

Studies in Christianity Christian Love #9

S#1.

Love For the Brethren

S#2.

Text : **John 13: 34-35 ; I John 4: 7 – 5: 4**

S#3.

A. No study about the basics of Christianity would be complete w/o studying love.

1. From God's own lips the two greatest commandments is that we should love.

Matt. 22: 36 – And He (*God the Son*)said to him, “You shall love the lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.
38 This is the great and foremost commandment. **39** "The second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'”

- a. We've looked at our love for God.
- b. We've seen some of the ramifications of loving our fellowman.
- c. We zeroed in on the special love we are to have for lost souls.

S#4.

2. All through the N.T. the Apostles emphasized the importance of loving the brethren.

- a. **I Pet. 4: 8** – Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.
- b. **I John 4: 7** – Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God;

- c. **Col. 3: 12** – So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; **13** bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. **14** Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.

S#5.

3. God said the love would be the identifying mark of HIS church.

S#6.

John 13: 34 – A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. **35** By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

B. History tells us that love ruled for 300 year until the persecution eased up.

In the book “History of the Early Church“ by David Bercot the chapter entitle “*Love Without Condition*” begins as follows :

At no other time in the history of Christianity did love so characterize the entire church as it did in the first three centuries. And Roman society took note. **Tertullian** reported that the Romans would exclaim, “See how they love one another!”

Justin Martyr sketched Christian love this way: “We who used to value the acquisition of wealth and possessions more than anything else now bring

what we have into a common fund and share it with anyone who needs it. We used to hate and destroy one another and refused to associate with people of another race or country. Now, because of Christ, we live together with such people and pray for our enemies.”

Clement, describing the person who has come to know God, wrote, “He impoverishes himself out of love, so that he is certain he may never overlook a brother in need, especially if he knows he can bear poverty better than his brother. He likewise considers the pain of another as his own pain. And if he suffers any hardship because of having given out of his own poverty, he does not complain.”

C. With this lesson we will introduce the love that flows between Christians. S#7.

1. Love is a command, not an emotion.
2. Love is a learned skill.
3. Our love must be patterned after Jesus.
4. Loving the brethren is linked to salvation.

I. Love is a command, not an emotion.

S#8.

S#9.

A. Emotions cannot be commanded, but love is often commanded in the scripture.

1. We have seen that God the Father and God the Son both commanded love.
2. We have also seen that love is universally commanded by the Apostles.
 - a. Peter ... **I Pet. 4: 8** – Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another
 - b. John ... **I John 4: 7** – Beloved, let us love one another,
 - c. Paul ... **Col. 3: 12** – Beyond all these things put on love

* 3. Notice : Love is to be “put on” not felt.

B. The biblical word translated “love” is most often “agapē” or “agapaō.”

1. This word does not refer to an emotional response to another.
2. It is the verb ... “**To love**” ... to be full of good-will and exhibit the same
3. More commonly defined as : “To seek the highest good for another.”

C. The love that God commands can be done in spite of what one feels.

1. **Luke 6: 27** – But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, **28** bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.

S#10.

2. Jesus set an example for us in doing this.

Rom 5: 8 – But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we **S#11.** were yet sinners, Christ died for us. **9** Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. **10** For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

D. There is supposed to be some emotional attachment between brethren. **S#12.**

1. **Rom. 12: 9** – Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. **10** Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; **11** not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; **12** rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, **13** contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.
2. Here, “**Brotherly love**” philadelphía ; fraternal affection:—brotherly love (kindness),
3. Members of the God’s family of are supposed to have the same bonds of affection as is typical of physical families.
 - a. **I Pet. 1:22** – Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for **S#13.** a sincere love of the brethren (philadelphía), fervently love (agapaō) one another from the heart,
** Peter here clearly refers to a strong emotional attachment.*
 - b. Compare : **II Pet. 1: 7, I John 5: 1, Heb. 13: 1, I Thes. 4: 9**

II. Biblical love (agape) is a learned skill.

S#14.

A. Man is born a blank slate, but quickly learns from his surroundings.

S#15.

1. However, some things are instinctive, natural to him from birth.
 - a. Breathing, Nursing, Clings,
 - b. Some things are just part of life in the flesh,
2. Some mental / emotional characteristics are instinctive as well,
 - a. Children have to be taught not to be jealous. (*survival depends on parents*)
 - b. Children are selfish by nature ... We teach them how to share.
3. Instinctive characteristics linger in the back of one’s mind even as adults.
 - a. Some people are more successful at overcoming their negatives than others.
 - b. The world limits some negatives, but encourages them ... be ambitious, but not too
4. To love as Christ taught is completely antithetical to human nature.

Phil. 2: 3 – Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves;

B. When Jesus was on the earth He had to learn how to live as a man. S#16.

1. **Luke 2: 52** – And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.
2. **Heb. 5: 8** – Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. **9** And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,

C. When we come into Christ we must learn to be like Him. S#17.

1. **Matt. 11: 29** – "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.
30 "For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."
2. The new Christian has his whole life reoriented. He must learn a new lifestyle.
II Cor. 5: 17 – Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; **S#18.**
the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.
3. If one applies himself to the task, with time and effort he will successfully transition.
Eph. 5: 7 – Therefore do not be partakers with them; **8** for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light ...
10 trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.
4. Developing a loving relationship with the brethren is part of that transition.

D. Any skill that is learned is improved by practice.

1. One learns to love one choice at a time.
2. The more decisions one makes to act lovingly the more skilled he becomes at loving.

III. Our love must be patterned after the love demonstrated by Jesus. S#19.**A. John 13: 34** – A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, **S#20.**
even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.**B. How did Jesus love us ?**

1. He left Heaven to come to earth to offer salvation to mankind.
John 1: 1 – In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and **S#21.**
the Word was God. **2** He was in the beginning with God. ... **14** And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.
2. Jesus treated people with love and compassion.
Matt. 9: 35 – Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching **S#22.**
in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness. **36** Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd.

3. Though the King of kings, Jesus became a servant of all.
Matt. 20: 27 – and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; **S#23.**
28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve,
 and to give His life a ransom for many."
4. Jesus was conscious that He was setting an example of love for us.
I John 3: 16 – We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us;
 and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

IV. Loving the brethren is linked to salvation.

S#24.

A. Our text very clearly states this fact.

S#25.

I John 4: 7 – 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.

B. Learning to love will change our lifestyle.

S#26.

I John 5: 2 – By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. **3** For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.

C. When we love God we will love His children, our fellow Christians.

S#27.

1. **I 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.
2. Thus, loving the brethren is proof that one loves God.
I John 5:2 – By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments.

CONCLUSION :

A. The life of the Apostle John is the greatest testimony of this lesson.

S#28.

1. Jesus gave John a nickname which indicated one who was very aggressive.
Mark 3: 17 – and James, the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James (to them He gave the name Boanerges, [boh-uh-nur-jeez] which means, "Sons of Thunder");
2. John became known as *"The Apostle of Love."*

B. **INVITATION :** How has being in Jesus changed your life ?

S#29.

S#30. ... Communion slide

Lesson Text :**John 13: 34-35**

34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. **35** " By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

I John 4: 7 – 5: 4

7 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. **9** By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. **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. **11** Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. **12** No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us. **13** By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. **14** We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.

15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. **16** We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. **17** By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world. **18** There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love. **19** We love, because He first loved us. **20** If someone says, "I love God," and hates 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.

5: 1 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him. **2** By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. **3** For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. **4** For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world — our faith.