



LOVE ONE ANOTHER: WEEK 2

Welcome to Lesson 2 of the **ONE ANOTHER** Study! This week we will be discussing what Jesus meant when He said to love one another. Honestly, I've been so looking forward to diving into this particular one, but the deeper I got, the more my mind felt like it was exploding. This concept is so rich, so profound, yet so simple. Simple, but impossible without the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. It's my favorite of the **One Another**s. I also think it's the over-arching emphasis for each of them. It tells us **WHAT** to do, the others tell us **HOW** to do it and **WHAT** it should look like.

Love is hard to define in today's culture, right? We use the word "love" to describe many things. We use it to describe what we like to eat (chocolate), what we like to do (read), and how we feel towards others who are close to us (family, friends, etc.) It has almost become overused, therefore, less meaningful, because it's used to cover a very wide range of relational ideas. In the Greek there are four different words that are all translated as love. There's one for romantic love, one for brotherly love, one for a general positive regard, and one specifically used for the unconditional love given by God. The verse I've chosen for our memory verse is written by John, considered the Apostle of love, and is found in John 13:34-35: **"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."** Work on this verse throughout the week.

1. Before we go any further, think of at least one person in your life who you feel genuinely loved you. What did they do to make you feel that way?

2. How do you think our culture defines and demonstrates love?
3. Let's get some context for our memory verse. Read John 13:1-38. After reading through the chapter, please observe the text by noting the facts: What is happening? Who are the main characters? Where is the story occurring? What is the main point?
4. As discussed last week, Jesus was good at "show and tell," or modeling the truth He was teaching the disciples. What "points" or truths was He modeling in this story? How?
5. What stands out the most to you in this story? How many "One Anothers" did you see in action?
6. What was the final point Jesus made in verse 35? Why is this a crucial statement?

In Mark 12:30-31, Jesus gave us the two greatest commandments, which are to love God with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength, and love our neighbor as ourselves. Basically, Jesus reiterates that truth. Here He is at the Last Supper, about to get arrested in the Garden, washes their feet, and talking about His betrayal. Picture for a minute all of them sitting around the table as Jesus is giving them some last words ... "Hey, huddle up guys! Pull it in! Here's the plan. Let's all love one another. Just like I've been saying, just like you've seen Me do. That's the plan. And when I'm gone, just love each other like that, and others will know who I am." Time was running out. For three years Jesus had walked among the people, telling and showing them why He came into the world, which was to save them from their sins. But soon He would be gone, at least visibly. He would be leaving this world and going to the Father, as He says in John 13:1. So how would the world know about His love for them? His plan? By watching how His Church loved one another. Wow. His unique plan was that unbelievers would be able to come to know about Him and His love through His people in proper relationship with one another. They could learn from His followers what the love of Christ was like.

7. What did John later have to say about that in 1 John 4:11-21?

Also read 1 John 3:13-24.

8. Have you ever thought about how loving one another is really evangelism at the core, if the purpose of it is to draw men and women to Christ?
Thoughts?

9. How, then, do all the other “one anothers” tie into loving one another? How do they work together?

Jesus called it a “new commandment” in verse 34. What’s new about it? Gene Getz wrote, “Christ was obviously making a comparison that was both a contrast and an extension of truth. It was a contrast in that Christ was telling the disciples about a new way to make people aware of their sins and to bring them to Christ. It was an extension of truth because it involved the fulfillment of a promise God had made many years before, both to Adam and Abraham.” God obviously knew that no one could keep the Law perfectly and would all fall short. Paul talks about that in Galatians 3:25, “The Law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith.” Some translations say that the Law became our tutor to lead us to Christ. The Old Testament Law was given to make all people aware of their sins and cause them to seek a way of escape and to lead them to Christ. God made that way of escape through Jesus Christ. So, this “new” commandment was a new way to lead people to God and to make them aware of their sin, since only faith in Jesus can set us free us from the power of sin and death in our lives through the cross at Calvary.

10. Loving one another, therefore, makes Christ “visible” to the world. Explain how the love believers have for one another can make unbelievers “aware of their sin and show them the remedy for that sin.” Then, take some time to reflect on whether or not that truth is evident in your own life. Can your neighbors, your co-workers, and your family, see Christ in you? Are they drawn to Him because of how you love others, including them?

Remember that we are called to do good to both believers and unbelievers alike, according to Galatians 6:10. We often find it much easier to “do good” to those in our church or fellow believers, but Jesus told us to “love our neighbors” which, according to the example of the Good Samaritan, means all people.

11. Why do you think it’s easier at times to love those who are believers?

12. Have you been reaching out to try to establish friendships with non-Christians? If not, pray and ask the Lord to show you how to do that.

13. Jump over to John 15 and read verses 1-27. How is loving one another discussed in this chapter as well? What other words does Jesus use to perhaps convey the same thing?

Jesus made it clear that the Gardner was the Father and that He Himself was the true Vine. The freshly pruned branches seem to be the disciples who had not forsaken Him, minus Judas, who had left the table. But He didn’t define the word “fruit.” Many commentators think that the fruit in verse 8 refers to the concept of “loving one another” as stated in John 13:25, as well as His words in 17:9-17. I’m not sure I have ever heard that before. Hmmmmm ... what a concept. That just elevated the importance of loving one another even more. All the other one another ... comfort one another, be devoted to one another, bear one another’s burdens, forgive one another ... can all be the “fruit” from abiding in Him, since those actions are motivated, or should be motivated, by love.

14. Jesus uses the word “command” in the passage in John 13. How does that change your perspective about loving one another?

15. What if you consider the person an enemy? Are you still called to love them? What did Jesus say about that in Matthew 5:43-48? How is that possible? Also read Romans 5:6-11.

16. Do you have anyone in your life you would consider an “enemy,” or that you simply just don’t like? How can you demonstrate genuine love to them?

17. Read the following verses on loving one another and write what they practically mean:

- A. Romans 13:8
- B. 1 Peter 4:8
- C. 1 John 3:23
- D. 1 Thessalonians 3:12
- E. Galatians 5:13
- F. Ephesians 4:2

18. In light of this discussion, what would you say is the role of community in a believer’s life?

19. Read John 15:12-13. What does this practically mean for you and I today? What does it mean to sacrificially love someone?

20. Peter told Jesus he would lay down his life for Him in John 13:37. What did Jesus say? Read John 18:25-27. Did Peter keep his promise? What can we learn from this lesson?

21. How can saying “I love you” without demonstrating it be detrimental to a relationship? Why? Are you guilty of this?

22. What are some practical ways to genuinely love others as Christ loved you this week?

In his book Love One Another, Don McMinn points out that most of the **One Another**s have a declaration, a design, and a distinction. For instance, Love One Another:

Declaration: Love one another

Design: As I have loved you

Distinction: If you love others, it will distinguish that you are a follower of Christ.

Here's another example of the One Another in Romans 15:7: Accept one another, just as Christ accepts you.

Declaration: Accept one another

Design: As God accepted you

Distinction: Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4 showed He accepted her, and accepting others was a distinguishing characteristic of Jesus' life.

In the studies ahead, let's look for those 3 things in each, shall we? I think it's pretty fascinating. I pray you have a wonderful week and may you be intentional about loving others. God wants to use you and I to make Himself visible in our world. I love what Bob Goff said, "I used to think you had to be special for God to use you, but now I know you simply need to say yes." Okay, one more quote from him, just because I like it: "I used to think being a believer was enough, but now I know Jesus wants us to participate, no matter what condition we're in."

Don't forget to work on your memory verse! Hide it in your heart!

(Maybe put it on your dashboard!)