

THE NEW COMMANDMENT

jkroberts_us@yahoo.com

July 16, 2017

John 13:31-35

1. After washing His disciple's feet and spending some time around the table Jesus sent Judas out into the night to carry out his plan to betray Jesus to the Jewish leaders and the Roman authorities.
2. Once Judas was gone Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper and continued to prepare the eleven remaining disciples for what was about to take place.
3. In the process He taught them important truths that would become clear to them once they received the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost.
4. After speaking about His departure Jesus set forth what He referred to as "a new commandment."
 - a. Notice that He issued the new commandment to His followers.
 - b. He declared that we are to love each other even as He has loved us.
 - c. He pointed out that all men would know that we are Jesus' disciples if and when we love each other with the same love with which He loves us.
5. In summing up the Christian life the Apostle John wrote, "And this is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us. And the one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And we know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us." 1 John 3:23-24
6. John stated that he wrote 1 John so that we who profess to believe in Jesus would know that we have eternal life. 1 John 5:13
7. One of the things that will characterize the life of a genuine Christian is that they will love other Christians with a Christ-like love. 1 John 5:1

"Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him."
8. John almost overemphasizes this point to be sure he is understood.
 - a. 1 John 3:10

10 By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.
 - b. 1 John 3:14

14 We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death.
 - c. 1 John 4:7-8

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.
 - d. 1 John 4:19-21

19 We love, because He first loved us. 20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates (fails to love) his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. 21 And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.
9. Let me share three thoughts related to keeping the new commandment.

I. Listen to Jesus.

- A. By that I mean we need to understand that Jesus is Lord and expects to be taken seriously.
- B. We are not talking about a new suggestion, but rather a new commandment—a commandment that goes beyond previous commandments.
- C. The Old Testament Law commanded that we are to love our neighbor as ourselves, but the new commandment states that we are to love others with the same love with which Jesus loves us.
- D. Jesus could say to many of His professed followers, "Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?" Luke 6:46
- E. In a later message we are going to look at Jesus' declaration related to loving Him that we find in John 14:15, 21, 24
 - “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments...He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me...He who does not love Me does not keep my words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me.”

II. Learn from Jesus.

- A. If we want to know what it means to love others with the same love with which Jesus has loved us we need to examine His life and teaching. John 13:1
 - Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.
- B. John summed up Christ's love this way. 1 John 3:16-18
 - 16 We know (define) love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. 17 But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? 18 Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth. (**The love Jesus manifested was an active, sacrificial love.**)
- C. A thoughtful study of the Gospels will help us to evaluate the quality of our love for others.

III. Lean on Jesus.

- A. The first question we need to answer is do we really want to obey the new commandment?
 - NOTE: If we do not we should find out the reason why because the genuineness of our salvation is in doubt.
- B. If we do, then we must abide in and depend on Jesus to manifest His love in us.
 - 1. Paul wrote, “I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.” Philippians 4:13
 - 2. Jesus declared, “I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.” John 15:5
- C. Paul stated that the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. Romans 5:5
- D. Note Jesus' invitation and promise found in John 7:37-39
 - 37 Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. 38 "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" 39

But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

E. And of course the fruit of the Spirit is love which manifests itself in many ways.

Gal 5:21-23

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

APPLICATION

1. The current day concept of simply attending church is foreign to the teaching of God's Word.
2. The corporate life of a local church depends upon our love for God and our Christ-like love for one another.
3. Those who only "go to church" are not really manifesting a Christ-like love for fellow believers.
4. Many so-called Christians actually prefer to keep company with the world rather than with other believers.
5. They claim to know and love God but have no desire to know and love others who have been begotten by God.