

Lesson 13

The Ultimate Lesson on Love

Introduction

Class Objectives

- **God's mission in sending Jesus was to save us from the certain death and destruction brought by sin and His ultimate judgment upon it.**

While on earth, Jesus was the complete manifestation of God in every way. While on the cross, we see the ultimate demonstration of mercy . . . pity and compassion carried out to the maximum. It is the greatest display of love in the history of our created world. Nothing else even comes close.

- **The call to love one another in John 15.9-17 is a call to action for every Christian. If we neglect it, we will not remain in Christ's love.**

It is not enough that we simply *learn about* Christ's love, we must *learn to* put it in practice in every situation. "What would Jesus do," or "How would Jesus respond," should be in our mindset at all times.

Think About It

1. What moves you most about the sacrifice of Jesus on your behalf?
2. How does this realization motivate you to faithfulness?
3. What are you doing in everyday life to demonstrate this kind of love to your spouse, brethren, friends, *and those you dislike*?

What the Savior Said

Luke 23:32-43 (CSB)

CRUCIFIED BETWEEN TWO CRIMINALS

³²Two others—criminals—were also led away to be executed with him. ³³When they arrived at the place called The Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals, one on the right and one on the left.

³⁴Then Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, because they do not know what they are doing.” And they divided his clothes and cast lots.

³⁵The people stood watching, and even the leaders were scoffing: “He saved others; let him save himself if this is God’s Messiah, the Chosen One!” ³⁶The soldiers also mocked him. They came offering him sour wine ³⁷and said, “If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself!”

³⁸An inscription was above him: This Is the King of the Jews.

³⁹Then one of the criminals hanging there began to yell insults at him: “Aren’t you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!”

⁴⁰But the other answered, rebuking him: “Don’t you even fear God, since you are undergoing the same punishment? ⁴¹We are punished justly, because we’re getting back what we deserve for the things we did, but this man has done nothing wrong.” ⁴²Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”

⁴³And he said to him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

Our God desires a real connection with us. John 3.16 outlines the mission of how God has made this possible. As we examine the gospels, we discover Jesus’ never-ending commitment to carrying out the mission of seeking and saving the lost. Our Savior did not come to reign here and live as an earthly King, He came here to serve *and to give his life as a ransom for many*, Mark 10.45. His commitment in getting us home drove Him to take the battle to Satan and defeat him. It moved Him to respond in pity to our desperate and terrible situation. It guided Him as He helped the helpless, bound up the brokenhearted, and brought life to death. It fueled His joy as He remembered about our names being written in heaven. And finally, it sustained Him while He hung on the cross, suffering the greatest of pain, humiliation, shame, and reproach humanly possible.

In short, what we see in Jesus’ gift to us on the cross is the greatest possible expression of love in the history of the world. Especially as our minds envision those gathered around the cross mocking, sneering, and hurling sarcastic abuse at Jesus. The amount of dishonor, disrespect, disdain, and shame handed out to Jesus on that day is monumental. It is the ultimate in blasphemy. And that God chose not to act with instantaneous death and judgment boggles our mind. While justice should have fell on them (and us), it fell on Christ. Judgment should have crush them (and us) . . . and yet, it crushes Jesus. That God would do this is beyond our comprehension.

Isaiah explains it thusly:

Seek the Lord while he may be found; call to him while he is near. Let the wicked one abandon his way and the sinful one his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, so he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will freely forgive, Isaiah 55.6-7.

How can God do this?

A Passage to Explore

John 15:9–17 (CSB)

CHRISTLIKE LOVE

⁹“As the Father has loved me, I have also loved you. Remain in my love. ¹⁰If you keep my commands you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love.

¹¹“I have told you these things so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete.

¹²“This is my command: Love one another as I have loved you. ¹³No one has greater love than this: to lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵I do not call you servants anymore, because a servant doesn’t know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything I have heard from my Father. ¹⁶You did not choose me, but I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce fruit and that your fruit should remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he will give you.

¹⁷“This is what I command you: Love one another.

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8. Read this passage through out loud several times. What did Jesus command? What does Jesus mean when He says, *Love one another*?

 9. How far are we to be willing to go in our expression of love for one another?

 10. How do we acquire this type of love?

 11. What does it look like in everyday practice?

12. What does it mean that Jesus has called us *friends*?

Life Application

This week, make some time each day to spend a few moments alone with God. Every day we will consider how we can demonstrate our love by remembering the greatest act of love ever displayed. Take your time with each passage(s) so you can concentrate on what is being said. Use the questions as a springboard for your positive thoughts throughout your day.

Monday

13. Read 1 Peter 2.21-25. What are some things here that we learn about Christ's love?
14. What does this passage teach you about sacrificial love?
15. How can you use Christ's example as motivation to *follow in His steps*? What will that look like *today*?

Tuesday

16. Read Philippians 2.6-8. What did Christ do so that the world may be saved?
17. How does Philippians 2.3-4 set up the type of mindset required for demonstrating sacrificial love?
18. What are some ways you can carry out the expectation of Philippians 2.5 today??

