”. The word “home” is a more intangible word and harder to define than the word “house”.

We can spend hours looking through design magazines, watch TV shows on amazing looking houses. Some of them are gorgeous, breathtaking, worth thousands and even millions of dollars.

Yet, regardless of how perfect they are, how expensive the design, how amazing they are decorated, they are only walls, windows, doors, ceiling, furniture, and that doesn't make them a home!

A home is different; home is a feeling that touches the human soul.

You can buy a house but you cannot buy a home.

Love is what makes a house a home!

AND LOVE IS WHAT MAKES A CHURCH A HOME!

Illustration: This Christmas we invited people “Home for Christmas”. Pastor Heidi closed the Candlelight saying, “*From our Home, no wait! This is your home... Merry Christmas!*” In other words, “*Mi casa es tu casa*”

We are wanting people to think of our church as their home! “How do we get a church to feel like a home?”

Or as Pastor Wayne spoke a few weeks ago, “How do we get a church to feel like a family?”

“What is the MAIN ingredient?”

“ABOVE ALL, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us together in perfect unity.” Colossians 3:12–14

The main ingredient is LOVE!

Illustration: On Boxing Day we got together for our annual Drost gathering. My nephew Andrew brought this amazing desert. “What's in it?” He said, “Sugar, lots of sugar!”

You can have chocolate cake, coconut pie, vanilla ice cream, peanut butter balls... but I guarantee that the one essential common ingredient is sugar! Lots of sugar!

You can have all kinds of styles of churches: conservative churches, liturgical churches, modern churches, loud churches, quiet churches... but the one ingredient that must be present to make it feel like home, like a true family, is genuine LOVE! **Above all!**

✚ The book of first Corinthians is a letter that the Apostle Paul is writing to a church that was going through a lot of internal conflicts. They were arguing over how to run church, how to do communion, prejudice issues, who had the greatest spiritual gifts... all kinds of issues. Right in the middle of clearing up these issues, Paul writes one of the most beautiful definitions on “what is love”.

“Now I will show you **the MOST excellent way**. (This is the **HIGHEST** way you can live your life! **The BEST of the BEST**. The **TOP VALUE! Nothing tops this!**) If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. (I am just a bunch of **NOISE!**) If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. (**Nothing! Nada!**) If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing. (**Nothing!**)

Illustration: Christmas Crackers (Shiny outside but it’s what’s inside that matters!).

Paul is telling us that you can look good outside, speak in tongues, prophesy, do amazing miracles, give to the poor... But it’s all **EMPTY** unless you have **LOVE! You’re just an empty Christmas Cracker!**

Then he defines love... (**Kids: you can check these off**)

Love is **patient**, (Paul uses **PATIENCE** as the first definition of love! **LOVE STARTS WITH PATIENCE!**), ⁽²⁾

Love is **kind**. It does not envy. (**It doesn’t want what belongs to others**). It does not boast (**It doesn’t brag!**). It is not **proud**. It is not **rude** (**It doesn’t treat others with dishonour but with respect**). It is not **self-seeking** (**looking out for your own interest, looking out for No 1**). It is **not easily angered**. It **keeps NO record of wrongs**. (**Doesn’t keep track – or keep score – of the wrongs others do**). **LOVE forgives! Love erases the blackboard of wrongs done!**

We forgive to the degree that we love!

Love does not **delight in evil** (**not happy with evil or doesn’t enjoy finding what is wrong – doesn’t enjoy pointing out the negative stuff**) but (instead) **rejoices with the truth** (Enjoys – finds delight in those things that are honest, true, those stories that are not false). It always **protects**, always **trusts**, always **hopes**, always **perseveres**.

So Paul says that **love STARTS** with patience
and **ENDS** with perseverance!

Just imagine the impact just that last line would have on a church! How it would make one feel like its home!

It always **protects** (You feel **safe** around those who love you), always **trusts** (You **trust** those who love you), always **hopes** (Those who love you give you **hope**), always **perseveres** (Those who love you **don’t give up on you**). WOW! No wonder Paul ends with...

Love NEVER fails. Love ALWAYS wins! 1 Cor. 12:31b - 13:8 (NIV)

No wonder Paul says: “I will show you **the MOST excellent way**”

Love is the most powerful force in the universe! It’s what moves God to give His best!

For God **soooo** loved the **WORLD** that He gave His **ONLY** begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. John 3:16 (NKJV)

Paul says...

I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:38-39 (NIV)

Nothing can win over LOVE! Love perseveres! **LOVE ALWAYS WINS!**

Jesus said...

“By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” John 13:35 (NKJV)

By what?

- By our PATIENCE with each other
- By our KINDNESS to each other
- By how we treat each other with RESPECT
- By how we FORGIVE wrongs done
- By how others can FEEL SAFE around us
- By how they can TRUST us
- By how we BELIEVE IN THEM and bring HOPE to them
- By NEVER GIVING UP on them!
- By how we genuinely LOVE each other!

**Love is a choice when given
and a feeling when received**

That's HOME, SWEET HOME! That's a HOME and not just a HOUSE (a church).

The world is hungry for that!

+ My stories

Love is patient, love is kind... It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love NEVER fails.

It makes a HOUSE a HOME. It makes a CHURCH a FAMILY.

+ Song: One Thing Remains

Higher than the mountains that I face

Stronger than the power of the grave

Constant in the trial and the change

One thing remains

One thing remains, Your love

Your love will never change

Your love never fails, it never gives up...

Never runs out on me