

“Love One Another” – The Who, Why, and How of Jesus’ Last Love Command

Five “Callings” of Jesus that Changed the World – #5 *“Love as I have loved you.”*

Love as I loved you – Five loves Jesus taught and lived:

1. Jesus’ first love is God His Father (Deuteronomy 6, part of Old Testament Shema)
2. Love ourselves (all the “as yourself” passages)
3. Love our neighbors (Leviticus 19; Luke 10 25-37)
4. Love our enemies (Matthew 5: 43-48)

5. Love one another – The phrase “love one another” is found 20 times in the New Testament. Here are the key “love one another” verses from Jesus as He prepared the disciples for His crucifixion. Apostles Paul, Peter, and John all used it to instruct Christians, new and old. I included those from John, who re-emphasized this message throughout his ministry.

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” John 13:34-35

“This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you...This I command you, that you love one another.” John 15:12, 17

The Apostle John:

“For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another ... This is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us. The one

*who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. We know by this that He abides in us, by **the Spirit whom He has given us...*** 1 John 3:11, 23-24

*“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love ... Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, **because He has given us of His Spirit.*** 1 John 4:7-8, 11-13

To whom is this command given?

Jesus gave it to His disciples for them to love each other. This was not given to those covered by all the other “loves” He commanded. This love was specific to that between born-again believers, brothers and sisters in Christ. John’s verses simply reiterated the same command.

Why? They were about to face hate and persecution as Jesus told them. They had no idea what it meant or how intense it would become. It would be easy to turn on each other in such times. A great message would be sent to those who observed this love that something was different between those who love Jesus. The world would see firsthand the impact the love of Jesus for His disciples had on them and how His love flowed between them.

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

The question Jesus and John put before their followers is the same for us today.

Is my “exchanged life” in Christ evident from the love I demonstrate toward other Christians

How do we “love one another”?

If we are honest with ourselves, Christians will admit we are not able to love those we do not even like or those with whom we have strong disagreements even within the body of Christ, perhaps especially the latter.

Jesus' exemplary life showed the disciples what this love meant and looked like. It is interesting to note that He gave this command AFTER He washed their feet. Soon thereafter He told them how they would be able to do this. Chapters 14 and 16 were primarily about the Holy Spirit, Who He is, when He would come, and what He would do. The Apostle John's words echoed those of Jesus decades after His resurrection and ascension.

Answer: The Holy Spirit working in, on, and through us.

What does it look like? Jesus' love. Focused on showing God first. Servant-hearted and sacrificial even unto death. It went against cultural norms into areas like race, money, and position-power. We show other believers through our humility and willingness to serve, even sacrifice, to help brothers and sisters in need. When we do love them in these ways, the world (lost) will see the difference and ask why? Then we can share the good news of the love and saving grace of God in Christ alone.

It is worth asking that important question again:

Is my “exchanged life” in Christ evident from the love I demonstrate toward other Christians?

The Invitation

- This series has clearly shown God loves you. We know this love was most clearly demonstrated thru the death of Jesus on the cross for your sins. Do you understand and believe that?

- If yes, has it caused you to come to that place the Apostle Paul so aptly described as *“godly sorrow that produces repentance that leads to salvation without regret”*?
- Again I plead that you have done this so that you will be counted among us, today and on that day Jesus will judge the living and dead. Be found in Christ and live eternally with Him. Remain lost and you will live forever but in that place Jesus called Hell, suffering forever.

For Christ's sake,

Walter