

## **Our Love For One Another**

No. 40

### **Introduction.**

- I. Once a skilled teacher of the Mosaic law came to Jesus to test His knowledge of the law and asked, “Teacher which is the great commandment of the law?”
  - A. Jesus responded. (Matt. 22:37-40).
    1. Jesus taught the greatest commandment is to love God.
    2. He taught love for “neighbor” is the second greatest of all the commandments. Some months ago we focused on the great commandment. Today let’s study the second greatest commandment.
  - B. Love is stressed throughout the New Testament. (Jn. 13:34, 35; Rom. 13:8; 1 Pet. 1:22; 1 Jn. 3:11; 4:7, 11).
- II. These are a few of the verses in the New Testament that set forth Christians are to love one another.
  - A. This love is not the weak word the world often depicts it to be. It is a powerful, motivating force that issues forth in many ways.
  - B. The purpose of this lesson is to reveal some ways love is demonstrated.
- I. **Helping Those In Need** - Love leads us to help those in need. (Gal. 6:10; Jas. 1:27; 1 Jn. 3:17, 18; Matt. 25:31-46).

**MAT 25:31 "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne.**

**MAT 25:32 "And all the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats;**

**MAT 25:33 and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left.**

**MAT 25:34 "Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.**

**MAT 25:35 'For I was hungry, and you gave Me {something} to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in;**

**MAT 25:36 naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.'**

**MAT 25:37 "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You drink?**

**MAT 25:38 'And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You?**

**MAT 25:39 'And when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?'**

**MAT 25:40 "And the King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, {even} the least {of them,} you did it to Me.'**

**MAT 25:41 "Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;**

**MAT 25:42 for I was hungry, and you gave Me {nothing} to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink;**

**MAT 25:43 I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.'**

**MAT 25:44 "Then they themselves also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?'**

**MAT 25:45 "Then He will answer them, saying, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.'**

**MAT 25:46 "And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."**

- A. **Edwin Markham**, the famous American poet, has written a poem inspired by this passage. In this poem he describes a cobbler, working at his little bench making shoes. He dreamed a dream and in that dream he thought that the Lord said, "I am going to come to your cobbler's shop and visit you today." When he awoke he cleaned his shop and set out some milk and bread on the table for the Lord. He then waited for the Lord to come. After a while a beggar came by and the cobbler invited him in and gave him a pair of shoes. Later, a poor woman came by. She, too, was in need so he gave her the bread and milk. Finally, there came a lost child, weeping for his parents. He found the parents of the child. When night fell he was disappointed for the Lord had not come. He dreamed again and chided the Lord, "Why did you not come?" The Lord replied, "I did come. You gave me a pair of shoes. You gave me bread and milk. You soothed away my tears."
- B. Let us always remember this fact. There is little or nothing we do for Jesus personally. Jesus is no loner on the cross. He is reigning in heaven at the right hand of God. He can call myriads of angels to minister to His every desire or need.
1. We have learned, however, that when we help a poor person it is one and the same as if we helped Jesus. When we fail to help a poor person, we have neglected Christ.
  2. In view of this fact, we should ask ourselves, How have we been treating Jesus lately? How many poor people have we helped this year? How many poor people have we fed and clothed? How many needy widows and orphans have we helped?" These are questions that Jesus will ask us in the judgment. The answer we give will determine our salvation.

## **II. Teaching Others The Word Of God - Love leads us to teach others the word of God.**

A. **Paul** said. (Rom. 1:14).

1. Paul affirmed he was "a debtor."
2. Paul made this statement in view of the great love and mercy that had been shown him. Because he had received love and mercy, he felt a debt, he felt compelled to share Christ with others.

3. We are also debtors to teach others the gospel of Christ.

B. Not only are we to teach others, but we are to teach them in love. (Eph. 4:15).

1. I once read **a story of a man who burst into a store** and asked the storekeeper to lend him \$5.00 to buy a bat to hit a preacher with.. “What for?” asked the storekeeper. The man replied, “Because he told me I was going to hell.” A few weeks later the same man burst into the same store saying. “Lend me \$5.00. I want to give it to the preacher down the street.” The storekeeper inquired, “Why do you want to give him \$5.00?” He replied, “Because he told me I was going to hell.” “Now wait a minute,” said the storekeeper. “What’s going on here? Last time you wanted \$5.00 it was to get something to hit a preacher for telling you that you were going to hell; and today you want to give a preacher \$5.00 for telling you the same thing. What’s the answer?” The man thought for a moment and then he said, “Well, the first preacher told me I was going to hell and it looked like it tickled him to death. This preacher told me I was going to hell, and it looked like it broke his heart.”

