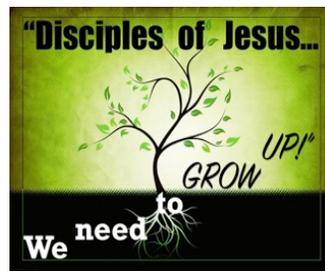


“Disciples of Jesus ... We need to GROW UP!”

Part 17: “LOVE ... more than a feeling!”

Romans 5:6-11; I John 4:1-12



Introduction: “By *THIS* all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another!” (John 13:35).

Jesus calls believers to love one another in a way that will amaze the world and display His power at work within us and among us.

John 13:34: “Love one another just as I have loved YOU!”

Disciples of Jesus are called and empowered by His Spirit to love one another by laying down our lives to serve one another!

This message is for those in whom the Spirit of God is at work.

I. Jesus’ command to “love one another” ...

Obedience to Jesus’ commands is not optional for disciples of Jesus.

I John 4:1-12: “Beloved, if God so loved US, we also ought to love one another” (vs. 11).

“Religious” people talk about “love,” yet refuse to accept that there is anything unique about Jesus and His disciples.

“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God” (I John 4:7).

Those who are not united to Christ by faith through the work of the Spirit cannot and will not consistently love one another.

I Corinthians 13:1-8: “If I ... have not love ... I am nothing!”

It is only believers who can love one another in such a way that it becomes a testimony to God.

Loving one another forms the foundation for everything else we do as disciples of Jesus.

II. Jesus’ example of loving one another ...

Romans 5:6-11: “God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us!” (vs. 8).

Jesus’ love is a “sacrificial” love that is willing to lay down its life for others and that doesn’t quit when things get hard.

Ephesians 4:29-32, 5:1-2: “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave YOU!” (4:32).

Romans 12:9-13: “Love must be genuine. ... Love one another with brotherly affection” (vss. 9-10).

Philippians 2:1-8: “Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility, count others more significant than yourselves” (vs. 3).

III. Jesus’ GRACE to love one another ...

Disciples of Jesus are called and empowered by His Spirit to love one another by laying down our lives to serve one another!

GRACE is not only “undeserved favor,” but also “God’s empowering presence, enabling His children to BE what He calls us to be and to DO what He calls us to do!”

I Peter 1:3-4: “His divine power HAS GRANTED us all things that pertain to life and godliness ...” (vs. 3).

To be a member of the Body of Christ is to understand that the GRACE of God is at work IN us and AMONG us as it is nowhere else!

It is by the grace of God at work in us that Almighty God has determined to make Himself known, to fulfill His promises and to bring salvation to those whom He has chosen to be His.

“You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light” (I Peter 2:9).

Ephesians 4:4-7, 15-16: “... speaking the truth in love ... makes the Body grow so that it builds itself up in love!” (vss. 15,18).