

Family TableTalk

Conversation 48

How To Love

read

John 13:34&35

think

If you want to learn what it means to follow Jesus, a good place to start is in chapters 13 to 17 of the Gospel of John. These five chapters of the Bible contain what has become known as “The Farewell Discourse” of Jesus as they contain the words that Jesus shared with his chosen closest followers, his Disciples, on the night before his death.

Early on in the evening, Jesus gives his disciples what he calls “a new commandment” when he tells them to “love one another.” He clarifies the meaning of *love* by telling them to love “just as I have loved you.”

Sadly, in today’s world we have little or no idea what *love* really is, nor do we know *how* to love. The entertainment world lulls us into believing that love is some kind of romantic feeling, which in reality is nothing more than a kind of fleeting infatuation. This isn’t love at all. The kind of love that Jesus tells us is to be the mark of his followers is a decision to commit one’s self to another, no matter what the cost to the giver of that love. It expects nothing in return. In fact, over the course of the next 24 hours, his disciples will learn through his crucifixion that this kind of love will go so far as to lay down one’s life for another.

There’s another aspect to this kind of love that we need to understand and embrace in our lives. When we love as Jesus loves us and commands us to love, we will look out for the best interests of each other as we encourage each other to faithfully and obediently follow Jesus. What this means is that we won’t respond to the foolish beliefs and behaviors of others with an attitude of “I love you. . . so go ahead and do whatever you please.” Rather, we will love as Jesus does by telling the truth. We will say the hard things that others need to hear in order to protect those we love from harm and to provide for their well-being.

apply

- Think about a familiar television show, movie, or book that features “love” in the plot. Based on what you’ve seen or read, how would that show, movie, or book define “love”?
- Is there an example of Christian love from our current times or past history that reflects obedience to Christ’s command in John 13:34&35?
- What are some ways that parents show Christ-like love to their children?
- Based on this new commandment from Jesus, what can you change about the way that you give and receive love?

pray

Lord Jesus, we confess that we have not loved well. We recognize that we are oftentimes self-centered in our relationships with others, looking for what we can get out of those relationships rather than what we can give. We ask that your Holy Spirit would work in us, erasing our love for ourselves, and replacing it with a self-sacrificial love for others. Help us love as you have loved us. Amen.

by Walt Mueller

Walt Mueller is the President of the Center for Parent/Youth Understanding. To access Walt’s blogs, podcasts, and other resources, visit cpyu.org.

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