

Title: A New Commandment
Text: John 13:34-35

Series: John

Take your Bibles, please, and turn with me to John chapter 13. The 13th chapter of John's Gospel. And I want to look at verse 34 on the topic: A New Commandment.

For the past two weeks we have looked at two major areas in which Jesus proclaimed his deity. The fact that He was God. These two areas caused great angry among the leaders of the land. And they began to plot how to kill Jesus. When Jesus claimed to be the living water and the light of the world, WOW!!! Great opposition arose throughout the land. This opposition finally led to the cross.

Now, what I would like to do in the next few weeks is inter pose some instruction that Jesus gave to His disciples. I would like to look at some teaching that Jesus gave concerning what it means to be a Christian. We are going to learn from Jesus what our responsibilities are as a Christian. We will learn what Jesus wants us to do. Not what we think we ought to do. But, what Jesus tells us to do.

And I would like to begin the instructions of Jesus ⁱⁿ ~~at~~ chapter 13 verses 34. Would you please stand for the reading of God's Word?

(Read John 13:34-35)

Prayer

Now, according to these two verses, the primary responsibility of every Christian is to love one another. Jesus said, "A new commandment I give to you that you love one another. And by this action all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.

So, our primary responsibility is to love one another. Now, I believe that. And I am sure you believe that also. We ought to love one another. RIGHT? Right!

But, it is a lot easier said then done. And so I ask myself why? Why do we find it so hard to love one another? And the only answer I could come up with is that little word SIN. It is sin that slowly moves, without out knowledge, into the believers life.

Now, knowing this I discovered that the Bible spells out 5 specific areas where sin can destroy LOVE ONE FOR ANOTHER. 5 areas that will hinder our ability to love one another.

(1A) Number one, James 4:11 says "Do not speak evil against one another." Dear friends, the quickest way to destroy your relationship with another person is to speak evil of another brother or sister in Christ. There is nothing that will destroy a relationship faster than speaking evil against another person.

My mother taught me a long time ago, IF YOU CAN'T SAY SOMETHING NICE ABOUT SOMEONE ELSE, SAY NOTHING. Well, ^{as Ted} simple says: "Do not speak evil against one another." And when you do it is called sin. And sin will hinder your ability to love that person.

(2A) Area number two, The Bible tells us to complain not against your brethren. James 5:9 says, "Do not complain, brethren, against one another, that your yourselves may not be judged; behold, the judge is standing right at the door."

Dear friends, this is not talking about the second coming of Christ. It is talking about right now. Be very careful that you complain not against one another. Least God judge you for your attitude,

Here is a good principle of life to remember: COMPLAINING FOSTERS COMPLAINING. It happens in a home. It happens at work. And it will happen in the church. Complaining destroys individual relationships and it will destroy the church

And when we complain against our brethren, we are sinning. And sin hinders our ability to love one another.

(3A) Third, lying. Colossians 3:9 says, "Lie not one to another, speak truth, each one of you, for we are members of one another." Dear friends, lying is one of the five sins that God hates. You cannot demonstrate love when you are lying. Lying is a sin. And sin hinders our ability to love one another.

(4A) Area four: ^{provoking} ~~provoking~~ someone to angry. Proverbs 20:2 says, "Do not provoke one another to angry." Do you know what the root cause of provoking one another is? JEALOUSY!! Dear friends, jealousy can destroy the relationship of one another faster than any other sin. Provoke not. Why? Because it is a sin. And sin hinders our ability to love one another.

(5A) Area number five: Romans 14:13 says, "Therefore, let us not judge one another anymore. But, rather determine this, do not put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way."

Let me clarify what this verse is ^{teaching} ~~teaching~~. It is not referring to judging a non-believer. The Bible is very specific when it says we are to judge whether a person is a believer or not a believer. We are to test the spirits to see if they are of God. If someone is not a Christian, we are to witness to him or her and invite him or her to come to Christ.

But, believers are not to judge other believers as to their spiritual growth and development. You are not to say that I am more righteous than another believer. You are not saying, "Look at that believer. He or she is a bad Christian for not doing such and so' or for doing something that you have determined to be good or bad 🙌"

Dear friends, one way to just kill your relationship with another believer is to indicate that whatever he or she is doing is not acceptable to you. Even though that standard is not outlined in the Bible.

For example: Two Christians live next door to one another. One Christian believes in speaking in tongues. He believes that if you speak in tongues it proves that you are a Christian. The other Christian does not believe in speaking in tongues. And so the Christian who believes in speaking

in tongues as a proof that you are saved says to his neighbor: "You are really not a Christian because you haven't spoken in tongues. So, I am here to tell you that.

Now, what do you suppose is going to happen between those two Christians, regardless of whether one is right or one is wrong.

Listen, dear friends, a wall is going to form right between them. And Satan will have a field day. Love will stop. And our witness will be hindered.

Jesus said, LOVE ONE ANOTHER. And when there is sin operating in one of these five areas, love certainly is not being demonstrated.

And that is where we need to apply I John 1:9: "If we confess our sin, He is faithful and just to forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

When sins are confessed, they are forgiven. And we can then fulfill the commandment of Jesus to love one another. And by that kind of love all who crosses our path will know that we are his disciples.

SHALL WE CLOSE IN PRAYERU