

## **The Law of Love**

In John 13:34, Jesus made an interesting statement. He said, *"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another."* Then in the next verse He went on to say, *"By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."*

Here Jesus made two important statements.

First, He commanded us to love each other.

Second He said that the way people would know that we were Christians is by the love we have for each other.

Jesus didn't say that His disciples would be recognized as Christians because of some gold embossed certificate or license hanging on an office wall.

Jesus didn't say that His disciples would be recognized as Christians because of the way they would dress. He did not require a certain type of design on their robes.

**Jesus said that the way His disciples would be recognized would be one way and one way only. Others would see that they had love for each other. Then the world would know that they were disciples of Jesus.**

Jesus commanded us again in John 15:12-13, where He said, *"This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends."* Jesus did not ask us to love each other, He commanded us to love each other. It is not an option for a Christian. It is a requirement.

Once a man told me that it was impossible for him to love this particular person. Then he spent much time telling me the details about this man and how he had destroyed his home and his life. Then he went on to say, "So you see, that's why it's impossible for me to love this man. I'm sure God understands."

Well, he's right. God does understand that under natural circumstances it would be impossible to walk in love. That's why He sent His Son, Jesus. Once we accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior, then we have access to power that helps us love those who don't deserve it.

**After all, what's the big deal about loving someone who is nice to you and loves you? Anybody can do that. The mark of a true Christian is when we love those who do not love us and are hard to love.**

In Matthew 5:43-46, Jesus said, *"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven."* Then Jesus goes on to say, *"For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?"*

**Here Jesus puts it on the line. If we only love those who love us, we are no different than the world. Even the people of the world who are not Christians love those who love them. But we are to be different. We as Christians are not under the old law. We are under the new covenant. We live under the law of love.**

Jesus said, *"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 13:34-35)

## **The Greatest of These**

First Corinthians 13:13 says, *"Now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love."*

For years this verse has been used to show the greatness of love. Love is great. We know that Jesus taught extensively about love. With Him it was a very important subject.

**In fact, in Mark 12:28**, Jesus was approached by a scribe who had been listening to Him teach. He came to Jesus and asked Him to tell him which commandment is the most important.

In verses 29-31, Jesus answered him and said, *"The first of all the commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment. And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."*

So the scribe said to Jesus, *"Well said, Teacher. You have spoken the truth, for there is one God, and there is no other but He. And to love Him with all the heart, with all the understanding, with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."*

So, when Jesus saw that the scribe had answered wisely, Jesus said to him, *"You are not far from the kingdom of God."* Vs 34

Here Jesus tells us that the greatest commandment is love.

**It is the number one commandment, second to none.**

When Jesus was talking with His disciples in John 13, He told them that He would be leaving soon. Then He gave them a command. In verse 34, He said, *"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."*

**Isn't it interesting how Jesus said that we as Christians could be identified? He said that everyone would know that we are Christians by the way we show love to one another.**

**In fact, God's Word says that if we don't love, we don't know God.** 1John 4:7-8 says, *"Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love."*

Then verse 11 says, *"Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another."*

My and I were counseling with a lady who said she had a fear of love. She had been hurt so many times in her life that all her defenses were up, all the time. She didn't want anyone to get close to her and she feared getting close to anyone else. Verse 18 says, *"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love."*

Verse 20-21 says, *"If someone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also."*

Remember, God is love. God has not given us a spirit of fear. And, perfect love casts out fear. 2TM 1:7 *For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind*