

THE GREAT COMMANDMENT

By Donald G. Leavell

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another (John 13:34-35).

For some time now, I have known that there are depths and heights to understanding, but I am learning that the depths and heights of love are truly staggering! When Jesus speaks of love, He is speaking of the God-kind of love: Love that is not self-interested. His love is for the well-being and the good of the one loved. It is everlasting and does not change according to fluctuations in our behavior! Human love is fickle and arbitrary; it changes like the wind. It blesses when it feels like it and can be withdrawn when one feels that the object of that love does not merit it. God's love, on the other hand, is not given to us because of human merit! His love sought and apprehended us when we were bankrupt of love without merit and having nothing to offer. This is a new standard of love that Jesus brought to His disciples and, thus, to all of us who are heavenly. This love commands **"that you love one another as I have loved you" (John 13:34)**. In order to love one another as Christ has loved us, we need His Spirit to indwell us! His Spirit brings us capacity — capacity to do as He does. His love is our pattern for loving!

Our daily experience in the love of God through Jesus Christ should constantly inform us. **"If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit" (1 John 4:12-13)**. The apostle tells us that if we love one another, God abides in us. This is not a small nor insignificant statement. As we love one another, we show the living and active presence of God in our daily deportment. As a result, our conduct then pictures the Lord. John also tells us that the love of God, the love that God has and is, has been perfected in us, meaning that the love of God in the believer is complete and mature! Since we have His love abiding in us as it is in Him, let us love one another. Jesus gave His life for us! He loved us with everything He had, and He loves us still. As we allow this love to flow through each of us to the rest of us, it will influence conduct, change lives and communities. We often say that when God speaks to us, He speaks into us, and what He speaks into us, we become! We do not strive, toil, or work-up this love; it is resident in us by the Spirit of God! Jesus, in this passage of scripture, says, **"a new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:34-35)**. **"Love suffers long and is kind [...] is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own [...] does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)**.

Pastor Don

Copyright 2020

Corpus Christi Christian Fellowship and The Fellowship International