

2-17-19 Message **BEING TAUGHT BY GOD HOW TO LOVE**

Intro: This past week we celebrated Valentines day. Usually this time of the year we think about expressing our love for each other. The truth be told, the concept of love is really suffering in the day that we live. Divorce is at an all time high. We live in a day of mass murders, shootings, violence, divisions, strife.. We can rightly say "WHERE IS THE LOVE" We read in the Bible:

Matthew 24:12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

That is a perfect description of the hearts of people in the day that we live. The hearts of many are waxing cold. As we consider the topic of love this morning we need to realize that the Bible teaches that:

I John 4:7 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

I John 4:8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

There we have it. **GOD IS LOVE.**

Let me suggest to you that the further removed we are from God the less love we will have. Mortal men do not know how to love. God teaches us how to love. The further removed we are from the God the less we will love each other.. the closer we get to the Lord the more we will learn to love each other.

I John 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

The world elevates romantic love this time of the year.. Yet how short lived that romance is. Shortly after the honeymoon is over many of these people who are so madly in love are fighting like cats and dogs.

So in essence, mankind does not know how to love apart from God, for God is love. The greatest example of love is Christ. There is no greater love than Christ's love.

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I John 4:8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

I John 4:9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

I John 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

I John 4:11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

I John 4:12 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

CHRIST TEACHES US HOW TO LOVE:
CHRIST IS THE PERFECT EXAMPLE OF GOD'S LOVE..

The Bible says Herein is love. It could say that herein is Christ. For Christ is the manifestation of God's love to the World.

I John 4:8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

If we want to know what love is all we need to know what Christ was like. Jesus said, He and the Father were one and that no man can come to the Father but by Him. In fact to know Him is to know God and He was indeed God manifest in the flesh.

According to the Bible, love did not start with us, it started with God. When we receive His love He teaches us how to love. Since God is love, when we receive Christ we receive the love of God in our hearts and then we can love. Apart from Christ we do not know how to love. So if we want to learn how to love the first thing we need to do is receive Christ.

I. The First Step In Learning To Love Is To Be Saved:

I John 4:9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

Romans 5:5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

Love is one of the greatest fruits of the spirit. Without salvation we are a self centered people. Everything revolves around us. One of the greatest fruits of the spirit is LOVE.

Galatians 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

What was the greatest manifestation of God's love for us?

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

I John 4:9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

God manifested his love for us by sacrificing himself for us. By giving his life as a substitute for our sins.

I John 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Before we are saved we do not love God, and in fact even our love for our fellow men is somewhat limited and selfish. Jesus loved us when we were unloveable.

Think about this next level of abortion. After a baby is born the parent can decide if they want it? In other words. If the baby has a deformity maybe they would decide to kill it. So abortion is be extended beyond the womb. Why not? This is the unsaved world admitting that there is no difference between a newborn baby and the baby when in the womb. They are liars and have no regard for the life of that unborn child.

Jesus loved us when there was nothing lovable about us.

Romans 5:6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

Romans 5:7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

Romans 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

When we get saved we become like Christ. This is characteristic of salvation. It is a fruit of the spirit. THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS LOVE. LOVE. LOVE. What was the manifestation of God's love toward us? He sacrificed for us.

Jesus came into this world to give.
Satan takes and his children take.
The children of God give.

When you get saved you become like Christ. This differentiates the children of God from the children of the devil. Judas came into the fold and was a thief. He was stealing money from the treasury. He was a leach. God's people give. Because they have the spirit of God in them.

What was the manifestation of the love of God towards us? HE GAVE.
What was the evidence that God loved us? HE SENT HIS SON INTO THE WORLD.

Do you want to love? Be like God.

Without the spirit of God in your heart you can't be like God.

An unsaved person is self centered.
An unsaved person is selfish..
An unsaved person is unlike Christ unlike God.

To love, you have to be like Christ, you have to be like God.

