

Studies in Christianity Christian Love #3

S#1.

Loving God By Sharing Him

S#2.

Text : **Acts 20: 16-27 ; Deuteronomy 6: 4-9**

S#3.

A. Last week we learned how God's people were taught to love Him in the O.T.

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|---------------|------------------|
| 1. Follow Him | 3. Listen to Him |
| 2. Fear Him | 4. Serve Him |
| 3. Obey Him | 5. Cling to Him |

B. This lesson seeks to explore one effect of love for God in our lives.

S#4.

1. When being tested Jesus was asked what was the most important command.
 - a. Interestingly, He did not sight one of the Ten Commandments.
 - b. **Matt. 22: 36** – “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.”
This is the great and foremost commandment.” (**Deut. 5:6**)
2. Without being asked, Jesus volunteered the second.
 - a. This second command is so closely related as to be part of the first.
 - b. **Matt. 22: 39** – The second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'
3. These two commands summarize God's will for mankind.
 - a. The 10-Com start with how to treat God and end with how to treat others.
 - b. **Matt. 22: 40** – On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."

I. Jesus refers to a type of love that is far beyond what is common to man.

S#5.

A. The Jews centered their lives around this command, called “The Shema.”

1. Each Jew started his prayers with these word ... **vs-4**.
Deut. 6: 4 – Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one! **5** You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

S#6.
2. This prayer was repeated at least twice each day.
 - a. The Jews understood the words of **vs. 7** to require morning and evening prayers.
Deut. 6: 7 – when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.
 - b. Ancient Jews were required three times of prayer : Day break, Afternoon, Evening.
 - c. They also prayed after each meal to acknowledge God as their provider.

B. The love God wants from man doesn't form like love between two people. S#7.

1. When one person becomes attracted to another person, there is a physical aspect.
 - a. Normally, the first attraction is to the appearance of another.
 - b. The attraction is confirmed by the character of the other person.
2. When one person is attracted to another he/she waits for a visual response.
3. Love develops over time as life experiences are shared.
4. Romantic activity may occur after love has developed, but it is **NOT** part of the process of developing love.
5. Many today mistake passion for love.
 - a. Passion is as easily gone as it is aroused. (42–45% *of marriages get divorced*)
 - b. Millennials are choosing not to marry and are just casually cohabiting.

C. God doesn't want man's conditions based love. S#8.

1. Love for God cannot be based upon or grow from physical attraction.
John 4: 24 – "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."
2. One does not have a relationship with God that requires mutual development.
 - a. A loving relationship between two people requires both to develop commitment.
 - b. God loved us before we were born so all the development is on man's side.
I John 4: 10 – In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.
19 – We love, because He first loved us.
3. God will not be a party to a 50/50 relationship.
 - a. Marriages that are **50 / 50** propositions will fail because they are **CONDITIONAL**.
 - b. A true marriage is **100 / 100** with each partner totally committed to the other.

D. God wants our love for Him to be like His love for us. S#9.

1. Love is the foundation of God's character.
I John 4: 8 – The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.
2. God expects that we will love Him with an all-consuming and unconditional love.
Matt. 22: 36 – You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.
 This is the great and foremost commandment
3. Love for God must permeate every aspect of one's being .. *act w/o making a decision*

II. A love that totally consumes one cannot be hidden, it must be shared. S#10.

A. Paul compromised his personal desires to meet the needs of the brethren. S#11.

1. **Acts 20: 16** – For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus so that he would not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be in Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost. **17** From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church.
2. Our love for God does not fit into our daily schedule, **God comes first**.
3. Paul was not going to Jerusalem on a personal mission; he was taking the collection.

B. The Apostle holds his life up as an example to reinforce his teaching.. S#12.

1. **Acts 20: 18** – And when they had come to him, he said to them, "You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, how I was with you the whole time, (**I Cor. 11:1**–*Be imitators of me*)
2. I was with you for years so you saw me in every circumstance of life. **Consistency**
3. The gospel must be communicated by words, but our life will reinforce **or** destroy.

C. The consistent lifestyle must be marked by a humble and gentle spirit. S#13.

1. **Acts 20: 19** – serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials which came upon me through the plots of the Jews; (**lowly mind**)
2. Same concept is taught in Eph. 4 as the Apostle urges unity among brethren.
Eph. 4: 1 – Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,
2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, **3** being diligent to preserve the unity
3. We must cultivate the right mindset within ourselves. (**graciousness of spirit**)
 - a. You are always being observed. **Must develop a tender heart that directs life**.
 - b. One outburst from one member can effect the reputation of the church for years.
 - c. THE CHURCH IS ALWAYS BEING JUDGED ON THE BASIS OF YOUR LIFE.

