

# Love: The greatest commandment

Matthew 22:34-40

“The Great Commandment

<sup>34</sup> But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. <sup>35</sup> And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. <sup>36</sup> “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” <sup>37</sup> And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. <sup>38</sup> This is the great and first commandment. <sup>39</sup> And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. <sup>40</sup> On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

## God’s Love is self-sacrifice:

1. The steps to walking in God's love.
  - It starts by acknowledging and admitting (repenting), that you are not OK, not enough, are sinful, are imperfect, and you need God and his salvation **daily. We live on borrowed breath and life!** It is **not enough** to rely solely on his forgiveness and be unrepentant! There is no faith or love in that. Repentance is a 180° turn from sin. It is walking from the darkness, into the light. This is where deliverance happens. Repenting is giving up the sin and believing upon Jesus Christ in all areas of your life. It is loving God more than sin.

John 16: 7-11

“7 Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. 8 And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: 9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; 10 concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; 11 concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.”

- Then we must know his word.

Romans 10:17 “Faith comes from hearing and hearing through the word of God”.

- Then, by knowing God, his nature, character, and love for you.
- Then, our Love and faith increases for him, through us, by the Holy Spirit.
- Finally, self-sacrifice, total submission to God, is where his love begins in us.
- We are able to sacrifice ourselves because we live in blessed assurance with an abundance mentality and resting in God's provision. This is expectant faith!

- When we are attacked by sin and death, we won't be affected or offended. When we identify with Christ through faith, we see past the sin, to the suffering. This is what faith focuses on and is the opportunity for God to move!

## **Faith and love:**

### **Galatians 5:6**

**“<sup>6</sup> For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.**

- Love is how faith works. It is bringing the Kingdom of God in you, to the world.
- We must take him at his word! Our faith in him, trusts that he has our interests as a priority and intertwines them with his will and according to his love for us.
- If there is no love for God, there is no faith.
- Love starts the faith process.

### **1 Corinthians 13:13**

**“13 So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.”**

- Love **starts** the hope (the imagination in your heart), And faith results in action and the manifestation of God in the circumstances.
- As the apostle John wrote, “God is love”. He desires to will and to work/ move through his people.

### **Philippians 2: 13**

**“13 for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.”**

- Love results in reversal, restoration and redemption.
- The Greek word that Paul used in first Corinthians was “agape”. This literally means “God’s outward love”.

## **What God's love doesn't do:**

- self-interests and motivations in the church.
- It isn't living your own way and justify your actions.
- It isn't changing the word to support your interests.
- It isn't only to pray when you need something from God.
- It isn't having a relationship with God that entirely circumferences your self-serving needs.
- It isn't to desire fame, fortune, large crowds and using false teachings like woke, seeker friendly theology to accomplish this.
- It isn't being different in the world than you are in church.
- It isn't neglecting to give God, Jesus Christ, And the Holy Spirit their proper places in your life.

- It isn't teaching the church that they don't have to speak about the gospel to the world," just bring them to church and let the preacher do it". Making it "OK" to avoid our Commission.
- Isn't hiding certain actions and not being accountable to God.
- It isn't leaders of the church abusing their authority to control others, instead of helping and loving them. It isn't making themselves judge over others.
- It isn't treating our family worse than a stranger.
- It isn't being ungrateful to God and ignoring your blessings.
- It isn't living life without humility.
- It isn't seeing yourself and your time is more important than everyone else's. An example, you get cut off in traffic and are offended.
- It isn't neglecting and ignoring discipleship, thus relying on your own wisdom.

## **What God's love does:**

### **1st Corinthians 13**

#### **"The Way of Love**

**13 If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. <sup>2</sup> And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. <sup>3</sup> If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned,<sup>[a]</sup> but have not love, I gain nothing.**

**<sup>4</sup> Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant <sup>5</sup> or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful;<sup>[b]</sup> <sup>6</sup> it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. <sup>7</sup> Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.**

**<sup>8</sup> Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. <sup>9</sup> For we know in part and we prophesy in part, <sup>10</sup> but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. <sup>11</sup> When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. <sup>12</sup> For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.**

**<sup>13</sup> So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.**

- As the opening scripture stated, we are to love God first and love people as ourselves. We must realize that loving God **facilitates** loving people. We do not possess the quality of love required by God without his spirit in us.
- God's love has evident qualities as stated in the above scripture. These are our benchmarks. By these are we tested.
- Love sees the suffering of others **and acts**.
- Love for God results in self-sacrifice for him and that results in sacrifice for others.
- We can't walk in self-interests and God's interests at the same time.

- Love isn't a feeling. It is something you **do**, to and for people. It is a resolved **purpose** to behave and **choose to act** in this way.

## John 8: 12

### “I Am the Light of the World

**<sup>12</sup> Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”**

- Love is the light of God. It is not from our ability. It is his love in us, and through us, to the darkness and death of sin in this world.
- You will know that you are motivated by God's love, when you have the desire to love others above your own self interests.
- You see the suffering and feel an unusual, overwhelming compassion toward that person in their circumstances.
- Love creates! The Holy Spirit comes to an unfertile, hostile environment and brings life. He brings the word of God like in the book of Genesis.
- By speaking the truth of the word of God, hope is kindled then faith abounds. Truth is love and life! Love speaks life! This is active faith.

## Ephesians 4: 15, 29

**“15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,”**

**“29 Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.”**

- Love is self-sacrifice. Jesus was a living sacrifice!
- Jesus was intentional and deliberate. He defended faith for the love of the father and confronted sin for the love of those who suffered from it!

## Ephesians 4: 17-27

### “The New Life

**<sup>17</sup> Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. <sup>18</sup> They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. <sup>19</sup> They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. <sup>20</sup> But that is not the way you learned Christ!— <sup>21</sup> assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, <sup>22</sup> to put off your old self, <sup>[a]</sup> which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, <sup>23</sup> and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, <sup>24</sup> and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. <sup>25</sup> Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. <sup>26</sup> Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, <sup>27</sup> and give no opportunity to the devil.”**

