

Love for One Another

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” –

John 13:34-35

Christians are commanded to love, but loving people means we get our hands dirty. It means we invest in people's lives. It means we sacrifice our time even when we don't feel like it. It means we stop looking at outward appearances and think “souls.” It means we stop judging at every little word or deed. It means we get to know one another more than just casually in a church foyer.

Real love means we learn about each other's strengths and weaknesses. It means we occasionally set aside our own goals and ambitions to cry with someone or laugh with someone. It means we gently rebuke and speak the Truth in love because we want that person to go to heaven more than wanting to avoid conflict. It means we lay aside our pride and stop comparing ourselves or our families to others. It means we stop isolating ourselves, and instead, disciple a group of people. It means we discover other people have baggage – lots of baggage, but we love them anyway.

Jesus spent most of his ministry with twelve people – and some of that time He focused in on just three. He could have spent most of his time preaching to multitudes. He could have preached every night in different locations in an effort to reach as many as He could. He could have organized all kinds of programs and events to try and emphasize His message. But instead He invested time, energy, teaching, and love into just twelve. Those twelve then took what He shared with them and multiplied that love out to others.

This type of love is not something that comes from a church program or an event with 200 people. It's the type of love that is cultivated over meals in one another's homes. It's the type of love that grows from staying over too long at one another's house sharing a deep conversation- even if you know you have to be at work early in the morning. It's the kind of love that is shaped by running errands together. It is kind of love that is grown through hours and hours of being together. You can't force a congregation into this type of love. And you can't fake it.

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