2. This story vividly illustrates the importance of love in our teaching.

a. A Christian must teach others in love. If we teach in love, we can say almost anything to a person and he will love us rather than hate us for it.

b. **This does not mean our preaching and teaching is to be soft.** Soft teaching does not have the power to root out sin and convert the sinner. We must strongly rebuke sin, yet with the compassion that softens the sinner’s heart and lead him to repentance.

III. **Restore The Erring** - Love leads the Christian to restore the erring.

A. Many Christians have fallen and others are weak and on the verge of falling.

B. The Christian is not harsh or arrogant or indifferent with these people. The Christian lovingly seeks to encourage and restore. (Gal. 6:1,2).

C. An unknown author has written these words.

“Deal kindly with the erring,  
Oh, do not thou forget,  
However darkly stained by sin,  
He is thy brother yet.

Forget not thou has often sinned,  
And sinful yet must be:  
Deal kindly with the erring one,  
As God dealt with thee.”

IV. **Not To Speak Evil Of Others** - Love leads the Christian not to speak evil of others. (Jas. 4:11).

A. Instead of speaking evil of others the Christian always tries to find something good to say about them. He knows you can find something good to say about anyone.

1. One time **a woman who make this statement** was challenged. The challenger said, “What can you say good about the devil?” The woman thought for a moment and then said, “One good thing you can say about the devil is that he’s industrious.”

2. If we can find something good to say even about the devil, certainly we can find something good to say about others.

3. Someone has written.

There is so much bad in the best of us,  
And so much good in the worst of us,  
That it ill behooves any of us  
To speak evil of the rest of us.

B. The poem 3 gates also contains a fine lesson on this point.

If you are tempted to reveal  
A tale some one to you has told

Give a truthful answer. And the next  
Is the last narrowest: 'Is it kind?'

About another, make it pass,  
Before you speak, three gates of gold -

Then you may tell the tale, nor fear  
What the result of speech may be.

Three narrow gates: first, 'Is it true?'  
Then, 'Is it needful?' In your mind

V. **Returning Good For Evil** - Love is also demonstrated by returning good for evil.

A. **Jesus** said. (Matt. 5:43-48).

B. **Paul** wrote. (Rom. 12:19-21).

C. It has been said to return good for good is human; to return evil for evil is carnal; to return evil for good is devilish; to return good for evil is divine.

### **Conclusion.**

I. Paul penned these words in 1 Corinthians 13. (1 Cor. 13:1-8, 13).

**1CO 13:1 If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.**

**1CO 13:2 And if I have {the gift of} prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.**

**1CO 13:3 And if I give all my possessions to feed {the poor,} and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.**

**1CO 13:4 Love is patient, love is kind, {and} is not jealous; love does not brag {and} is not arrogant,**

**1CO 13:5 does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong {suffered,}**

**1CO 13:6 does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth;**

**1CO 13:7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.**

**1CO 13:8 Love never fails; but if {there are gifts of} prophecy, they will be done away; if {there are} tongues, they will cease; if {there is} knowledge, it will be done away.**

**1CO 13:13 But now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.**

II. Yes, love is the greatest of all gifts. It leads us to seek the good of others. It led God to give His only begotten Son on the cross for the sins of man. I pray that it will lead you to Christ.

III. Once a **religious fanatic was speaking** to a group on a street corner. He wore a long white robe and a long beard. He declared that he was Christ come back upon the earth again. A man came up to him and said, "Let me see your hands." The man held out his hands and the other man said, "You are not the Christ. You don't have any nail print in your hands."

- A. Yes, Jesus had the nail prints in His hands. He is the One who had nails driven into His hands and feet. He shed His precious blood for our sins.
- B. He loves you and wants to save you. Won't you love Him back. Come and surrender your life to Him as we stand and sing.

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