

Love One Another Week of October 24, 2021

Intro Discussion Question(s):

- *How have you grown in your study of God's Word this week?*

Read Bible Study Summary:

This study begins an eight week series on the "One Another Commands." A significant portion of this first study sets the foundation for the "One Another Commands" by examining what it truly means to be a Christian. When we understand that the word Christian literally means "little Christ" or "Christ follower" we can see the rationale for observing the "One Another Commands." The first "one another" command found in The New Testament was given by Jesus Himself when He told His disciples that they were to love one another. After reading the passage together, we will consider three important aspects about what it means for Christians to love one another.

Main Scripture

- *Read John 13:34-35*

What does Christ teach us about love?

1. Love is not optional for a follower of Christ

- **"A new command I give you"** - As Christ followers we must love. It's not optional. It is a command. Yet, God knows it's not always easy to love others. Loving is especially difficult when others do not show us love, hurt us, wrong us, or take from us. But, loving someone doesn't mean you have to like what they do, their mean spirit, hurtful words, or "I don't care" attitude. It does mean that you let Christ help you see beyond their faults and see their need for Christ. It means having a burden that if they don't find Christ they will spend this life and eternity separated from God's love. It means letting Christ help you understand that without the change Jesus made in your life, you would be capable of the same kind of behavior.
- C.S. Lewis wrote: "Do not waste time bothering whether you "love" your neighbor; act as if you did. As soon as we do this we find one of the great secrets. When you are behaving as if you loved someone,

you will presently come to love him. If you injure someone you dislike you will find yourself disliking him more. If you do good to him, you will find yourself disliking him less."

- **Read Luke 6:27-33** - *"But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who ill-treat you. 29 If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also. If someone takes your cloak, do not stop him from taking your tunic. 30 Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. 31 Do to others as you would have them do to you. 32 "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' love those who love them. 33 And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' do that.*
- **Ask Questions**
 - *How can Jesus call the command to love one another a "new" command? (See the end of the study for additional insight)*
 - *What is an example of you following Jesus's command to love despite extreme difficulties because of the person or circumstances?*
 - *Read the C.S. Lewis quote again. How can this perspective help you to love a fellow believer that is difficult to love right now?*

2. To Love is to Follow Christ's Example

- **"As I have loved You, love one another"** - Jesus told his disciples to love as He had loved - to follow His example. If we are going to be a Christ follower, we must let Jesus be our coach! And no one has ever been a better coach when it comes to loving others. Think about the love he showed to Judas by calling him friend despite his betrayal. Think about his love for and restoration of Peter despite his denial. He showed us how to love.
- When you believe in Christ Jesus, the Holy Spirit changes your heart and convicts you to live a different life. Christ's sacrifice covers your sin and secures your eternal salvation, but it is only the beginning. It is the in-between that we are called upon to be Christian - to follow Christ. When you look at a headstone at a cemetery you will see a name and the dates of someone's date of birth and death. In between those two dates are a little dash. That dash represents our life. God wants us to use our dash, however long or short it may be, to follow Christ and grow to be like him - to live and love in such a way that people would call you a Christian (Christ-Follower).
- **Read Romans 5:8-10** - *But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! 10 For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!*
- **Ask Questions**
 - *In what way does the love of Christ help us to love each other?*
 - *What are some personal barriers that keep you from fully loving others?*

3. Love for One Another is the Mark of a Christian

- **"By this all men will know that you are my disciples"** - Love for one another is the mark that brands us as Christ followers. When we repent of our sin and accept God's grace and love, we are adopted into God's family through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. The relationship that is established cannot be revoked. However, if we choose to live in sin, and if we refuse to love one another, then our fellowship

with God will be broken. The relationship remains, but the kind of fellowship God desires to have with us will be hindered.

- Northshore Church's vision is "To raise up a healthy church that will impact the North Shore and ultimately the world with the life changing message of Jesus Christ!" If we are to fulfill this vision, we must let the world see our love for one another. They must see our love in what we say and what we do.
- **Read Scriptures**
 - **1 John 1:8-9** - *If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*
 - **1 John 4:19-21** - *We love because he first loved us. 20 If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. 21 And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.*
- **Ask Questions**
 - *What is your response to the truth that fellowship with God is strengthened when we love others and hindered when we do not?*
 - *Have you ever experienced hindered fellowship with God because of your refusal to love a brother or sister in Christ? In what ways are you still lacking in love toward this person? Or, how have you grown in your love for this person?*

Closing

- **Ask Question** - *What is the greatest challenge you are facing right now? Is there some way our group can help you specifically?*
- Pray together over those requests.

Additional Insight

- **Question 1 - Why does Jesus call loving others a "new" command?**
 - First - It's new because it has its source in Christ's love for them.
 - Second - it's new because it would define a community that was coming into existence (the church).