

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The word of God for this morning is found in the Gospel of John 15:9-17.

“As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. 10 "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. 11 "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and *that* your joy may be full. 12 "This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. 13 "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. 14 "You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. 15 "No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. 16 "You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. 17 "These things I command you, that you love one another.”

So far our text. Dear fellow redeemed.

Do you love me? Do we love one another? The initial reaction to this question might be that it would depend on what I mean by the question.

The world has gotten to the point that to love is to allow another whatever they want. Who are we the world say when someone makes a definitive statement in regards what constitutes love.

Our flesh does the same thing. From time to time we feel that we need certain things in order to feel loved. Often times though the things we demand are more in line with the way the world thinks, and not the way that God wants us to love. Therefore it is good to consider this morning how we can truly **“Love one another.”**

In Jesus Christ who is our perfect God we have the example of what true love is. Jesus said, **“As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.”** The relationship that we will find between the Father and the Son is in the fact that Jesus obeyed the Father. Throughout our text for this morning you are going to see that loving Jesus and in turn one another is abiding in the teachings of Jesus.

Jesus did this very same thing on our behalf. Jesus was obedient to the teachings of the Father. This came not only in the fact that Jesus obeyed the Law of His Father it also came in the requests that the Father made to Jesus alone.

The Father asked Jesus to come and live a perfect life for the sake of sinners. The Father asked Jesus to lay down His life for all mankind because of the perfect love He has for us. In this request of the Father we find perfect love. And in the obedience of the innocent Only Begotten Son of God we find the example of love. And in this kind of love are we to remain.

We on our own part cannot love exactly like the Father and the Son have loved us. Unto ourselves, because of our sinfulness we would've never planned the Justification of all mankind through the death of our own son.

And in regards to our willingness to carry out such a perfect request we would've never gone to die for people such as ourselves. The love that the Father and the Son have lavished on us is our perfect example.

If because of our sinfulness we could never have conceived or executed such a plan of love how then do we fulfill the Father's request to "Love one another?" **"If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love."** The word 'commandments' in our text for today needs to be understood rightly before we can be confident in our love for God and our love for one another.

The word here is not referring specifically to the commandments as found in the Ten Commandments. The root idea of the word is 'instructions'. It is true therefore that we show our love for God as well for one another when we keep His Law. But if we limit it to that we would end up showing our worth before God in a work righteous way. We dare not leave out the way that we should **"Love one another"** by forgetting the way that God loved us through Jesus Christ.

"These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. 12 "This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. 13 "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. 14 "You are My friends if you do whatever I command you."

Jesus here continues to show His love for those whom He loves by giving them the example of how we **"Love one another."** To lay down one's life is the high-water mark of love. Jesus did that for you. He showed how much He loved you by taking upon Himself every single one of our sins.

Do we not love if we don't do the same? We certainly cannot die in the same way as Jesus. Not in regards to His crucifixion, but in regards to His innocents and righteousness. Why then does Jesus give us this example? First to use the best example that can be given, Himself. If someone dies in the service of His kingdom, he will be dying also for the sake of His brother whom he is serving.

Should we despair if we don't die a martyr? Certainly not! To lay one's life down for the Kingdom of God is to simply put others before yourself. It is to make yourself secondary. When you do this, you're setting aside or laying down your life for your friends and you **"Love one another."**

1 Cor. 13:3-8a **"And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. 4 Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; 5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; 6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never fails."**

And this is the source of such love, 1 John 3:23b **"...that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ ..."**

Without the faith given to you by God, all the wonderful works sighted from 1 Corinthians are not love. But in Christ, the simplest sacrifice, done for the sake of Christ is the greatest love.

By abiding in the instructions of God we have a very unique relationship with Him. **"No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you."** When you **"Love one another"** it shows that you're abiding in the instruction that Jesus revealed to all of mankind through His word.

If Jesus disobeyed the Father, Jesus would no longer have been His friend to use the word in our text. So it is with us, if we disobey and refuse to love one another and instead love ourselves we no longer have that relationship that Jesus describes as being friends.

Some false teachers claim that good works originate from within a Christian outside of the power of God. To claim this is to deny what is called 'total depravity'. Isaiah prophesied about the condition of man, 64:6-7 **"But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; We all fade as a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, Have taken us away. 7 And there is no one who calls on Your name, Who stirs himself up to take hold of You; For You have hidden Your face from us, And have consumed us because of our iniquities."**

It is with thankful hearts then that we believe that **"You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you."**

We were chosen by God to serve Him. We did not appoint ourselves for this work, He appointed us to glorify Him by bearing the best tasting fruit of all, that we **"Love one another."** When we ask the Lord that He would through the hearing of His word and by the power of the Holy Spirit cause us to bear the fruit of love for His sake, He will grant it.

Understanding that we **"Love one another"** is going to be accomplished in many different ways it is important. None of us as Scripture so vividly shows us is the entire body. Each one of us has been given different gifts that show themselves as love. But when the source for our love is Christ it doesn't matter what the world or our flesh says in regards to it. We then **"Love one another."**

Do you love me? Do you love one another? By the grace of God, we do! May we be thankful that the Father has showered on us true love in His Son Jesus Christ. The only One able to live a perfect life, die a perfect so that His righteousness would be imputed to all of us. Therefore when the Lord says, **"These things I command you, that you love one another."** we know then that through the love that He bestowed on us in Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit we can actually do what the Lord asks of us. **"Love one another."** Amen.