

D-Up: A Series on Discipleship
A Disciple's Love for Others
1 John 2:9-11, 3:10-23, 4:7-21

Dr. Steve Horn

April 10, 2016

Text Introduction: This morning I am returning to a series on discipleship. We are calling this series of messages "D-Up!" The "D" stands for discipleship.

We have focused on our initial decision to follow Christ, on baptism and the importance of the church to help us grow as disciples. We next focused on daily reading of the Word, prayer, stewardship, and sharing our faith.

I want to close out this series with several ideas focused on outcomes. As we always talk about, we do not study the Bible for information, but for transformation. In talking about discipleship, we are certainly not talking about what a disciple knows, but what a disciple does.

In the letter called First John, we have a list of several signs that help us to confirm our salvation. Last week, we said, "the one who keeps His commands." On the heels of that general sign, we have a more specific sign.

Text: The one who says he is in the light but hates his brother is in the darkness until now. ¹⁰ The one who loves his brother remains in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. ¹¹ But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness, walks in the darkness, and doesn't know where he's going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

Whoever does not do what is right is not of God, especially the one who does not love his brother. ¹¹ For this is the message you have heard from the beginning: We should love one another, ¹² unlike Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil, and his brother's were righteous. ¹³ Do not be surprised, brothers, if the world hates you. ¹⁴ We know that we have passed from death to life because we love our brothers. The one who does not love remains in death. ¹⁵ Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him.

¹⁶ This is how we have come to know love: He laid down His life for us. We should also lay down our lives for our brothers. ¹⁷ If anyone has this world's goods and sees his brother in need but closes his eyes to his need—how can God's love reside in him?

¹⁸ Little children, we must not love with word or speech, but with truth and action. ¹⁹ This is how we will know we belong to the truth and will convince our conscience in His presence, ²⁰ even if our conscience condemns us, that God is greater than our conscience, and He knows all things.

²¹ Dear friends, if our conscience doesn't condemn us, we have confidence before God ²² and can receive whatever we ask from Him because we keep His commands and do what is pleasing in His sight. ²³ Now this is His command: that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another as He commanded us.

Dear friends, let us love one another, because love is from God, and everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸The one who does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent His One and Only Son into the world so that we might live through Him. ¹⁰Love consists in this: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹Dear friends, if God loved us in this way, we also must love one another. ¹²No one has ever seen God. If we love one another, God remains in us and His love is perfected in us.

¹³This is how we know that we remain in Him and He in us: He has given assurance to us from His Spirit. ¹⁴And we have seen and we testify that the Father has sent His Son as the world's Savior. ¹⁵Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God—God remains in him and he in God. ¹⁶And we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and the one who remains in love remains in God, and God remains in him.

¹⁷In this, love is perfected with us so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment, for we are as He is in this world. ¹⁸There is no fear in love; instead, perfect love drives out fear, because fear involves punishment. So the one who fears has not reached perfection in love. ¹⁹We love because He first loved us.

²⁰If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For the person who does not love his brother he has seen cannot love the God he has not seen. ²¹And we have this command from Him: The one who loves God must also love his brother.

Introduction: That is a pretty good bit of Scripture to read, but I wanted you to hear all of that. In hearing these passages, do you think John is trying to make a point? Last week, we said that the disciple obeys. John adds to the idea that we keep his commands, by giving us a most specific command—to love one another.

Do we really have to love one another?

- Loving one another is a commandment.

John 13:34 "I give you a new command: Love one another. Just as I have loved you, you must also love one another.

A theologian of the Christian Reformed Church - Scott Hoezee – writes this:

"If you study the life and words and parables and sermons and actions of Jesus, you will find an eternity's worth of things you should do. But there was precisely just one thing which was so vital that Jesus actually went so far as to phrase it as a command, and that was to love each other."

In other words, there is plenty by way of inference that we could say that Jesus commanded us to do, but here is the only saying that we are explicitly given as a command.

- Loving one another is part of what it means to be conformed to the image Jesus.

Does anything say image of Jesus more than love?

Remember this from last week?

Romans 8:29 says, For those He foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brothers.

We know that we are to love as Jesus because we are to be “becoming like Jesus.”

- Loving one another convincing the world about Jesus.

John 17:21

May they all be one,
as You, Father, are in Me and I am in You.
May they also be one in Us,
so the world may believe You sent Me.

John 13:35

By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

- Loving one another confirms our relationship to Jesus.

This is how we know that we remain in Him and He in us: He has given to us from His Spirit. (1 John 4:13)

What does it mean to love?

That is, how do we communicate what it means to love like Jesus?

- Love is displayed in the life of Jesus.

We have a several examples. One is in the washing of the disciple’s feet. Remember the story.

For I have given you an example that you also should do just as I have done for you.

2 Observations about the way that Jesus loves:

- (1) Love for the friend is consistent with our love for the enemy.

Judas was present.

(2) Love is not based on the expectation of love in return.

Ultimately, this foot washing scene is an act of humility. When you know who you are in Christ, this is easy to do. (Notice verse 3)

Foot washing met a real need in the first century world.

Ultimately, love is displayed in his death.

Love is demonstrable.

Real love is not in words, but in action. Arguably the most familiar story Jesus ever told illustrates this point. The story is the Parable of the Good Samaritan. The reason that Jesus tells the story in the first place is because of a question over loving our neighbors. The question is then, "Who is my neighbor?" Then Jesus tells the story about the Samaritan who stopped when religious leaders did not. "Which one proved to be a neighbor?" Jesus asked. "The one who showed mercy." The one who did something.

How will I ever love the way that Jesus loves?

To love the way that Jesus loves we must understand that love is a fruit of the Spirit. Only in Christ can I love. To illustrate this principle, let's think upon that Mount Everest of Love Chapters—1 Corinthians 13.

Ready?

Love is patient, love is kind.

Love does not envy,

is not boastful, is not conceited,

⁵ does not act improperly,

is not selfish, is not provoked,

and does not keep a record of wrongs.

⁶ Love finds no joy in unrighteousness

but rejoices in the truth.

⁷ It bears all things, believes all things,

hopes all things, endures all things.

⁸ Love never ends.

Can you add your name where love is so that it reads...Steve is patient, Steve is kind? Not all the time, but we can add Jesus' name there so that we read...Jesus is patient, Jesus is kind, etc. So, here is what we have to do. We have to say Steve in Jesus is patient. That is how we love the way that Jesus loves.

So,

Pray Pray Pray Pray

- For Yourself
 - For Them

- About Them
 - With Them