

NEW SERIES--RELATIONSHIPS

LOVE

John 15

Have you heard the phrase, "I don't like him, but I love him." It's almost like "love" is something you have to sign up for, but don't really want to embrace. You don't want to, and don't enjoy spending time with someone, and only express "love" when there's some sort of crisis happening. Yet many "pop" songs written had a central theme of "love". Some examples:

April Love, My Secret Love, Hello Young Lovers, People Will Say We're in Love, Love Story, Portrait of My Love, True Love, Love Me Tender, Affair to Remember, Love and Marriage, etc.

The Greek language had several words to describe the different forms of "love".

romantic love

brotherly love

divine or Godly love--the love which Jesus spoke of and demonstrated, Recall John 3: 16 "God so loved, that He gave..."

In John 13: 34-35, Jesus gives a new commandment, important enough that it would be the emblem of the church, more important than anything else. Apostle Paul called LOVE "a more excellent way", as he wrote in 1 Corinthians 13.

Remain in His love

Commanded to love

The evidence of love

Remain in His love John 15: 9-10

vs 9. What precedes this verse in John 15: 1-8, in which Jesus describes himself as the vine, God the Father as the vine dresser, and us as the branches. And we all know what happens to a branch that is cut from the vine.

It looks OK for a while, but then withers away and dies. So how do we love those who are just not really “lovable”? Only as we are connected to Christ as the vine. Also the word translated “loved” has the idea of looking back at something that has happened in the past. Jesus was looking back at his sacrificial death on the cross--the supreme act of love--before it came to pass. And He encourages us to “remain” in that kind of love.

vs 10. Shows that love is not some abstract term. We show our love toward the Lord by keeping His commands, just as Christ has shown His love for God the Father by keeping His word.

Commanded to love John 15: 11-12

vs 11. Notice the 2 phrases, “my joy” and “your joy”. What made up the joy of Jesus? Answer: Bankrupting heaven, coming into the world, rejected by the world (John 1: 10-11), choosing and training His followers, arrested, tried, crucified, dying for the sins of the world. Sound like fun? NO! but that was His joy. Beginning with this verse, “joy” will be used another 6 times prior to His death on the cross. What about “your joy”? Obeying the command to make disciples, preaching/teaching the gospel, even though we will face tough times doing it. Recall James 1: 2-4. Sometime ago a southern gospel song had this title: “I Read the Back of the Book, and We Win”. So we know that our joy will be complete one day when Christ returns and wins the final victory over sin and death.

vs 12. This verse is a repeat of the idea expressed in John 13: 34-45. Not only have we been commanded to love our fellow believers, but this love, visible to the world, will be the most powerful witness that we are His followers.

The evidence of love John 15: 13-14

vs 13. So what does it mean to “lay down your life”? Certainly throughout today’s world, some believers have been called to make the “ultimate” sacrifice. And certainly Jesus would give us the greatest

example of “greater love” by doing just that. But for many Christians, laying down one’s life may involve countless, too many

to number, occurrences of “small” sacrifices. Recall the example that Jesus gave us, when before He instituted the Lord’s Supper, He had the disciples sit down, and He washed their feet: something that a servant would do, not the master.

vs 14. “You are my friends”. This verse does not mean that the Lord Jesus is “one of the gang”. The term “friend” has the idea of the roles of the Bridegroom and Best Man in a wedding party. The Bridegroom is the principal; the Best Man is important, but only to make the wedding perfect. So Jesus can call us His friends, but He is still Lord of all.

That’s it for this Sunday--stay safe and well. Berl