

Love

I. The True Mark Read *John 13:35*

Questions-

1. Through the centuries, people have displayed many different symbols intended to show that they are Christians. What are they?
2. According to Jesus, what is the universal mark of Christianity?

II. What is Love? Read *Rom 5:8* *1 John 4:10*

A. Greek vs. English

-In English ...

-In the Greek ...

Two Greek **examples from the Bible** (New Testament):

- 1.
- 2.

The word used for Love in the above passages is ...

B. A New Definition of Love -

-it is NOT...

-it IS...

-a good test ...

Questions-

1. What do most people think that the opposite of love is?
2. Based upon the above definition, what would you say the opposite of Love is?

III. The Command to Love- The Law of Love

Winkie Pratney calls the summation of all the commandments the "Law of Love"

Read *Matt 22:37-39*

A. We are Commanded to Love ...

Questions-

1. Based on our new definition of love, what does it mean to love God?
2. What does this mean practically? How should this affect my use of resources like money and time?

B. We are commanded to Love ...

Read *John 13: 34* *Luke 10:29-37*

Questions-

1. Who is my neighbor?
2. I am told to love others as Jesus loved me. What practical things can I do to make this a reality?

C. We are commanded to Love ...

Read *Matt 5:43-48*

Questions-

1. Did Jesus practice what He preached?
Read *Romans 5:10 and Luke 23:34.*
2. What good could come out of "unselfishly choosing for the highest good" of your enemy?

IV. The Transforming Power of Love

G.K. Chesterton, from **Orthodoxy** "Let us suppose we are confronted with a desperate thing -- say Pimlico (a city). If we think what is really best for Pimlico we shall find the thread of thought leads to the throne or the mystic and the arbitrary. It is not enough for a man to disapprove of Pimlico: in that case he will merely cut his throat or move to Chelsea. Nor, certainly, is it enough for a man to approve of Pimlico: for then it will remain Pimlico, which would be awful. The only way out of it seems to be for somebody to love Pimlico: to love it with a transcendental tie and without any earthly reason. If there arose a man who loved Pimlico, then Pimlico would rise into ivory towers and golden pinnacles; Pimlico would attire herself as a woman does when she is loved. For decoration is not given to hide horrible things: but to decorate things already adorable. A mother does not give her child a blue bow because he is so ugly without it. A lover does not give a girl a necklace to hide her neck. If men loved Pimlico as mothers love children, arbitrarily, because it is theirs, Pimlico in a year or two might be fairer than Florence. Some readers will say that this is a mere fantasy. I answer that this is the actual history of mankind. Men did not love Rome because she was great. She was great because they had loved her."

An Eternal Principle - A thing must be loved, before ...

Questions -

1. Do you agree with Chesterton, that a thing "must be loved before it can become loveable?"
2. Can you think of any examples of things that weren't loved? What happened to them?
3. Can you think of any examples where love brought beauty?

Summary

-Love is the only distinguishing mark of a true Christian.

-Love is NOT a feeling, it IS an unselfish choice for the highest good of another.

-Things that are unloved always become (or remain) ugly.

-Objects that are shown love can become beautiful. The only reason we are who we are is because God loved us. We now, should do the same.

-The Law of Love is the law of the universe - the only way to true happiness is to consistently love God and others.

My test is to always ask myself, ***Why Do I Do The Things I Do, and Who Do I Do Them For?***