

SACRIFICIAL LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER! (Scripture: 1 John 3: 16-18)

Introduction: As I said before, Christian love is very peculiar compared to any form of love. It loves equally even our enemies, and prays for them! It is unconditional love. Not the kind like quid pro quo, this for that. No it is not a business relationship, it is an agape love, and it gives, it gives, and it gives forever. This love is a sacrificial love. It is not given out of abundance, but rather, out of self-sacrifice with little what we have! Love is not just feelings, it is pure works through faith in Christ.

Love is a choice. We make conscious choice every day to love a person or reject him. We choose and decide, and move consciously, we do these things so fast through our human brain computer, and we do not realize it. We must change our way of thinking. We must constantly decide, plan, move, work hard to bring out loving actions toward a person who is hated most, and strive to bless that person! Just like how we scheme, and execute plans to hurt a person who hurt us, we must also plan and scheme to love, and bless a person, we must consciously move toward accepting everyone, loving everyone consciously every day, and grow in this agape love!

This is what Jesus wants! If we reject others, God will reject us! So we have a lot to grow in the area of love. Drop your guard! Drop your walls, and protection shield around you. Get rid of those chips on your shoulder. Just focus on loving the other person genuinely. Do not be afraid to be hurt by the other person. Perfect love casts out all fears from us, it is not who you are in this world, but who you want to be with the other person. Are we going to ignore or love that person? Take effort to love every person!

1 John 3: 16.

16 We know love by this that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

Jesus said that there is no greater love than this: one lays down his life for others! Our Lord proved it with His own life. He emptied Himself and lived for us, and then when the appropriate time came, He died for our sins, and through His shed blood to save those who believe in Him! This is what the love is: Sacrificial love! When we take baptism, this is what we say: Lord, I offer my life to you. I will live for you through the faith of Son of God forever.

This is what we must focus on when we gather around the table. This is what the person who gives the communion meditation must make us focus on: How he sacrificially lived for us and died for us. Likewise, we must be stirred up to live for Him and for our brothers and sisters, and be prepared to lay down our lives also if necessary. Communion time is a connecting time with this sacrificial love of our Savior. It is not the time for preaching and teaching. 3 to 5 minutes is plenty to stir our spirits and connect. Communion meditation is all about this sacrificial love. It is perfectly ok to repeat this thought of sacrificial living and

dying again and again every week because we easily forget this very principle of Christian life that we ought to apply this sacrificial love to everyone the minute we step out into the real world. We must implement this agape love principle constantly.

We may understand and grab Christ's love for our benefit readily, but we leave out our obligation to live and die for Christ and others! This is the new covenant in His blood we try to remember week after week. We must lay down our lives for the brethren, and live for them. No Christian lives to himself, and dies to himself. He or she always lives for others. This kind of Christian love is unique, peculiar, and it stands out! But our selfish spirit makes us forget it so quick!

There were so many missionaries who poured out their life in an unselfish manner because they understood this verse and obeyed sincerely!

Examples of missionaries? Mother Teresa, Amy Carmichael, William Carey, Albert Schweitzer, David Livingston, other unknown missionaries who poured out their life for others.

Let us love one another as Christ loved us by emptying ourselves, and laying down our lives for others.

We always focus on why Christ laid down His life for us, but we fail to realize when He laid down His life for us!

When we were without strength, totally unable to help ourselves or save ourselves. (ROM. 5:6)

When we were ungodly. (ROM. 5:6)

When we were sinners. (ROM.5:8)

When we were enemies of God! (ROM. 5;10)

Jesus showed compassion on His enemies, and prayed, "Father forgive them. They know not what they do!"

We must also show compassion toward our enemies, instead of anger.

The point is this: if we love God, then we follow His Son, Lord Jesus Christ. We love people just like He did. We love them even when they oppose and do things against us and stand against us. In fact, loving our enemies, and those who hurt us is the proof that we really understand the love of Christ. If we love those who do things against us, then we know the real love of Christ!

Christ died for those who hated Him; and Christians must confront the hateful world with a love that is ready even to die for the haters. Just as our Lord emptied Himself, and gave

Himself for us, we must also empty ourselves, and lay down our lives for others, especially for those who hate us.

1 John 3:17, 18.

17But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? 18Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

Every Word of God goes deep into our hearts and pierces our soul. How do we live for our brothers? Living for others, and meeting the real needs of the people is the main purpose of our lives. It is not just meeting the needs of our family, but others also.

If we have the basic necessities of life, and see a person in need, how can we close our heart against them? How can we shut off feelings for him? If we turn him down, how can the love of God dwell within us? The answer is very clear: the love of God does not exist within a person who does not help those whom he sees in need. No matter what we profess, or think, or try to be loving, we do not love God, if we are not helping that person, and meet his needs sacrificially.

But a word of caution needed. We need to be careful of those who try to exploit our compassion, and use us and deceive us. We must be very cautious not to help those charlatans who prey on us! This is what we should be doing wherever we go: We must listen to the needs of the people when they talk, and pray about their needs, and if the Lord moves in your heart to help that person, we must! Always pray in your heart for the Lord's leadership before you offer your help. We cannot help everyone. We cannot get rid off hunger from the world by ourselves. Yet, carefully, give it to those who ask. That's what Jesus said! You help those who cannot help themselves.

Let us open our hearts to those who are in real need. But help those who cannot help themselves. Give it to those who ask, but be sure, you are not taken for a ride!

Brothers, and sisters, and children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth. Loving is an active verb. Let us love through our actions mostly.

James has lot to say about this topic!

James 2:13.

13For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

James 2:15-17.

*15 If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food,
16and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?
17Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.*

This applies not only to physical need, but spiritual need also.

Again book of James addresses this:

James 5:19, 20.

*19Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back,
20let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save [!]a soul from
death and cover a multitude of sins.*

Evangelical ministries shut off physical needs. Both must go hand in hand. Both spiritual and physical needs must be budgeted together.

Conclusion:

Let us love one another, as Christ loved us, sacrificially, unconditionally.

Let us take more effort to win our unlovable people also. Always keep your doors open and welcome. Never cut off.

Let us meet the needs of our brothers sacrificially. We may not have gold or silver to offer, but we can offer our house and food, in case one of our brothers lose their job for a very long time!

Let us not just speak about charity in words, but let us show in action also.

Daniel Israel

pastor@acts242church.org

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