GOD SO LOVED, THAT HE GAVE.

Satan and his children take.
Satan and his children steal.
Satan and his children murder.

Christ sacrificed himself in love.
Christ gave his life so we can have life.
Christ became poor so we can be rich.

Do you want to learn to love? Then you need to get saved.

Then you become like God, for God is love and you will possess love also!
YOU CANNOT LOVE LIKE GOD UNTIL YOU ARE SAVED. LOVE WILL LIVE IN YOUR HEART WHEN YOU GET SAVED.

The Bible says that sometimes the good nature of God's people will draw unsaved people into the fold for selfish reasons.

Jude 1:12 These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots;

They are called spots in your feasts of charity. In other words, they come into the church to take and not to give because they have not the Holy Spirit of God. THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS LOVE. And how did God manifest His love towards us? HE GAVE US SOMETHING!

How do we manifest our love? The same way!

I remember before I was saved and I was in Florida with our band. I was about 19 years old and was thinking seriously about my life and things I wanted to do in the future. We were coming home late at night after a gig and we went into a 7/11 store to get some snack items. I looked at the magazine rack for something to read. I saw a little booklet entitled, "are you bored?" I picked up the booklet and took it to the check out. They couldn't find a price on it so they just charged me 25 cents for it. When I got back to my motel room I took the little booklet and started to read it. It started out talking about boring people. People who were self centered. I thought, I know a lot of people like that! Then it said some people are boring because all they want to talk about is themselves. I thought yeah, I know people like that!

Then it went on and on to talk about things in life that bore people and cause people to feel unfulfilled. And then it began to say that there was one person that can change all this and give meaning to your life and that is the person of JESUS CHRIST, the Lord. When I read that I threw the booklet down and yelled out I've been tricked. I paid for a religious tract! The truth be told, I was that boring person and I didn't even know it. I was self centered.. I was living for myself, Everything was about me, me, me! I did not know the Lord but the Lord was trying to get my attention. My whole life was wrapped around my own success, and my own thing! Truth be told I did not know how to love because I did not have the love of God in my heart.

Before you can love you need to receive the Love of God in Jesus Christ!
Without Christ in your life you are self self self centered! When I picked up that tract God was trying to get my attention.

II. THE SECOND STEP TO LEARN TO LOVE LIKE CHRIST IS TO BE LIKE HIM IN THE AREA OF OUR PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS:

God is love.
Christ is love.
When you receive Christ you have the potential to love.

Notice I said potential to love. It does not mean that you will. It just means you have the ability and tools to be able to love like Christ loved you.

I John 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

I John 4:11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

I John 4:12 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

I John 4:13 Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

One of the greatest evidences that you are saved is that you become like Christ in the area of love. If God loved us we ought to love one another!

I John 3:14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.

The evidence that God loved us is that He sacrificed his son on the cross to save us. HE GAVE. What is the evidence that we love? It will be evident in what we do. He gave, now that we are saved we will want to give back to Him. To quote that old Hymn.

I give I gave my life for thee
What hast thou given for me?

Now here is the priority you should have in giving!

1. SHOW GOD YOUR LOVE: GIVE GOD THE PREMINENCE IN YOUR LIFE.

He loved us so now we should love Him..

God expects you to give him first place in your life through prayer, adoration, etc.

Matthew 22:37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

Mark 12:30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

I Corinthians 6:19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

I Corinthians 6:20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

When a person is saved they will want to show their love, their gratefulness to God. You put God first! Now how do you do that?

A. THROUGH PERSONAL DEVOTION, PRAYER, MEDITATION, BIBLE READING.

B. THROUGH PUBLIC DEVOTION, CHURCH, TITHING, SERVICE.

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

2. SHOW YOUR FAMILY YOUR LOVE: MAKE SACRIFICES FOR THEM.

He loved us so we should love one another.

