

Love Others

Lesson for Sunday, October 9, 2022

INTRODUCTION:

- Let's review: What is Vision 53? *Our vision is to build an army of Bible-believing people, mobilized and committed to Jesus Christ and His church.*
- What are the four steps to our plan for carrying out the vision?
 - *Worship God; Love Others; Witness Everywhere; Make Disciples*
- How does the world define "love?" *Allow for some discussion. The world primarily makes love a strong, mysterious emotion that can come and go.*
- Thankfully, God is a little more specific when it comes to defining love. If we are going to see our vision become a reality, then we must be the most loving place in our part of the world.

BIBLE STUDY:

1. The Command to Love (Matthew 22:39)
 - a. Remind your class of the context of this passage. Someone poses an insincere question to Jesus asking Him which command is the greatest.
 - b. Jesus responds with two commands instead of one.
 - i. Matthew 22:37 states that we are to love God wholly. This is what we discussed last week: *worship God.*
 - ii. Matthew 22:39 states that we are also to love others.
 - c. Notice that Jesus commands us to love others. This verse is not a suggestion. It is not conditional on someone loving us back. As God's people, we are simply to love.
 - d. Jesus also tells us how to love: We are to love others "as we love thyself."
 - i. This is NOT a command to love yourself.
 - ii. Ephesians 5:29 reminds us that we are born with the knowledge of loving self! In fact, that is the root of the majority of our problems – we love ourselves too well!
 - e. Jesus's point is that *we have no excuse for not loving others.* It's not complicated. We know how to love because we have been in love with ourselves since birth.
2. The Quality of Love
 - a. In our text, Jesus uses the Greek word "agape" which translates to our English as love.
 - i. IDEA: Have the class discuss/work in groups to answer the following:
 - ii. How would you define agape love?
 - iii. What is an example of agape love?
 - b. Agape love is a love that is unconditional. Agape love has no limits and no conditions.
 - c. Agape love is exactly how Jesus loves us. As followers of Christ, we are to love others as Christ loves us. He is the Example we are to follow.
 - d. 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 is the most thorough explanation of what Jesus is referring to when He speaks of agape love.
 - e. Read through Paul's words slowly. This is often read at weddings, but the context is not talking about marriage.
 - i. Chapter 13 is surrounded by chapters 12 and 14, where Paul is addressing the topic of spiritual gifts.
 - ii. At the end of chapter 12, Paul essentially says to his audience, "You are fussing over these different spiritual gifts and which ones are the best? Let me share with you the best gift of all!" (See 12:29-31).
 - iii. It is at this point Paul launches into his description of love.
 - f. Do you see how tangible this explanation of love is? Love is not mystical! Love doesn't come and go! Love is an action. It is being patient, kind, etc.
 - g. Point out that Paul, like Jesus, never gives any conditions. We don't love only when the person is lovable. We are simply to love. Period.

3. The Example of Love
 - a. The ultimate example is Jesus. Look at John 13.
 - b. Jesus has had His last supper with His disciples (vs. 1-2).
 - c. Before leaving for the Garden, Jesus physically transforms into a servant and begins to wash the feet of His friends (vs. 4-5).
 - d. It was more making sure His men's feet were clean. There was a message He was trying to communicate. See verses 13-15. Jesus was providing an example of love that His children are to follow.
 - e. Does Jesus expect us to wash each other's feet? Not literally. But we are to become the loving servant that He modeled.
4. The Evidence of Love
 - a. Jesus took the time to drive home His point in John 13.
 - b. He summarizes His message in verse 34. The new command that Jesus has commissioned us with: Love one another.
 - c. In verse 35 He points to the potential impact of our obedience: the world will take notice.
 - d. People want to be in places where they feel loved.
 - i. This is why homecomings and reunions are often so special.
 - ii. This is why we typically always have a heart for where we grew up.
 - iii. This ought to be a big reason why people want to be at FBT.
 - iv. This ought to be a big reason why people would want to be in your class.

APPLICATION:

- Discuss:
 - What are specific things our class should do if we were truly loving of all people?
 - What would this look like individually in our daily lives?
 - How do the first two parts of our plan (worship God and love others) work together? Can you do one and not the other?