

Learning to Love Like Jesus
11-3-13

John 13:34 "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another"

John 15:12-14 "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. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you."

In the night Jesus was betrayed and executed, Jesus gave His disciples what he called a "new commandment": to love like Jesus. Of course we know that this was given in the moments before He died, so the full weight of this command is observed more by us than the disciples in that moment. How was this commandment new? Before this we knew love as:

Love of a neighbor – Leviticus 19:18

Love of God – Deuteronomy 6:5

But there was something new in this command, perhaps in the idea that love had never been manifested in the world until that night and the next day in that way. If we are going to observe this command, we need to know what love is, and how Jesus loved.

First, love as Jesus taught it is not an emotion or feeling, as the world believes it to be. The world's version of love is in fact rooted in selfish emotions; I "love" someone or something because of how it makes me feel. Instead, love is foremost an action, as demonstrated in the meaning of love in Greek, *Agapeos* – love with the best intent. This is the command to love in the New Testament given to husbands and wives, to brethren. Love means we take actions with the best intentions for others.

We need to learn how Jesus loved us. First, Jesus loved enough NOT to leave things as they are. Jesus rebukes those whom He loves when they are in error (and hence in danger) as He did with Peter and with the churches in error (Mark 8:33, Revelation 3:19). His love also chastises us (Hebrews 12:6). But that is not all; in His love He is willing to make sacrifices to restore us and preserve us (Philippians 2:5-, I John 4:9-12)

Are we willing to love like Jesus? It means that we will NOT accept that someone is in sin (James 5:19-20, Galatians 6:1-2, I Corinthians 5:4-11). It means that we are prepared to make great sacrifices for those we love; Romans 12:1-2 – living sacrifices; Hebrews 13:1-2 – showing hospitality; Philippians 2:3-4 – others above self.

So you seem, Jesus' new commandment is not an easy one. We must be willing to take actions that result in the best situation for others. The problem is, they may resent us for it. If we make the sacrifices His new commandment expects of us, it may cost us personally. This is what it means to say that we must live like Christ in Love .