Ephesians 5:22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

Ephesians 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

Ephesians 5:24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

Ephesians 5:26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

Ephesians 5:27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Ephesians 5:28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

Ephesians 5:29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

Ephesians 5:30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

Ephesians 5:31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

Ephesians 5:32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

Ephesians 5:33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

There needs to be love in the family!

Husbands love your wives!

Wives love your husbands.

When there is love in a home children will have a happy and safe place to grow spiritually.

An unsaved person will not know how to love his wife:

Just as Jesus sacrificed for us (His spiritual bride), a Christian husband needs to learn to sacrifice for his physical bride. What woman in her right mind would not want a Christian husband who is like Christ? What is shocking is that these liberals are more tolerant of the Moslem model of a family than Christians. The Moslems show no mercy or love or tolerance towards women at all. What man would not want his wife to be what Christ wants her to be? Ever since we have rejected the Bible in our nation today our marriages and families have suffered.

3. SHOW YOUR LOVE TO YOUR BROTHER IN CHRIST:

This is a special love we should have for our fellow Christians.

I John 3:14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.

I John 3:15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

I John 3:16 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.

I John 3:17 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?

I John 3:18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

There is a special love we should have for the brethren.

4. GOD TEACHES US HOW TO LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR (I.E. Your Fellow man).

Remember we do not know how to love! We love because He loved us.

When did He love us? When we were lovable? NO NO NO.

He loved us when we were sinners. We were alienated from God.

I say to you without the spirit of God we cannot love this way!

Also the Bible says as a Christian, we can walk in the Spirit or we can walk in the flesh. We need to make a conscious effort each day to walk in the Spirit. It does not come natural. This is especially true when you are tired, irritable, had a bad day, been taxed to your limit.

What helps is when you are meditating in the Word of God and staying close to the Lord in prayer.

If you want to know how to love and show love to your fellow man, meditate on the characteristics of love found in I Cor. 13.

I Corinthians 13:4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,
I Corinthians 13:5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;
I Corinthians 13:6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;
I Corinthians 13:7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

Do this and you will love your neighbor.

EVENING MESSAGE Part II

III. WE ALSO LEARN TO LOVE BY BEING LIKE CHRIST IN THE AREA OF VIRTUE AND HOLINESS

How could He who was so full of love and manifested that love towards so many be so hated? How is it that Christ, who did harm to no man, be so hated of so many, and in fact was so hated that the leaders and rulers conspired against Him to destroy Him.

So many people would think that if you are filled with the love of God that you will be loved back.

TO KNOW CHRIST IS TO KNOW WHAT LOVE IS.

AND WHAT IS THE GREATEST EXPRESSION OF THAT LOVE?

IF WE LOVE AS HE LOVED WHAT SHOULD WE LEARN ABOUT TRUE BIBLICAL LOVE?

BIBLICAL LOVE IS WRAPPED UP IN THE PERSON OF CHRIST, HE IS THE EXPRESSION OF GOD'S LOVE..

WHAT IS THE GREATEST CHARACTERISTIC OF CHRIST THAT WOULD EXPRESS WHAT LOVE IS:

The Bible describes Christ foremost as a person who came to testify of truth.

John 18:37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

John 18:38 Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all.

Jesus described himself as the WAY THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE.

I Cor. 13 shares the characteristics of love and says:

I Corinthians 13:6 (Love) Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

1. *HEREIN IS LOVE, TRUE GODLY LOVE WILL BEAR WITNESS OF THE TRUTH.*

It is interesting that we celebrate love on valentines day, but few people know anything about this fellow Valentine?

VALENTINE

According to church tradition Valentine was a Believer and Pastor who lived in Rome in about the year 270 A.D. At that time the Roman Emperor Claudius II was imprisoning Christians for not worshipping the Roman gods. During this persecution Valentine was arrested. Some say he was arrested because he was performing Christian marriages, but others say it was for helping Christians escape prison. During the trial they asked Valentine what he thought of the Roman gods Jupiter and Mercury. Of course Valentine said they were false gods and that the God that Jesus called Father was the only true God. So the Romans threw him in prison for insulting the gods.

While in prison Valentine continued to minister. He witnessed to the guards. One of the guards was a good man who had adopted a blind girl. He asked Valentine if his God could help his daughter. Valentine prayed and the girl was given her sight. The guard and his whole family, 46 people, believed in Jesus and were baptized. Because these people had come to know Jesus, Valentine praised God right there in his prison cell. When the emperor heard about this he was furious that Valentine was still making converts even in prison, so he had Valentine beheaded.

The tradition states that before he was beheaded he wrote a letter to the little blind girl and signed it your Valentine.

Valentine knew that he might get caught in his Christian activities. He knew that if he told the court the truth about the Roman gods that he would be thrown in prison. And he knew that if he continued to witness of Christ in the prison he would make his captors angry. But he continued, because he loved the Lord and his fellow humans. He was

willing to risk his life to free the prisoners and spread the Good News of Jesus Christ to those who needed to hear it.

Valentine was martyred for the truth. He would not acknowledge the pagan gods of Rome as being on an equal plane with the Lord Jesus.

Why are we surprised that when we have a love for Christ, and the truth is that others do not love us?

THE FIRST SERMON CHRIST PREACHED IN HIS HOME TOWN THEY SOUGHT TO KILL HIM.

Look, who wouldn't want to be around someone that gives. In fact, in John chapter 6 we read about thousands of people that wanted to make Jesus their King until he preached to them. Then they went away. Even Jesus feeding them and doing miracles could not take away the offence of preaching the truth to those who are not saved.

Look, we have lots of dinners around here. We don't charge for these dinners but a lot of people will not come to these events because they know when they come they will hear preaching.

2. THE SECOND GREAT CHARACTERISTIC OF CHRIST WAS THAT HE WAS RIGHTEOUS. HE WAS GOOD AND TAUGHT RIGHTEOUSNESS.

I John 3:13 Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.

I John 3:10 In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

I John 3:11 For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.

I John 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.

I John 3:13 Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.

I John 3:14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.

I John 3:15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

True love will seek to do what is right.

Herein is love not that we loved God but that He loved us and sent His son to not only bear witness of the truth but to be an example to the world of doing good and right.

Why are we surprised that when we love as He loved many will not appreciate us for it.

Abel did right and suffered because of it.

I John 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.

3. THE LAST GREAT CHARACTERISTIC OF CHRIST IS THAT HE CHANGED PEOPLES LIVES FOR THE BETTER.

He is the WAY THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE.

Jesus came to give us life. He became the propitiation for our sins, and not our sins only, but the sins of the whole world.

Application:

As we become like Christ in this ungodly world we too should:

- 1. BE FILLED WITH TRUTH.**
- 2. BE FILLED WITH GOOD WORKS.**
- 3. BE GIVERS OF LIFE.**

What greater thing can we do than to share with other people the truth of the word of God and get them saved and see their lives changed.

Before I was saved I did not give life. I was a taker. I played in a Rock band because that was what I enjoyed doing. I did what made me happy and would still be doing that if Christ had not saved me.

Application: Herein is love.

1. Have you received Christ..

He is truth.

He is the way, filled with righteousness and good works.

He is life. He imparts life through his sacrifice on the cross.

When you receive Christ He teaches us how to love.

2. The evidence that God loved us is what he did for us.

He gave his life on the cross for our salvation.

The evidence that we are children of God is we love as he loved.

3. God is love and if we love as God we will be like God.

To be godly is to be like God and the greatest characteristic of Christ is His regard for the truth. He is the way the truth and the life. John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. He came to earth to testify of the truth.

In fact, this is the answer to that age old question, how could a loving God ever send anyone to hell? The answer is that the love that he has does not violate the truth. God is true and holy and righteous. So in His love He figured out a way to provide salvation for those who will come to Him. Those who reject Him must pay for their sins.