

INTRODUCTION

1. Today is Valentine's Day. And every year on February 14th, "Approximately 150 million Valentine's Day cards are exchanged...making Valentine's Day the second most popular card-sending holiday after Christmas" (History.com).
2. And since the world is longing for love, I thought I would talk about the love the church should be displaying before the world.
3. Please take God's Word and turn with me to John chapter 13.
4. John 13:34-35 (NASB) 34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."
5. If you'll notice in these two verses, 3 times Jesus says we are to "love one another."
6. He also states this as a new commandment as well as something that He has done to them and states that

this is how “all men will know you are My disciples” (v.35).

7. Notice also in those two verses that He says this love is not for yourself but for “one another.”
8. He even describes it as a reciprocal love.
9. In other words, if they were all obeying this command of Jesus then all of them would experience what He is saying. No one would be left out.
10. That is true with all the one another’s in the NT.
11. If all of us would do what Jesus says then all of our needs would be met.
12. Think about this command.
13. All of us desire to be loved.
14. If all of us are loving one another, then that desire would be met.
15. The same is true with the rest of the one another’s in the New Testament.

16. If all of us are kind to one another then all of us will receive kindness from each other.
17. If all of us serve one another then all of us will be served.
18. Do you see what I mean?
19. It's reciprocal.
20. I believe that the purpose of the one another's is to illustrate how we are to relate to each another in the body of Christ.
21. Paul said in Romans 12:4-5 - "For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another."
22. Here Paul, in talking about our function, is referring to our spiritual gifts but at the end of verse 5 he says we are "individually members of one another."
23. He says that again at the end of Ephesians 4:25 - "...for we are members of one another."

24. You are not your own.
25. 1 Cor.6:19-20 says, “Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”
26. You are “God’s,” and you are “members of one another.”
27. That means you have a family relationship with each other that is to go beyond the superficial.
28. You cannot come to Christ and hide and never have any relationship with anyone.
29. Because each “one another” causes you to relate in a very personal way with each other, I believe that the “one another’s” is teaching us personal accountability.
30. You cannot carry out any of the one-another’s without holding anyone accountable.

31. So this morning we are going to see what it means to “love one another.”
32. This passage clearly talks about “love.”
33. It addresses the command to love and the demonstration of that love.
34. There is no way possible to excuse ourselves from loving one another.
35. “The word *love* is used 360 times in the Bible, 146 times in the OT and 214 times in the NT (QV).
36. In the Gospel of John alone “the word love is used only twelve times in John 1–12, but in John 13–21 it is used forty-four times!” (Warren Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*).
37. We are told 10 times in the NT to specifically love one another.
38. Notice verse 34, here Jesus gives *the Command to love*.

I. The Command to Love (v.34)

“A new command I give to you, that you love one another.”

A. It is New (v.34a)

1. The command to love is not new in the sense that this is the first time it was given

a) The Mosaic Law said we are not to “take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall **love your neighbor** as yourself: I *am* the Lord” (Lev.19:18).

b) Jesus even repeated this command in Matthew 22:37-39

Jesus said to him, ‘*You shall love the Lord* your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is *the* first and great commandment. And *the* second is like it: ‘*You shall **love your neighbor** as yourself.*’

- c) The disciples had already been told by Jesus to “love your enemies” in Matthew 5:44
 - d) But now He tells them to have a mutual love for one another
2. The command to love was new because it was the first time He said it directly to them and because it had a *fresh* meaning
- a) The word “new” (kainos) “does not mean “new in time,” because love has been important to God’s people even from Old Testament times (see Lev. 19:18). It means “new in experience, fresh.” It is the opposite of “worn out” (Ibid., Wiersbe).
 - b) Jesus’ *new* command to “love one another” came with a meaning that was “new in quality” (John MacArthur, 2 Corinthians).

“Love would take on a new meaning and power because of the death of Christ on

the cross (John 15:13). With the coming of the Holy Spirit, love would have a new power in their lives” (Ibid., Wiersbe).

