

Love for Others

I. Introduction

- A. Scripture stresses the need to love our neighbors as ourselves. This is at the root of commands dealing with right treatment toward others. **Romans 13:8-10**
- B. Consider some things God teaches connected to this theme.

II. Love Involves Selflessness

- A. The words generally used for love in the New Testament are *agapao* (Strong G25) and *agape* (Strong G26). These words are difficult to define, but involve seeking others' highest good. Love is a deliberate choice to do what is beneficial for others rather than only thinking about oneself. **Philippians 2:3-4**
- B. The perfect example of love is Jesus. His descension to this earth and the choices He made as He walked the earth exemplify selflessness. **Philippians 2:5-8; John 13:34**

III. The Character of Love

- A. When we develop the mindset of Jesus, it will vastly change how we treat others. Paul provides a vivid description of what such treatment looks like. **1 Corinthians 13:4-7**

IV. Love for Enemies

- A. *Agape* love should apply not only to those who treat us well, but also to those who treat us poorly. **Matthew 5:43-44**
- B. Jesus did not condone others' hateful treatment toward Him, but He did not have bitterness against them or seek revenge. His desire was (and is) for all to receive salvation. **Luke 23:34**

V. Love's Impartiality

- A. Jesus' love for those who treated Him poorly is further demonstrated in the fact that He *died* to give *everyone* a chance to be saved. **1 Timothy 2:6**
- B. This includes those of all social statuses, ethnicities, backgrounds, etc. Like Christ, our love must be impartial and unprejudiced. **James 2:8-9**

VI. The Need for Sincerity

- A. Impartiality is among the things needed to love *sincerely*. We must not simply pretend to love, but prove it by truly doing what is needful for others. **Romans 12:9**
- B. Jesus exemplified sincere love in His interaction with the "rich young ruler." Rather than telling the ruler what He wanted to hear, Jesus told him what he *needed* to hear. It is clear that Jesus genuinely cared for the man's soul. **Mark 10:21-22**

VII. Going the "Extra Mile"

- A. Such genuine care for others led Jesus to go "above and beyond" in His service for others. The apostle Paul followed this example, and urges all Christians to do likewise. **1 Corinthians 10:23-24, 33**

VIII. Conclusion

- A. May we truly love others as ourselves. **Romans 13:8**