

Sermon Notes:

Counter Culture 2 - Living as Followers of Christ in Today's Society

The Great Command: Love One Another

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Professor and father illustration – “I love him in the abstract, just not in the concrete.”

We want to be not just a people of love, but also of truth.

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

Leviticus 19:18 - “You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbour as you love yourself: I am the Lord!”

The new commandment is not to love, but the depth with which we love. Jesus ups the ante when He says, if you want to be my disciple you will not love as you love yourself, but you will love others as you have been loved by Me.

“Jesus told His to love one another, “as I have loved you.” That wouldn’t be so hard if the love that Jesus displayed was primarily the write a cheque or call once a month type of love. But Jesus set the bar immeasurably high. Jesus’ kind of love touched the skin of a leper and washed the feet of a soon to be betrayer. He didn’t mind interruption by another’s demands, even those of a person all others disdained. Jesus had the uncanny ability to look straight into a person’s soul to see the deepest need there. Is that an impossible example to follow? You bet it is! That’s why God sent the Holy Spirit to live inside us and empower us with His supernatural love. Only when “plugged in” to that power will His followers stand out in their treatment of others and of one another.”

Chuck Swindoll

John MacArthur – “Standing firm in the Lord means two things: not waving doctrinally and maintaining a resolute love.”

John Stott - “We cannot proclaim the gospel of God’s love with any degree of integrity if we do not exhibit it in our love for others.”

How do I walk with someone through these issues and show incredible love while standing for truth? We follow the example of our Savior and plug into the power of the Holy Spirit that is at work within us. Remembering that, “If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing (1 Corinthians 13:1-3).”

I WILL LOVE JESUS BY...

1. Being patient and kind – 1 Corinthians 13:4a

“Love is patient and kind.”

All throughout the Old Testament we see the message of God’s patience with His people. Joel 2:13 - “Return to your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster.”

William Barclay - “If God had been a man, He would have taken His hand and wiped out this world a long time ago, but God has that patience which bears with our sinning and doesn’t cast us off. In our lives, in our attitude to and dealings with our fellow man, we must reproduce this loving, forbearing, forgiving, and patient attitude of God towards us.”

Ephesians 4:1-2 - “I, therefore, a prisoner for the Lord urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love.”

If we are modelling the kindness that is seen in the Father, we are praying that it will lead to something deeper. Romans 2:4 - “Or do you presume on the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God’s kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?”

Woman at the Well, John 4 - A woman’s life was changed because Jesus stepped out of culture barriers and showed love through the kindness of an invitation while standing for truth.

2. Being humble – 1 Corinthians 13:4b-5

“Love does not envy or boast, it is not arrogant or rude, it does not insist on its own way.”

The humility that Jesus showed while here on earth set the example for us to follow. Jesus coming to earth was a massive step down for Him. Matthew 20:28 - “Even as the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve and give His life as a ransom for many.”

Ephesians 4:1 - "I, therefore, as a prisoner for the Lord, I urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you were called in all humility and gentleness."

3. Loving unconditionally – 1 Corinthians 13:5b

"It is not irritable or resentful."

Luke 23:34, as Jesus is hanging on the cross, He looks out and cries, 'Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.'

"Forgiveness by Terror" the story of Jim and Eloise Bergen

4. Rejoicing in truth – 1 Corinthians 3:6

"It does not rejoice at wrong doing, but rejoices with the truth."

Loving someone with the love of Christ does not mean that we rejoice in the sin that is part of their lives, but that they would see the truth of being set free. Love is not going along with everything that society teaches.

John 8:2-11 - The woman caught in adultery... Jesus took care of the pride in the Pharisees, showed mercy, and called for repentance all in the same story. Loving like Jesus doesn't rejoice in evil, but seek forgiveness, repentance and victory for the sinner.

"Spiritually mature disciples are passionately, hopefully, and patiently obsessed with learning to love like Jesus, they want to reveal, even to hurtful family members and frustrating friends, the heart of Jesus by the way that they relate to others. No matter how difficult or discouraging life becomes, they long to worship God with a genuine freedom that puts them in touch the Spirit granted desire and ability to love everyone they encounter with Jesus-like love."

Larry Crabb