3. The command was also new because Jesus defines what it means to love one another
 - a) He says, “As I have loved you, that you also love one another” (v.34).
 - b) “As I have loved you” is referring to His washing of their feet (vv.1-12).
 - c) That act of love demonstrated humility, selflessness, and compassion.
 - d) It also met their need!
 - (1) James said, “What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Depart in peace, be warmed and

filled,' but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?"(Jas.2:14-16).

- (2) John says, "By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth" (1 John 3:16-18).

Verse 16 - "know" Gr.ginosko, refers to experiential knowledge.

Verse 16 - "ought" Gr.opheilo, "speaking of a moral obligation"

Verse 16 - "lives" Gr.psucho, "soul"

"The ego must be crucified. Self

must be denied for the benefit of one's brother" (Kenneth Wuest, Word Studies in the Greek NT).

The laying down of our lives is out of obligation.

Verse 17 - "goods" Gr.bios, refers to "the necessities of life, such as food, clothing, shelter" (Ibid., Wuest).

Verse 17 - "and see's his brother in need"

"See's" Gr.theoreo, "to look with interest or purpose" (Wuest), "deliberately contemplates" (Vincent).

"The verb speaks of continuous action. This person deliberately contemplates over a protracted space of time. This is not a hasty glance. It is seeing a Christian in need of the necessities of life over a

long period” (Ibid., Wuest).

Verse 17 - “and shuts up his heart from him”

“Shuts up” Gr.kleio, “It is in the aorist subjunctive, speaking merely of the fact of an action. The word could be used of the slamming of a door, the snapping of a lock. It speaks here of this person who snaps shut the door of his heart against any compassionate feelings toward his needy brother and against any merciful actions” (Ibid., Wuest).

So the *new commandment to love one another* that Jesus gave them was a command to love as He loved by humbly meeting one another’s need.

B. It is a Command (v.34b)

1. It is first stated directly to the disciples

“A new command I give to *you*”

We know the “you” is referring to the disciples because they are identified in verse 5 when John says that Jesus “began to wash the disciples’ feet.”

2. It is later stated again in John 15
 - a) Verse 12 - This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.
 - b) Verse 17 - These things I command you, that you **love one another**.
3. John repeats this command in his epistles

(Four times in his first epistle; one time in his second)

 - a) 1 John 3:11 - “For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should **love one another**.”
 - b) 1 John 3:23 - “And this is His

commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and **love one another**, as He gave us commandment.”

- c) 1 John 4:7 - “Beloved, let us **love one another**, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.”
 - d) 1 John 4:11-12 - “Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to **love one another**. No one has seen God at any time. If we **love one another**, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us.”
 - e) 2 John 1:5 - “And now I plead with you, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment to you, but that which we have had from the beginning: that we **love one another.**”
4. Peter mentions it to his readers in his first letter

- a) 1 Peter 1:22 - “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.”
- b) 1 Peter 4:8 - “And above all things have fervent love for **one another**, for ‘love will cover a multitude of sins.’”

5. Paul also mentions it in two of his letters

- a) Rom.13:8 - “Owe no one anything except to **love one another**, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law.”

“All believers have the constant obligation to love one another.

It is a debt we are constantly to pay against but can never pay off.

The early church Father, Origen said, ‘The debt of love remains with us permanently and never leaves us. This is a debt which we pay every day and

forever owe.’ And by our Lord’s gracious provision, it is a debt we will always have the resources to pay and which, the more we pay toward it, the more willing and joyous the payment will be” (John MacArthur, Romans).

This is illustrated beautifully in Paul’s letter to the Thessalonians.

- b) 1 Thess.3:12 - “And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to **one another** and to all, just as we do to you.”
- c) 1 Thess.4:9 - “But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another.”

Jesus is commanding all His followers to love one another as He loved us. How did He love us? He met us at the point of our need. He paid the penalty for our sins by dying for us.

Romans 5:8 says, “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners,

Christ died for us.”

Jesus said in John 15:13 - “Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends.”

