

Sacrifice Series 6:

**LOVE
ONE
ANOTHER**

LOVE ONE ANOTHER

Sept. 7, 2014

Sermon in a sentence: Nothing is more important in our Christian relationships than showing love to each other.

Scriptures: John 13:34-35; John 15:9-12,17; 17:26; John 1:11-12

13:34 – “A **new commandment** I give to you, that you love one another”

15:10 – “If you **keep My commandments**, you will abide in My love”

15:12 – “**This is My commandment**, that you love one another, just as I have loved you”

- 15:14 – “You are my friends if you **do what I command you**”

15:17 – “This **I command you**, that you love one another”

13:34 – “.... **As I have loved you** ... love one another”

13:35 – “**By this all men will know** that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another”

15:9 – “Just **as the Father has loved Me**, I have also loved you; abide in my love”

17: 26 – “**I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved me may be in them, and I in them**”

15:13 – “Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends”

Recently we spoke about John’s account of the aftermath of the ‘last supper’ where Jesus took the place of a slave to wash His disciples’ feet. When this was done, He dismissed Judas to perform his act of betrayal.

From this point, (Jn. 13:27,30), until Judas returned with the soldiers, (Jn. 18:3), Jesus gave His last discourse to His disciples and prayed for them.

There are a number of very important things the Lord taught them that we will review in the next three sermons. The first major point is made in chapter 13, repeated in chapter 15 and concludes chapter 17. It is a big deal – a teaching we keep returning to. What is it?

LOVE ONE ANOTHER!

The first thing we observe in that four times explicitly (twice in 13:34; 15:12; 15:17); and twice indirectly (15:10; 15:14), Jesus commands us to love each other.

Commands are given to cause us to do things that are unnatural to us. But the commandments of God are achievable. We can do His commands. So when Jesus tells us the greatest commandments are to love God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength, and our neighbours as ourselves, (Mark 12:30-31), it is because He knows we can do it (undoubtedly through His enabling (17:26)).

Secondarily, we will be identified as disciples of Christ by the love we have for each other.

13:35 - “By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another”

In other words, if we do not have love for one another, we are not His disciples!

This is the ‘*disciple identifying feature*’ Jesus gave us. He did not say we would be known to be His disciples by how well we sing during our praise and worship service, or how many tracts we hand out at the bus stop on the way to work. It is not determined by how many hours we pray and how many days we fast. We will be known to be His disciples by the love we show to each other!

This love will cause us to think rightly about each other. We will say: “My brother has received great grace, just as I have, and I know God is still working to perfect him, just as He’s working to perfect me, so let me cut him a little slack”. My sister may not understand a passage of scripture in the same way I do, but I will listen to her interpretation and consider it carefully. I will not treat her as a sinner, but as a searching soul that may well have received a revelation or understanding that will help *me* grow.

Thirdly, God has revealed His name *to us*, so that we can have His love *in us*!

17: 26 - “I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, *so that the love with which You loved me may be in them, and I in them.*”

Knowing God’s name transforms us. The understanding of what His name means is powerful. “Jehovah saves”!

Knowing that Jehovah saves through personal experience is even more powerful and transformative. This experience causes us to enter into a love that is divine, and it rubs off on us. Knowing His name and knowing His love gives us the ability, the desire and the power to love as He loves!

Of course, knowing God's "name" also means we know His reputation, His power, His glory, His character, His great love for us.

Therefore, we need to be tolerant and understanding, kind and compassionate, caring and giving, gracious and hospitable to each other. But more than anything else, we need to love each other!

At times, we may need to be direct and corrective, rigid, even inflexible, frank and forceful – but all within the cocoon of love.

Nothing supersedes love. Nothing replaces love. Nothing is comparable to love.

As we enter the last third of 2014 – our "Year of Sacrifice", let us not miss the final outworking of Jesus' love for us, as He outlined it in Jn. 15:13: "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends". This is the ultimate in love. Self-sacrifice on behalf of a friend.

But here is agape in its fullest glory: Jesus did not just lay down His life for His friends. He gave up His life for His enemies also!

He came to His own and they disowned Him. But to those who believe, He gives power to become His children! (John 1:11-12)

“Such love, such wondrous love. Such love, such wondrous love. That God should love a sinner such as I, how wonderful is love like this”!

Brothers and sisters – let us LOVE ONE ANOTHER!