

As I have loved you—The new commandment

For some people, when they hear love, they think of romantic or sexual kind of love. Actually, what most people today call love is nothing but lust.

Love is not always talking about a romantic kind of love. There is a God kind of love, not just an earthly or worldly kind.

If I were to ask some people what the second greatest commandment is, they will boldly say, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as you love yourself."

- i) Leviticus 19:18 Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.
- ii) The truth is you can't love your neighbor as you love yourself. You just can't do it.

Who is your neighbor?

Your neighbor is not just someone who lives close to you. This can be a person sitting close to you but above all someone who crosses your path.

What if you don't love yourself?

- a) The truth is that you can't love thy neighbor as yourself if you don't love yourself. I couldn't tell you how many people that do not love themselves. What happens if you love yourself today but don't tomorrow?
- b) We need to find a much more consistent and fixed basis or standard to love our neighbor. Loving ourselves is not it.

If this (Leviticus 19:18) is the 2nd greatest commandment, then the effort is on you! This makes it practically impossible. Doing things to show that you love your neighbor doesn't always mean you do. To me, this seems to be more of an outside action than a heartfelt and originated love. This kind of love can have dissimulation and Hypocrisy in it.

However, loving your neighbor as the Lord has loved you can't be faked. It has to flow from the inside out. It's long-lasting and it goes far. This love of God controls your actions from the inside out while the OT law controls people's actions from the outside.

A. 1 John 4:10-11, 19 "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his son to be propitiation for our sins." Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.¹⁹ We love him, because he first loved us.

a) The greatest demonstration of love is not us loving God but God loving us—Huge difference! Before we ever did anything lovely and loveable, God loved us. So, God's kind of love was independent of our actions and our goodness.

b) Jesus loved us like no other. He loved us beyond reason or any reason we can come up with. His love for us is extravagant.

c) Additionally, we see that Love gives. When God loved, He gave. Love can't be demonstrated or manifested to its fullest without actions.

i) We must have actions to second our love.

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

B. **John 13:34-35** "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." **John 15:12** "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you."

a) New Commandment. This is not something that the disciples knew or had heard of. It was brand new.

- b) We are to love one another. How? **As He has loved us.** John 15:12 says, "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you."
- c) This is not a command to love God or about loving God. It's a command to love others as Christ has loved us. Huge difference! It's one thing to love your neighbor as you love yourself, but it's all another level to love others as Christ loved you. **Why?**
- i) It's practically impossible to do so if you have never received Christ as your Lord or never received His love for you.
 - ii) **You can't give what you don't have. First, you must receive it before you can give it.**
 - You can't give what you don't have.
 - iii) You can't love another if you have never been loved or have never received love.
 - iv) God is not asking you to do what He has not demonstrated IN you and at you. He is not asking you to do what you are not equipped to do.
- d) God is calling you into a personal relationship with Him that will reveal His love for you and then you can turn around and love your brother and neighbor as He has loved you.
- i) So, before we can even consider loving others as Christ loved us, we must ask ourselves if we have ever received the love of Christ. You can only withdraw what is in your account. Empty account = Zero withdraw.
- e) If you are struggling to love another, it's probably because you have not received God's love for you or you do not have a revelation of it.

- i) Why? Because a revelation or a reception of God's love will release us to love one another. That's why the Lord said *as I have loved you!*

C. 1 John 2:7-8—If you hate your brother, you aren't walking in this new commandment. You aren't loving others (your brother) as Christ has loved you.

- a) The OT commandment Lev 19:18 quoted in the NT (Matthew 22:37-40, Romans 13:9-10, Galatians 5:14, and James 2:8) has been repealed and swallowed up by the new and superior command of **loving others as Christ has loved us**—Christ kind of love (unconditional love).

“Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.” —Romans 13:8-10