

DISCIPLESHIP

Objectives

To consider love as being THE mark of a disciple.

References

Holy Scripture

Scriptural Verse

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:34-36)

Lesson Guidelines

- Do you know that above all else - friend, servant, slave, ambassador, Christian, believer - Jesus desires Disciples?
- Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, ²⁶ “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. ²⁷ And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.” (Luke 14:25-27)
- When He had called the people to *Himself*, with His disciples also, He said to them, “Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ³⁵ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it.” (Mark 8:33-35)
- “So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.” (Luke 14:33)
- But the “kicker” verse is in John 13:34-36; as stated above.
- How is it that love can be equated with taking up our cross and losing our life? Every time we choose to love someone else (and make no mistake, love is a choice) we are decreasing so they may increase because by nature, love is sacrificial.
- “We then, who are strong, ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves. ² Let each of us please *his* neighbor for *his* good, leading to edification. ³ For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, “*The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.*”^[a] ⁴ For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. ⁵ Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, ⁶ that you may with one mind *and* one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Romans 15:1-7)
- When a brother sins, don’t judge, rather cover it—don’t expose their problems or mistakes. When I love you, I cover your sin.
- 1Cor 12:28-13:8 - Love is the more excellent way, not the easy way. Love never fails—people may not follow the truth but they will follow love.
- Col 3:12-17 - Forgiveness is evidence of love. Speak the truth in love. When everyone is accepted and everyone is loved, people are attracted to that.
- I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, ² with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing

with one another in love, ³ endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴ *There is* one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; Eph 4:1-4

- Practical ways to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace and love one another:
 - Stop judging your brother even in your heart—look at him with the same eye God looks at you (to him little is forgiven who loves little)
 - Stop talking about your brother's faults to others—cover them. Great people talk about ideas, average people talk about things and little people talk about other people
 - Quit listening to gossip against your brother- out of love for both—the person being gossiped about and the gossipier
 - When you fall, ask for forgiveness from the person and confess/repent- AGAIN being honest with yourself that the problem lies within you, NOT them
 - Pray for those struggling to love and ask God to bless them and give you the grace to look on them with favor
- Meditate on a picture of Jesus on the Cross with arms open, ready to hug the person in question.
- Beseech God to bring His words to life in your heart. Meditate and memorize verses of love.

Conclusion

If we love one another like this, our mark of discipleship to the Lord Jesus Christ will be evident to all. Not only will we be fulfilling the greatest commandments, but we will be bringing others to our gracious God by our relationship with each other.

Activities

- 1, Discuss how issues in our society today could be solved through love, such as crimes, divorce, etc.
- 2 Discuss any characters in the Bible who exemplified this love