



Love ... The Freedom to Love or Not to Love

NorthRidge Church

Dr. M. David Myers

August 23, 2020

Truth for Life

For the week of August 23, 2020

(Questions and Scriptures for further study)

The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. – John 10:17-18

It is impossible for us to love God as He desires to be loved without the presence of others around us. When we love God directly, we are loving because we were first loved and because of the promise of life eternal. When He loved us, He did so without promise of that love being returned or even appreciated. So, if we are to love as He loved, we must choose to express love to others whom we could love without any prospect of reward, or benefit, or even appreciation. We can only love God the way He has designed by loving other people who cannot benefit us.

The Shepherd and His Choice to Love - Jn 10:1-21

I. The Setting ... A Little Background ... (John 7-9)

II. The Love of a Shepherd

- a. His Love is _____ ...
Cp. Hebrews 12:2; Romans 5:7-8; John 10:18
- b. His Love is _____ ...
Cp. 2 Corinthians 5:21
- c. His Love is _____ ...
Cp. John 6:39; Romans 4:25
- d. His Love is _____ ...
Cp. John 6:37; 1:29; 3:16; Revelation 22:17

III. The Contrast of the Thief and the Good Shepherd
Cp. Ezekiel 34

- a. The Thief comes to _____ ...
- b. The Shepherd comes to _____ ...

The Child of God and His Love

- I. We cannot Claim to _____ and not _____
- II. Our Efforts to Love the Whole World is Mute, but our refusal to Love the Man in front of Me is _____

1. How do you determine who to love? What level are we to love everyone? When is it appropriate to cease loving someone? Can you find any Biblical support for any of the answers above?
2. Missing God’s mandates is often the result of not taking what God says seriously enough. We can also get so focused on a particular issue that we misinterpret it and still miss God’s intent for us. Paul warned the Ephesian Church of these things in Ephesians 4:20-32.

Make a list of Paul’s instructions. Can you think of how someone could take each instruction to a damaging extreme and/or give a reason to not take it seriously? How have you seen it played out?

As we think about our responsibility to love, what kinds of things are we to do or avoid in vs. 29-32? How could following these instructions, doing the things he states or avoiding the things he tells us to avoid, express love?

3. The Church at Ephesus lost its way. (Cf. Revelation 2:1-7) Read through the following verses from Ephesians and jot down specific instruction for the church.

Ephesians 4:1-3	Ephesians 4:25-28	Ephesians 4:29-32
Ephesians 5:1-2	Ephesians 5:3-5	Ephesians 6:7

How could avoiding the instruction of each cause them (or us) to lose our way. “*Leave our first love?*”

4. Here are some more challenging questions that will be great to ponder.
 - Since sinful anger is contrary to God’s love, how should an angry dad or mom overcome this sin toward his/her children?
 - Does God love the entire world in the same way and to the same degree that He loves His children? Give biblical support.
 - “Friendship with the world is hostility toward God” (James 4:4). How then should we properly love worldly people?

If you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax-gatherers do the same? And if you greet your brothers only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? – Matthew 5:46–47



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- I. The Setting ... A Little Background ... (John 7-9)
- II. The Love of a Shepherd
 - a. His Love is **Selfless** ...
Cp. Hebrews 12:2; Romans 5:7-8; John 10:18
 - b. His Love is **Sacrificial** ...
Cp. 2 Corinthians 5:21
 - c. His Love is **Successful** ...
Cp. John 6:39; Romans 4:25
 - d. His Love is **Specific** ...
Cp. John 6:37; 1:29; 3:16; Revelation 22:17
- III. The Contrast of the Thief and the Good Shepherd
Cp. Ezekiel 34
 - a. The Thief comes to **Take** ...
 - b. The Shepherd comes to **Give** ...

The Child of God and His Love

- I. We cannot Claim to **Love God** and not **Love Others**
- II. Our Efforts to Love the Whole World is Mute, but our refusal to Love the Man in front of Me is **Disobedience**

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5. How do you determine who to love? What level are we to love everyone? When is it appropriate to cease loving someone? Can you find any Biblical support for any of the answers above?
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