

ESSENTIALS OF DISCIPLESHIP PT 2

JOHN 13:35

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³⁵By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

Introduction:

The word essential means: “that which is absolutely necessary; indispensable; basic.” As air is essential for the lungs; as light is essential for the eye and as blood is essential to the heart, so there are essentials for discipleship. If we desire to breathe the air of a higher life, see light in the face of Jesus and have the heart-beat of the Master, it is essential that we follow Him devotedly.

In the previous message the emphasis was upon the first essential for disciple-ship which is: A Follower Who Is Receptive.

We come to the second essential for discipleship and that is a Love that Is Reflective.

The setting for this statement by the Lord is the Upper Room shortly before His crucifixion. He is about to ascend out of this world and go back to Heaven. Before

He does, however, He is going to give His disciples an assignment – they are to go far and wide sharing the Good News that Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

And the way that the world of sinners is going to know that the ones who are His representatives are authentic – is that they genuinely love one another!

Notice:

1. A LOVE THAT IS DEMANDED – A NEW COMMANDMENT

John 13:34

³⁴ A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

Our love for one another, Jesus said, is to equal the quality of His love for us. “Love one another.

A. This Love Is A Gift From God

Romans 5:5

⁵ And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

This love that is demanded is a gift.

B. This Gift Brings Responsibility

God expects every gift He gives to be used in serving others, not utilized for self gratification

C. This Gift Brings Accountability

There is no responsibility without accountability.

James 1:17

¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

God, the Giver of “every good gift and every perfect gift” can command us to love because He gave us the gift of His love.

Love That Is Reflective is love that is demanded. In addition, Love That Is Reflective is:

2. A LOVE THAT IS DIVINE –AS I HAVE LOVED YOU

John 13:34

³⁴ A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

In what ways did the Lord demonstrate this God-like love? In at least three ways:

A. He Loved With A Selfless Love

No one can honestly say that Jesus was self-centered. His life was a life focused upon others. His life was spent giving His time, attention, energy and even His life for others. He said,

Matthew 20:28

²⁸ Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

B. He Loved With a Sacrificial Love

John 15:12-13

¹² This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

This is not mere human love; this is not Hollywood love; this is heaven's love! Man's love has limits, but God's love knows no boundaries.

C. He Loved With a Steadfast Love

John 13:1

¹ Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

What an amazing statement.

Love that is reflective is love that is demanded, love that is divine and, in addition:

3. A LOVE THAT IS DISPLAYED – BY THIS SHALL ALL MEN KNOW

John 13:35

³⁵ By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

Description of this love:

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

⁴ Charity suffereth long, *and* is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, ⁵ Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; ⁶ Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; ⁷ Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

A. Notice the Negatives

Close:

Essential to discipleship is not only A Learner Who Is Receptive but A Love That Is Reflective. This love is demanded of us because it is a divine gift and we are to put this quality of love on display before a watching and love-hungry world!

Illustration:

An elderly gentleman prided himself in his ability as an art critic. He was with a group of friends touring an art gallery when he saw a large frame on the wall. He wanted to impress his friends with his knowledge of art and he walked over to this framed piece to explain it to his friends.

He was near-sighted and when he reached for his glasses he discovered that he had left them at home. However, not to be deterred, he began to remark about the poor quality of the image that he dimly saw before him.

He criticized the fuzzy figure that he faintly saw saying that the subject, which was a man, was too ugly to ever be called a good piece of art. He said that the artist had shown poor taste in the way he had dressed the man and he was generally finding fault with everything about it. The man kept going on like this until his wife managed to get near enough to him to whisper to him,

“Dear, you are looking in a mirror.” He was quite embarrassed and humbled when he realized he had been criticizing his own face.

We are mirrors. When people look into our lives do they see the love of Christ reflected there or do they see something ugly?