

Jesus: Teach Us How To Love John 15:9-14

Introduction:

1. Previously, we learned that to love and be loved is life's greatest gift. Love is divine because God is love. Love is from God. Also, we learned that God is the originator of love; love was God's idea. 1 John 4:8
2. We learned that Christ's incarnation and cross work were a living demonstration of divine love. 1 John 4:9
 - He came to reveal true love in a way that we can grasp and understand.
3. As we have read and understood Paul's writings to the church, the idea is that since Christ has fully demonstrated His love to us, and since His Spirit now lives in us, we can love others as Christ has loved us.
 - We can love in a divine way! Romans 5:5; Ephesians 5:2a, 25; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; 4:9; 1 John 4:7, 11; John 13:34; 15:12
4. Previously, we learned from our text that "love" is mentioned eight times in six verses. Jesus spoke very personally with His disciples (His inner core group, His friends).
5. Last week we began to look at how every believer can love as Christ loves.
6. Let's continue to study how we can love in a divine way.

Love needs daily maintenance.

Love leads to action. vs. 10

1. My wife and I, for years, have had a little joke where one of us will say, "I love you." And then the other one will respond, "Prove it." Talk is cheap!
2. Christ teaches the same concept in verse 10: "*If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love...*" See also John 14:15.
 - Again, the issue was not, "Keep my commandments and I will love you." No, Christ's love for them was unconditional.
 - **Illustration:** The denial and cursing of Peter upon Christ's arrest.
3. The disciples could not say that they were abiding in a love relationship with Christ and do the exact opposite of what Christ knew was best for them. That isn't love. 1 Corinthians 13:4-5
4. Christ's commandments are the expression of who He is, and those who keep them consciously enjoy His love. 1 John 5:3
 - His commandments are not grievous (burdensome). They are there for our joy and for our good. When we keep them, we show Him that we love Him and trust Him.
5. The world teaches that love is a warm and fuzzy feeling. Everything is based upon one's feelings and emotions and sight. There are many couples who divorce after many years of marriage because they don't **feel** in love anymore.

6. Did you know that we never read of Christ falling out of love with His heavenly Father? Why is this? Look at verse 10 – *“I have kept my Father’s commandments.”*
 - Love is doing right with the right motive. Christ did that, therefore there were no problems in the love between Him and His heavenly Father.
 - In John 8:29 Christ said, *“...for I do always those things that please him (the Father).”*
7. What is the point? Love demands action. When you love somebody, you live to please them, not yourself. If you are going to abide in a relationship centered on love, there is some action required. 1 John 3:16-18
 - **Example:** Teenagers cannot rebel against their parents’ rules and desires, and then expect to have a growing, loving relationship between them and their parents.
 - On the other hand, if parents are seldom there and present in their child’s life (absentee parents), they can’t expect a deep love to exist between them and their child. Love is action.
 - When young people date, and each of them are concerned about what **they** can get out of the relationship, they get married and have problems. The situation becomes explosive. Why does this happen? Because those selfish actions are not love. There is a big difference between falling in lust and falling in love. When you fall in lust, it is all about you and your desires. When you truly fall in love, you live for the other person, and you would never want to do anything to hurt them. God’s Words says, *“Love works no ill to his neighbor...”* **Romans 13:10**
 - **Example:** Married couples, if you are each going your separate ways and not spending time together and you aren’t communicating and you aren’t seeking to please each other, don’t expect a growing and abiding love.
8. Love demands action. Love is doing the right thing by that other person. Love is treating them according to Christ’s Word. Romans 12:9
 - When two people are both desiring to obey God’s Word and God’s commandments to treat each other in a biblical and godly fashion, you will have the basis for and enjoy the existence of an incredible, deep, powerful, and loving relationship.

Love requires sacrifice.

1. **Illustration:** A man who went to the doctor and was going to die.
2. Jesus equates this idea of love and sacrifice in verse 13: *“Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends.”*
3. This is so incredible and powerful. Christ was so warm and personal and real with His disciples; He loved them so much. He lifted them to a new level. Did you notice that? They were no longer just disciples and servants, but friends.
4. Here, He gives them a glimpse of what He is about to do for them. He is going to lay down His life for them on the cross. This was spoken to His disciples who were part of the covenant people, Israel.

5. But later, we learn through the apostle Paul that Christ's death was not just for His disciples or for His people, Israel. Romans 5:7-8
6. Christ died for the ungodly. We, who were non-covenant Gentiles, who were by nature the enemies of God – He died for us.
 - He took us who were enemies of God and made us friends. We have His love as a present and precious possession. But my point is this – there was sacrifice involved in order to bring us into this amazing love relationship.
7. Where there is love, true godly love, there is always sacrifice involved. Ephesians 5:2
 - Did you notice how we are to love? *“And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us...”* **Ephesians 5:2**
8. Most of the disciples would eventually end up giving their lives because of their love for Jesus Christ. John 21:15-19
 - This conversation had to be very embarrassing for Peter, as Jesus asked him three times, *“Lovest thou me?”* Peter was keenly aware of his three-fold denial of the Lord, and he was grieved when the Lord repeated the question for the third time.
 - But Peter learned a lot through this, and Christ let him know that He still loved him and wanted to use him. This had to so energize Peter. As He realized Christ's unconditional love for him, he would demonstrate through sacrifice his love for Christ.
9. This thing of sacrifice doesn't sit well with our flesh. Our flesh loves to be served. The flesh asks questions like, *“What's in it for me? Will it make me happy? Will it be to my advantage? Will it require too much from me?”*
 - This is why there is not a lot of true love in this old world. The Bible says, *“...by love serve one another.”* **Galatians 5:13**
10. Let's be honest. We are all selfish and self-centered by nature. Ephesians 2:3 The idea of sacrificing ourselves for somebody else's benefit doesn't sit well with the flesh.
11. But once we are saved and possess the Spirit of Christ, Christ teaches us a different way of living. Our attitude should no longer be, *“What's in it for me?”* We are living for something far greater than our own self pleasure. 2 Corinthians 5:14-15
12. We begin asking questions like, *“How will this help the cause of Christ? How will it help others? How will it be a blessing to others?”* Romans 12:10
13. People who are great lovers, who truly know how to love fervently, do not display a *“me first”* attitude. People who really understand love view their life as a gift from God to be used to magnify Christ and minister to others.

In Conclusion:

1. Love is action, therefore love is always a choice. It is a choice of your will. Will I choose to love God and love others, or will I choose to love myself, love the world, love money, etc.?

2. Do you know what the real reward is of true love? The reward of love is a full joy. Look at verse 11. Jesus said, "I'm telling you this stuff so your joy will be full."
3. Selfish people, or "me-first" people, are miserable people, but when you are living your life as a living sacrifice unto Christ, it brings incredible meaning and joy to your life.
4. Loving relationships are what bring true, lasting joy in life. All else fades away.