That is the definition of love – to “lay down one’s life.”

The word for love used in John 13:34-34 is the Greek word *agape*, which refers to an “unconditional, sacrificial act.”

Ephesians 5:25 says, “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it.”

J.C. Ryal writes, “Love is the grand secret of the right behavior towards our fellows. Those who love their neighbors will scorn to do them any willful injury, either in person, property or character. But they will not rest there: they will desire in every way to do them good; they will try to promote their comfort and happiness in every way; they will endeavor to lighten their sorrows, and increase their joys” (*Matthew*).

II. The Demonstration of Love (v.35)

A. It Reveals to Others Your Relationship to Jesus (v.35a)

“By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

1. It says you are willing to identify and imitate Jesus to everyone

Eph.5:1-2 says, “Therefore be followers of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.”

Charles Spurgeon, said, “The worldling loves himself, the Christian loves his God” (Nuggets of Gold, p.101).

2. It says you are willing to obey Jesus and love as He loved
 - a) Jesus said in John 14:15, “If you love Me, keep My commandments.”

- b) Paul shows us what that means in Romans 12:9-21 - “Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. 10 Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; 11 not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; 12 rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; 13 distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. 14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. 16 Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion. 17 Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. 18 If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. 19 Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written,

"Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. 20 Therefore "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head." 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

B. It Reveals to Yourself Your Relationship to Jesus (v.35)

"You are *My disciples*."

1. It serves as a confirmation of your relationship with Jesus

1 John 2:3-5 says, "Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. 4 He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him."

A.W. Tozer says, "The final test of love is

obedience. Not sweet emotions, not willingness to sacrifice, not zeal, but obedience to the commandments of Christ” (The Quotable Tozer I, p.123).

2. Love for the brethren is a proof of genuine salvation
 - a) 1 John 2:9-11 - He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.
 - b) 1 John 3:14-15 says, “We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death. Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.”

- c) 1 John 4:20-21 - “If someone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.”

CONCLUSION

1. What is the true test for a believer regarding his love for God and his neighbor?
2. For God – He is obedient; He loves what He loves and hates what He hates.
3. He *delights* in God’s Word - Psalm 119:47-48 - “**And I will delight myself in Your commandments, Which I love. 48 My hands also I will lift up to Your commandments, Which I love, And I will meditate on Your statutes.**”
4. He *loves* God’s Word - Psalm 119:127 - “**Therefore I love your commandments** more than gold, yes, than

fine gold!”

5. He seeks God’s Word - Psalm 119:45 - “And I will walk at liberty, for **I seek Your precepts.**”
6. He treasures God’s Word - Job 23:12 - “I have not departed from the commandment of His lips; **I have treasured the words of His mouth** more than my necessary food.”
7. He obeys God’s Word - Psalm 119:106 - “I have sworn and confirmed that **I will keep Your righteous judgments.**”
8. For the believer – He loves his brother by laying down his life for him. He loves sacrificially and obediently.

Thomas Watson said, “It is possible to love a saint, yet not to love him as a saint; we may love him for something else, for his ingenuity, or because he is affable (easy to talk to) and bountiful. A beast loves a man, but not as he is a man, but because he feeds him, and gives him provender (dry food). But to love a saint as he is a saint, this is a sign of love to God” (The Golden Treasury of Puritan Quotations).

9. He loves *fervently* - 1 Pet.4:8 - “And above all things **have fervent love for one another**, for love will cover a multitude of sins.”

10. He loves *selflessly* - Phil.2:3 - “Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind **let each esteem others better than himself.**”

11. He loves *sacrificially* - 1 John 3:16 - By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. **And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.**”

12. 1 Corinthians 14:1 says, “Pursue love.” Are you pursuing to love one another?

13. Hebrews 10:24 says we are to stir it up. It says, “And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works.”

14. Beloved, Jesus says, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:34-35).

15. If you are without Jesus, I want to urge you to repent of your sin and surrender your life to Jesus Christ and experience the greatest love possible.

16. Let's pray.