

AS I HAVE LOVED YOU (John 13:34-35)

I. The mandate (John 13:34).

- a. Jesus is about to die, this conversation taking place the night of His betrayal.
 - i. According to Luke 22:24, there was a disagreement among the apostles about who should be the greatest in the kingdom.
 - ii. Jesus washed the feet of each of the apostles and pointed out that He, their Lord and Master, was willing to wash their feet.
 - iii. Since He was willing to wash their feet, be a servant, they should be willing to do that for others as well (John 13:12-17).
- b. After Judas left, Jesus gave them a new commandment: to love one another as He had loved them.
 - i. To love others was not what was new.
 - ii. The Old Law required loving others (Leviticus 19:18).
 - iii. However, this command was limited to Jews.
 - iv. As br. Woods wrote, "this is new with reference to its breadth, width, and scope, and not new as nont having been heard of before."
- c. The Jews had this love for one another only.
 - i. We see through a study of the gospels how the Jews felt about other nations or races.
 - ii. They treated them poorly and looked down upon others.
- d. As Christians, our love is to be offered to all men.
- e. The love that is to be offered is the sacrificial agape love.
 - i. This love seeks the best for its object.
 - ii. This love is willing to sacrifice for its object.
- f. What is interesting is that of all the commandments we have been given, it seems that this is the hardest to carry out in our every day lives.
 - i. I believe such is the case because this type of love has a cost attached to it.
 - ii. Paul Miller wrote, "We instinctively know that love leads to commitment, so we look away when we see a beggar. We might have to pay if we look too closely and care too deeply. Loving means losing control of our schedule, our money and our time. When we love we cease to be the master and become a servant."
- g. We have to be willing to be a servant to all others, not just those that love us in return.
- h. This, of course, as with many commandments, is easier said than done.

II. The model (John 13:34).

- i. Jesus knew this would be difficult.
 - i. As the omniscient Lord and Creator of us all, He knew the frailty of man in this area.
 - ii. It's not hard to love those who can and will love you back and, in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus had addressed this (Matthew 5:46-47).
- j. Since it is the case that such love is uncommon for man, Jesus used Himself as the model to follow.
- k. The one word that sums up the love Jesus had for His disciples, and us today, is sacrificial.

- i. Everything Jesus did for us was sacrificial.
 - ii. Paul described it in Romans 5:6-8.
 - (1) Jesus sacrificed Himself even for those who don't return His love.
 - (2) That is the essence of loving one another with agape love.
- l. The life that Jesus led was sacrificial.
 - i. He told one man that He had no where to lay His head (Matthew 8:20).
 - ii. He endured the bitterness and hatred of the Jews in order to have opportunities to teach them.
- m. We know the death that He died was sacrificial.
 - i. Hebrews 9:26.
 - ii. He was and is our sin offering (2 Corinthians 5:21).
- n. There is a song we often sing at camp that has the words "I love you with the love of the Lord" as one of the main phrases.
 - i. This love of the Lord is not an easy love.
 - ii. It has a cost in that it calls for sacrifices by the one doing the loving, not the one being loved.
 - iii. We should ask ourselves if we truly have the love of the Lord in us.
- o. I looked for a while to see if Jesus is ever recorded as saying He loved mankind, any group, or any individual person.
 - i. I couldn't find that type wording anywhere in the New Testament.
 - ii. However, do we not know that Jesus loved us?
- p. I know that we are told "For God so loved the world..."
 - i. However, He didn't simply say He loved us.
 - ii. He showed us His love by giving His Son.
 - iii. Paul said He commended, which translated in modern language means showed.
- q. This love of Jesus that He modeled for us is an action word.
 - i. It is a love that is shown rather than told.
 - ii. There is nothing wrong with telling people you love them but your actions will speak much louder than your words.
- r. The love of Jesus was on display every day of His ministry.
- s. It must be on display in our lives as well.

III. The mark (John 13:35).

- t. The reason it must be on display every day is because it is a distinguishing mark of being a disciple of Jesus.
 - i. One who truly seeks the highest good for all others is, without a doubt, a true disciple of Jesus.
 - ii. People will know we are such if we love one another.
- u. The way we treat one another and those in the world shows whether or not we are truly followers of Jesus.
 - i. If we only treat some people with love, we aren't true followers of Jesus.
 - ii. If we only treat our brethren with love, we aren't true followers of Jesus.
- v. A true disciple will love everyone alike.
 - i. Jesus said we are to love our enemies (Matthew 5:44).
 - ii. We are to love the brethren (1 Peter 1:22).
- w. As sound in doctrine as we may be, if we don't love the way we ought to love, all our study and effort will be a waste of time (1 Corinthians 13:1-3).

- i. The word “charity” is agape.
- ii. Without agape, sacrificial, love, it doesn't matter how right I am or what deeds I may do.
- x. Our love should be so strong for our brethren that we would be willing to do what Jesus did for us (1 John 3:16).
- y. When the world sees such love as this, some in the world will take notice and want to experience being loved in that manner and they will know we are disciples of Jesus.