



Introduction:

When you Google the word “love,” the main visual you will see is a heart, a symbol of beauty and affection. God’s Word concerning man’s heart portrays a much bleaker image (Genesis 8:21; Jeremiah 17:9). But aren’t you glad we don’t have to stay that way (Romans 10:9, 13)? When you accept Christ, He makes you new on the inside (Romans 6:17; 2 Corinthians 5:17). Last week, we looked at John 15:9-14. We

saw one component for how our love can reflect God’s love. Now, let’s look at two more thoughts.

The Focus:

- **Every believer can love as Christ loves.**
 - **Loving as Christ loves leads to action.**
 - **Loving as Christ loves requires sacrifice.**

Last week, we learned that in order to love as Christ loves, our love must be maintained on a daily basis. Remember, Christ told his disciples to continue in His love (John 15:9). I have heard it said, “Your talk talks and your walk talks, but your walk talks louder than your talk talks.” What does that mean? Your actions speak louder than your words. Words don’t cost you anything, but love, true love does. A prime example of what can happen when you don’t walk in Christ’s love transpired with Peter when Christ was arrested before the crucifixion (Matthew 26:31-75). This week Pastor Dan brought out two more principles from the text.

The first was “saying versus doing.” The disciples could not say that they were abiding in a love relationship with Christ and demonstrate attitudes opposite of what Christ taught and modeled. Paul revealed the attributes of Christ-like love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-5. One who embodies this love is patient, kind, content, friendly, humble, pleasant, selfless, thick-skinned, and good. You see love is not a feeling, it’s an action. Our love for God and others should lead to action. Love is a choice (1 John 3:16-18). Christ chose to love the Father and He demonstrated it by keeping His commandments (John 8:29; 15:10). As a believer, your love should be growing so that your words and actions bring glory to God (Philippians 1:9-11; Romans 12:9).

The second principle was that love requires sacrifice. After Christ spoke of continuing and abiding in His love, He then speaks of sacrifice (John 15:13). Paul revealed that Christ not only died for Israel, but for the Gentiles – the whole world (Romans 5:7-8). After Christ reconciled Peter because of his denying Him three times, Jesus said in John 21:19, “*Follow me.*” Peter and the others did. On that day, Peter understood that Christ’s love was unconditional, and that he and the others would demonstrate their love for Christ by giving their life. You know you have comprehended what it means to sacrifice when you view your life as a gift from God and that you are to magnify Christ and minister to others with that life (Romans 12:1; 2 Corinthians 5:15). Loving relationships are what bring true, lasting joy in life. All else will fade away.

Response to the Sermon:

In the sermon this weekend, Pastor Dan stated that love leads to action and requires sacrifice. What are some actions that you can begin to take that will show others in your life that you truly love them unconditionally? Christ gave His life so that we could live eternally. What are some areas in your life that you may need to give up (sacrifice) so that others see your love for them and desire to see the best for them?

Bible Study Thoughts & Questions:

Christ's commandments are the expression of who He is, and those who keep them consciously enjoy His love (1 Corinthians 13:4-5). In the same way, the things we do and say express to others who we are. If we choose to yield to the flesh, selfishness and pride will prevail (Romans 6:12-23; Ephesians 2:3). However, God calls us to live according to His calling for our lives (Titus 2:12; Philippians 3:14-15). If we yield to the Spirit, the mind of Christ dwells in our hearts and minds and is concerned with the things of others (Philippians 2:1-5).

Thinking back on your life, what are some sacrifices that another person made for your benefit or well-being?

How have you sacrificed for others? What were the results of your sacrifice?

If you are a person that struggles with communicating love, what one thing can you do this week that will show others that you love and care for them?

Read 1 John 3:16-18. According to John, if our relationships are centered on love, what is required? According to verse 16, what should we do for others that Christ did for us? What is the question posed at the end of verse 17 based on? What are the contrasting principles in verse 18? According to verse 18, how should a follower of Christ love?

Application Questions:

As it was with the disciples, so can it be with every believer! According to John 15:12, what commandment did Jesus give His disciples?

According to Jesus, what must we do to keep our relationship unified (John 15:10)? According to Paul, how does a believer establish unity (Ephesians 4:2-3)?

What is our status in our relationship with Jesus; how does He view us (John 15:14-15)?

What principle and what action is the greatest act anyone can do (John 15:13)?

Prayer:

- Read Romans 12:9 to understand how our love should be seen before others.
- Read Romans 12:10 and pray that you would grow in your understanding of the value of brotherly love.
- Read Philippians 1:9-11. Pray that your love would grow in an increased sense of morality and discernment (vs. 9). Pray that you would be able to discern between things that are godly and ungodly (vs. 10). Pray that your life would be without hypocrisy and reproach in order for God to receive all glory and praise (vs. 10-11).