

Love Like Jesus

Sunday, May 13, 2018
10:30 AM

Ephesians 5:25 (NIV)

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her

Here in Ephesians we are given a simple but profound command. Husbands love your wives

Now it is true that on this Mother's Day, I want to specifically address husbands

But this message is not only for husbands. I also want to address our young men who will someday be husbands

I want to address our women and young women who need to know the value that God places upon them and who should understand what true love is so that they would not settle for a worldly definition of what love is. I believe, ladies you have a right to expect to be loved in this way

Finally, I want to address us all, as God's people, and call us to be obedient to God's command to love one another

Lest we think it is only for husbands

Ephesians 5:1-2 (NIV)

5 1 Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children **2** and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Lest we think it was only Paul's command

John 13:34-35 (NIV)

34 "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. **35** By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

Now the first thing I want to establish in this passage is the meaning of the smallest word in the verse. "As". Understanding the meaning of this little word is foundational to fulfilling this command. Used here as an adverb, it describes and qualifies the verb love

It's one Greek word and it is translated "just as." In other words - in like manner, in the same way, or in the proportion which...

So we are to love... **JUST AS** Jesus loved

Let's ask ourselves some important questions about the love that we currently practice
Because we may be operating from the wrong definition of love

For example....

The Greatest showman a great musical, but not historically accurate in its portrayal of Mr. PT Barnum.

It's the same with love. Many times we are presented with a portrayal of what love is that is not biblically accurate

1. What examples shape the way we love?
2. What influences define how we love?
3. What standards do we hold ourselves accountable to?
4. What definitions of love do we subscribe to?

For many people it is...

Culture, friends, what they grew up experiencing, literature, movies,

But our example should be Jesus, His love should define what it means to love. His standard must be what we hold ourselves accountable to. His is the greatest example of what it means to love

Many things could be said about His love and what we will discuss this morning is not an exhaustive list; but let's take a few minutes to examine the following characteristics of Christ's love that we are called to imitate and as we do I want you to evaluate yourself in how well you are doing in each area.

- **Unconditional Love**

Because we measure love by human standards, it can be hard to imagine what it means to be loved unconditionally. We understand passionate love, and young love, and first loves. Yet all three of those circle back towards the ability to sustain that love, and to most people there will come a time when that begins to feel difficult. The rush wears off, the facades come down, and daily life begins to wear down the sparkle. The ones who make it, are those who choose to hold on to that first kind of love, in all moments-even when the ones we are called to love seem entirely unlovable.

- Article by Jada Pryor

Psalm 36:5-7 (NIV)

5 Your love, Lord, reaches to the heavens, your faithfulness to the skies. **7** How priceless is your unfailing love, O God! People take refuge in the shadow of your wings.

Like the picture of love we are shown in the book of Hosea, God's love is given to us not because we deserve us, but in spite of the fact that we don't deserve it.

Hosea 3:1 (NIV)

3 The Lord said to me, "Go, show your love to your wife again, though she is loved by another man and is an adulteress. Love her as the Lord loves the Israelites, though they turn to other gods and love the sacred raisin cakes."

Now this is an extreme case, but I want you to think for a moment about the ways in which you make you make your love conditional

- **Giving Love**

Ephesians 5:25 (NIV)

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and **gave** himself up for her

Ephesians 5:2 (NIV)

just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Galatians 2:20 (NIV)

20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

So much of the love that is expressed in the world, has as its intent - GETTING - or even worse - TAKING - but Christ's love is a giving love. What can you do to love people in a GIVING way

- **Sacrificial Love**

Galatians 2:20 (NIV)

20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Romans 5:8 (NIV)

8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

What sacrifices have you made lately that demonstrate your love of your spouse?

- **Forgiving Love**

Ephesians 4:32 (NIV)

32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Colossians 2:13 (NIV)

13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us **ALL** our sins,

Now I can hear the wheels starting to turn as various scenarios start coming to mind that would excuse us from this type of love. But the fact is that Christ's love is a forgiving love and that is what we are called to do

Ephesians 4:31-32 (NIV)

31 Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. **32** Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

- **Sinless Love**

One of the characteristics of Jesus' love for us that made it so powerful was the fact that his love was in no way tainted with sin. As Paul continues his admonition to Love Like Christ in his letter to Ephesians, Chapter 5 speaks of the need to fulfill this command by getting rid of the sin in our lives

The fact is we cannot love others the way God has called us to love if there is sin in our lives. Why? Because sin steals, it kills, it destroys, it tears down. And we must not forget that our sin not only damages us, it damages those around us. Especially those closest to us.

Ephesians 4:25-29 (NIV)

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her **26** to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, **27** and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. **28** In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. **29** After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church—

- **Compassionate (Caring) Love**

Psalm 103:8 (NIV)

8 The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.

- **Careful Love**

Matthew 12:20 (NIV)

20 A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out, till he has brought justice through to victory.

It's not reckless or harsh

- **Gentle Love**

Ephesians 4:2 (NIV)

2 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

- **Radical Love**

In every way that he expressed it, Jesus' love was radical. It was undeserved, unnatural, unconventional, unheard of

He touched lepers, ate and drank with publicans and sinners, welcomed Samaritans and other outcasts, valued women, feed the demon possessed, taught us to love our enemies, forgave those who were responsible for his crucifixion.

- **Honest Love**

Illustration: *Samantha fur in my nose

I am glad that God's love doesn't lie to us. If He did we would be dead in our sins.

We may say that is impossible and yet we are given this truth for which we must strive

We ask for His help. We ask for His love to manifest itself through us. For such, we need the fruit of the Holy Spirit, the first of which is love, readily apparent in our lives