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## Love Pt 2 Love God & your brethren as Christ loves you

This is our second study on the word “love” in the scriptures. Last week we established three points– (i) God is love, (ii) God loves Israel, (iii) God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. This week we establish an additional three points– (i) we are to love the Lord our God, (ii) there is a commandment that we love our neighbour, our brethren and our enemies, (iii) The love for our God and the brethren is with all our heart.

It is from our search of the scriptures that we establish our points–

### 1. We are to love the Lord our God!

I) Israel were commanded to love the Lord

And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might” (Deut.6:5). See also Deut 30:6

Love the Lord and **obey His voice**, that they would cleave to Him

“That thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that **thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life**, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them” (Deut.30: 20).

### 2. There is a commandment to love your neighbour

I) Israel were to love their neighbour and the stranger as themselves

“Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the Lord. [34] But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt” (Lev 19:18, 34).

ii) Jesus’ commandment – love one another

“This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. [17] These things I command you, that ye love one another” (Jn.15:12, 17).

Jesus taught –

\* love your enemies, and bless them that curse you.

“Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. {44} But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you” (Matt.5: 43, 44) See also Lk 6:27 & 35.

\* for if you love them which love you what is your reward? Do not the heathen do the same

“For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?” (Matt.5: 46). See also Lk 6: 32.

iii) The over-riding commandment for Paul – love thy neighbour as thyself

“For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if [there be] any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Rom 13:9).

Love all men (similar to Jesus that said – love your enemies)

“And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you” (1 Thes.3: 12).

### 3. The love for our God and the brethren is with all our heart

i) we are to love the Lord with all of our heart and soul and mind

“And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might” (Deut.6: 5).

ii) We are to love our brethren –

\* laying down our lives for them

“Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren” (1 Jn.3: 16).

\* as Christ also loved us and given himself for us

“And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour” (Eph.5: 2).

#### Illustration

Howard leads a church group opposite where we stand on Queen street to preach. He came over and shared something of his testimony on Friday night. He believed, and received the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ when he was in the Black Power – Auckland chapter. When he was knee deep in drugs, beer, and women he was extended love by a Pastor that surpassed any human’s love that he had previously experienced. So, he was drawn to their love, and came to know the love of God in Christ Jesus, by Turing from Satan to God and believing the gospel. He is now married, and walking with the Lord, beseeching others to receive the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### Questions of the scriptures

i) What is common between our love for the Lord, our brethren and our wives?

ii) How do we recognise God’s love in the brethren?

iii) Why would we struggle to show our love to our brethren in accordance with how the scriptures say we ought to love?

#### Answers from the scriptures

i) The common factor between loving God, our brethren, and our wives– Love NOT in word, neither in tongue but in deed and in truth– 1 Jn.3: 18– “My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth”.

ii) We recognise God’s love through the brethren, when

\* they work no ill to their neighbour, because– Love **works** not ill to his neighbour (hence love fulfils the law)– Rom.13: 10– “Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law”.

#### Giving is an outward evidence of our love for the brethren

“Wherefore shew ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf” (2Cor 8:24)..

iii) If we struggle to love our brethren, or the enemies of the cross (all men) because– it is not natural for a man to love, as Christ loved, as God the Father loves!– sacrificially. It is because– to love as God loves is a fruit of the Spirit of God– “But the fruit of the Spirit is love...” (Gal.5: 22).

Therefore, if we struggle to show love as the scriptures require us, and such love is wrought by the Holy Ghost, then we are quenching the Spirit of God from bearing the fruit of love in us.

When we are a vessel of God’s love the heathen will know we are a Christian

“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (Jn.13:35). Are you a vessel of God’s love?