

# LEARNING TO LOVE

## Int.

1. Aim: To show how we progress to the level of Christian love for one another.
2. The Bible teaches more about love than any other subject!!!
3. In John 15:12 Jesus says **"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you."**
4. 1 Jn. 3:11 **"For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another."**
  - a. When the first people heard about Christianity the first main message was "love one another".
  - b. Jesus even called love for the brethren something like a badge - John 13:35 **"By this shall all [men] know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."**
5. But How do you love someone that you do not like? Can we learn to love them?
  - a. There are some people we do not like as much as we do others.
  - b. How do we handle this problem in the church?
  - c. John describes levels of personal relationships and shows us how to really love one another in 1 Jn. 3:12-24

## Discussion

### I. MURDER - [lowest level]

- A. 1 Jn. 3:12 **"Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous."**
  1. In Gen. 4:4-15 we read about the story of Cain and Abel
  2. Cain murdered his own brother
  3. This is the lowest level of relationship that we can have
  4. "He was of that wicked one" - Satan dwells in those who act in this way
- B. Murder is always wrong
  1. God created life and we do not have the right to take the life of another.
  2. That is condemned - Ex. 20:13 & Deut. 5:17 "Thou shalt not Kill" is one of the 10 commandments
  3. Repeated in Rom. 13:9 - several other places in NT
  4. When love is absent murder can occur.
  5. You cannot murder someone that you love!!!

## **II. HATRED [second level]**

- A. 1 Jn. 3:13-15 "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. 14. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. 15. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."
1. Jesus warned his disciples that the world would hate them
    - a. John 15:18-19 **"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before [it hated] you. 19. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."**
    - b. So they should not be surprised
  2. But when we love one another it shows we are children of God and not children of the devil.
- B. But if we hate one another he calls us a murderer
1. Uses the word hate in contrast to the word love
  2. Hate is the absence of love - absence of love is hating
  3. He who hates his brother is a murderer:
    - a. This does not mean he has committed the act of murder
    - b. But he has exhibited the disposition and spirit of a murderer
    - c. Murder is hatred expressed in action.
    - d. If hatred does not bring murder it is because of lack of opportunity or lack of courage on the part of the hater.
- C. Matt. 5:21-22 **"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: 22. But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."**
1. Jesus condemned not only murder - but the act of hatred which precedes murder.
  2. Unnecessary anger is condemned !! Being angry with his brother without a cause.
  3. Tongue murder is wrong!!
    - a. To say things of hatred about our brother is wrong.
    - b. It is just as wrong as murder!
    - c. Why? It shows a lack of love!!
    - d. Jesus wants us to learn to love one another.

### **III. INDIFFERENCE [Third level]**

- A. 1 Jn. 3:16-17 "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. 17. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"
1. Christ laid down his life for us - this was a demonstration of his great love for us!!
  2. We ought to be willing to lay down our lives for each other
  3. But some will not do anything for each other. They see them in need but refuse to help.
- B. This is a matter of indifference
1. We don't really care
  2. We will not get involved and help those who are in need.
  3. Some may excuse their indifference by saying that they do not hate their brother, but they just don't want to take the time to get involved in the lives of others.
  4. The love of God does not dwell in that indifferent person.
  5. Christianity is more than just not doing bad. It is doing good.
    - a. Gal. 6:10 **"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."**
    - b. Jas. 4:17 **"Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."**
  6. The opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference.
  7. This third level of indifference is not how God wants us to act toward one another!!!!

### **IV. CHRISTIAN LOVE [Fourth Level]**

- A. 1 Jn. 3:18-24
1. 1 Jn. 3:18 **"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."**
    - a. We are to love with action not just in words.
    - b. Love is not just a feeling - it is doing!
    - c. The world is loaded with "word lovers" and "tongue lovers" but Christians are expected to love in deed and in truth.
    - d. Gal. 5:14 **"For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."**

- e. How do we love ourselves? Do we just repeat the words "I love me"? No we show our love for our self by taking care of self.
  - f. Let us love our neighbor with our deeds not just our words. Actions demonstrate true love
2. 1 Jn. 3:19 **"And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him."**
    - a. When we love in deed then we know we are doing the right and true thing.
    - b. This gives us confidence we are doing God's will
  3. 1 Jn. 3:20-22 **"For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. 21. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. 22. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight."**
    - a. We may have uneasy feelings because of our imperfections in really loving one another.
    - b. But if we are really sincere and honest in trying to love our fellow man in deed and truth then God will be pleased.
    - c. God answers our prayers if we do two things:
      - (1) Keep his commandments
      - (2) Do the things pleasing in his sight
  4. 1 Jn. 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."**
    - a. Two commands:
      - (1) Believe in Christ
      - (2) Love one another
    - b. By faith in Christ he means trust in Him. When we trust him we will practice what He teaches us to do. Love one another.
  5. 1 Jn. 3:24 **"And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us."**
    - a. Similar to Jn. 14:23 **"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."**

- b. If we keep His commands he dwells in us
  - c. He abides in us through the spirit which he has given us in his word.
  - d. Gal. 5:22-23 **"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23. Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."**
  - e. When we obey His word it produces certain effects in our lives.
- B. Christian Love - is what he is describing in these verses
- 1. It means we really love one another in deed and truth
  - 2. To love one another is to have real concern for the physical and spiritual welfare of all men, and especially of brethren in Christ.
- C. But how can I love someone that I don't really like?
- 1. Love is not just feeling, its doing.
  - 2. Do what love commands and you'll be all right.
  - 3. But some would object and say: "Well I'd be a hypocrite if I acted like that."
  - 4. No!!! A hypocrite is someone who does not intend to be what he pretends to be. He does not want to be any better. He wants to deceive to hurt another or take advantage of another.
  - 5. To act in the proper way toward other people is what Christ commands of us.
  - 6. For that person you just do not like you should:
    - a. Pray for them
    - b. Act in love toward them
    - c. Try to serve them or help them in some way
    - d. Be nice to them - talk kindly to them and about them
    - e. There must be no hatred for them, even if they are your enemies, and they hate you.
    - f. Even for those who are unlovable, let us act like Jesus and give them our love.
    - g. We can always do what love should do even when we do not feel like it.
- D. A Christian should hate anything that is evil and sinful
- 1. But we must not hate the evil doer
    - a. We hate the sin but love the sinner
    - b. I hate cancer, but love cancer patients

2. When we hate the person we have gone against the commands of Jesus.
3. We must learn to see the symptoms of hatred and get rid of hatred and replace it with genuine Christian love.
4. Three things to do when we recognize hatred for others;
  - (1) Pray to God and ask forgiveness of this sin of hatred
  - (2) Pray to God in behalf of the other person
  - (3) Make a real effort to find something good to do for this person.
5. The best way to destroy an enemy is to make him a friend.

### **Conclusion**

1. What is love?
  - a. Love is a quality that exists only in relationships - to God and man.
  - b. Love is a genuine concern for the good of another.
  - c. Love for our fellow man is just a deep, genuine concern for another person's good.
2. A Christian is one who loves and cares for other people.
3. Here in 1 Jn. 3 we have three levels of relationships that demonstrate a lack of love and then we have that final one which is real love.
  - a. 1st level - murder - no love
  - b. 2nd level - Hatred - absence of love
  - c. 3rd level - indifference - opposite of love
  - d. 4th level - real love - desires the best for everyone - even our enemies.
4. We can learn to love as God commands!
5. 1 Cor. 16:14 asv "**Let all that ye do be done in love.**"

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