D. One who loves God must have a compassionate heart. S#14.

1. **Acts 20: 19** – serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials which came upon me through the plots of the Jews;
2. How do you feel about the people God brings into your life ? (**heart determines**)
 - a. The natural man will be judgmental of those in open sin.
 - b. Sin affects everyone ... even Christians ... **Gal. 6** - bear burdens ... **Jas. 5** - pray
 - c. **Mark 6: 34** ... Jesus saw crowd ... sheep w/o shepherd ... compassion ... taught

E. One must have the strength to continue on in the face of trials.**S#15.**

1. If ever a person had a reason to stop sharing the gospel, it was Paul
Acts 20: 19 – serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials
 which came upon me through the plots of the Jews;
2. Notice the response of the Apostle Paul was not to give up, but to empathize.
II Cor. 11:23 – Are they servants of Christ? — I speak as if insane — I more so; **S#16.**
 in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without
 number, often in danger of death. **24** Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine
 lashes. **25** Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was
 shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. **26** I have been on frequent
 journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my **S#17.**
 countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the
 wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren; **27** I have been in labor
 and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food,
 in cold and exposure. **28** Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure
 on me of concern for all the churches. **29** Who is weak without my being weak? Who is
 led into sin without my intense concern?
3. All of us have the responsibility to share the Gospel, but none will suffer as Paul did.
 * *We must develop to fortitude to press on the way the Apostle Paul continued on.*
4. The gospel is spread on the road of relationships and often that road
 goes through valleys of trials, of suffering and of dark places.

F. We must develop the boldness in proclamation that characterized Paul.**S#18.**

1. **Acts 20: 20** – how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was
 profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house,
21 solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance
 toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.
2. It is not just about a consistent life, a humble and gentle spirit, more than a
 compassionate heart, and the strength to stand in the face of trials, we must
 develop the love that will cause us to directly share the saving message of Christ.
3. The gospel is communicated by words that demands actions when saves people:
 - a. One must learn enough about Jesus that he will put his trust in Him to save him.
 - b. One must repent ... He must be instructed to turn away from sin and serve God.
4. The message is not just .. “You need to come to our church.” *You need to repent.*
5. People will respond because your life has been consistent,
 Because it has the message is shared by a humble and gentle spirit
 Because they have witnessed within you a heart of compassion (*care is observable*)
 Because they have seen the strength of your faith as you have endured trials **S#19.**

* *The goal is to lead people into a saved relationship with God, NOT teach doctrine.*

III. When was the last time you actually shared the gospel with someone.**S#20.****S#21.****A. It takes a sincere and wholehearted love for God to develop the heart of Acts 20.**

1. **Deut. 6: 4** – Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one! **5** You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.
2. Belief does not motivate one like loving with all one's heart, soul and might.
3. In order to have this love for God, one must surrender his whole life to God.

B. Love for one's neighbor ABOVE himself grows out of this love for God.**S#22.**

1. **Lev. 19: 18** – ... but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the Lord.
2. **Phil. 2: 3** – Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves;
3. *"What right do I have to be saved while my neighbor has no hope?"*

C. Have you ever talked with your neighbor about her eternal soul ?**S#23.**

1. Listen to this direct quote from Jesus :
Mark 8: 38 – "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."
2. I Leave you with the words of #663 in our old songbooks.

S#24.

When in the better land before the bar we stand,
How deeply grieved our souls will be;
If any lost one there should cry in deep despair,
"You never mentioned Him to me."

CHORUS: You never mentioned Him to me,
You helped me not the way to see;
You met me day by day and knew I was astray,
Yet never mentioned Him to me."

O let us spread the word _ where e'er it may be heard,
Help groping souls the light to see,
That yonder none may say, "You showed me not the way."
You never mentioned Him to me. CHORUS

S#25.

A few sweet words may guide a lost one to His side,
Or turn sad eyes on Calvary;
So work as days go by, that yonder none may cry,
"You never mentioned Him to me." CHORUS

INVITATION : Have you given your heart to God ... what is the result ?**S#1.** ... Communion slide

Lesson Text :**Acts 20: 16-27**

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17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church. **18** And when they had come to him, he said to them, "You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, how I was with you the whole time, **19** serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials which came upon me through the plots of the Jews; **20** how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house, **21** solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. **22** "And now, behold, bound by the Spirit, I am on my way to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there, **23** except that the Holy Spirit solemnly testifies to me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me. **24** "But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God.

25 And now, behold, I know that all of you, among whom I went about preaching the kingdom, will no longer see my face.

26 "Therefore, I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. **27** For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God."

Deut. 6: 4-9

4 Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one! **5** You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. **6** These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. **7** You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. **8** You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. **9** You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.