

Love One Another

John 13:34 & 35 says, 'I give you a new commandment; that you should love one another. Just as I have loved you, so you too should love one another. By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you love one another'.

John 15:12 & 17; 'This is My commandment; that you love one another just as I have loved you. This is what I command you; that you love one another'.

Romans 12:10/13:8; 'Love one another with brotherly (or sisterly) affection; showing honour to one another as members of one family'. 'Owe no man anything except to love one another; for he (or she) who loves their neighbour has fulfilled the law'.

Ephesians 4:1 & 2; 'Walk worthy of the divine calling to which you have been called, with complete lowliness of mind and meekness, with patience, bearing with one another and making allowances because you love one another'.

1 Thessalonians 4:9; 'But concerning brotherly love for all other Christians, you have no need to have anyone write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another'.

1 Peter 1:22; 'Since by your obedience to the Truth through the Holy Spirit, you have purified your hearts for the sincere affection of the brethren, see that you love one another fervently from a pure heart'.

1 Peter 4:8; 'Above all things, have intense and unfailing love for one another, for love covers (forgives and disregards) a multitude of sins (the offences of others)'.

1 John 3:11 & 23; 'For this is the message which you have heard from the first, that we should love one another'. 'And this is His order; that we should believe in the name of His Son, Jesus Christ and that we should love one another just as He has commanded us'.

1 John 4:7, 8, 11 & 12; 'Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and he who loves his brethren is begotten of God and is coming to understand God. He who does not love has not become acquainted with God. He does not and never did know Him intimately, for God is love'. 'Beloved, if God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another'. 'No man has at any time yet seen God, but if we love one another, God abides in us and His love is brought to completion, to its full maturity in us'.

1 John 2:9, 10 & 11; 'Whoever says he is in the Light, and yet hates his brother (or sister) in Christ, is in darkness even until now. Whoever loves his brother (or sister) in Christ, abides in the Light, and in him there is no occasion for stumbling or cause for error or sin. But he who hates his brother (or sister) in Christ is in darkness and walking in the dark; he is straying and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes'.

1 John 3:14; 'We know that we have passed over out of death into Life by the fact that we love our fellow Christians. He who does not love, abides in spiritual death'.

1 John 4:20; 'If anyone says "I love God" and hates his brother in Christ is a liar, for he who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, Whom he has not seen. And this command we have from Him; that he who loves God shall love his fellow believer also'.

1 Corinthians 13:1 to 8; 'If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a clanging cymbal. If I have prophetic powers and understand all the secret truths, and if I have enough faith so that I can remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. Even if I give to the poor but have not love, I gain nothing. Love endures long, is patient and kind, is never envious, does not display itself haughtily, is not arrogant and inflated with pride and does not act unbecomingly. Love is not self-seeking, it is not touchy, it pays no attention to a wrong, it does not rejoice at injustice, but rejoices when truth prevails. Love bears up under anything, is ever ready to believe the best of every person and it endures everything. Love never fails'.

All of these above scriptures tell us in no uncertain terms, that we are to love all Christians; that is all believers and no one is exempt. We have no right to pick and choose whom we will love. Even if they go to another church fellowship, or accept a slightly different slant on the scriptures, or are at a different level in their walk with God, or even if we know somebody who is hard to love for whatever reason, we must, by God's command, love them and accept them anyway. There are some people who have been saved from the most appalling conditions; brand new baby Christians who are still learning what God expects from His people, but love them we must. We must not allow them to slip back into darkness, and loving them is initially, the only way they will grow. We must love all Christians as much as we love our friends and family. We are not given the choice. God first loved us so we must love others. We are not to judge others or criticise them but are to accept them wholeheartedly, with all their idiosyncrasies and weaknesses. We are to support those who are going through tough times, bearing in mind, that one day we will all have to endure a testing time in our lives. Galatians 6:2 says we are to bear one another's burdens. We are not to reject or withdraw from someone who is going through the fire. To withdraw at a time like that is not showing love.

People who have been involved in a cult and have since become Christians, are often the ones who 'excommunicate' people from their lives more easily and feel justified in doing so, because that is often all they know. If you have been involved in a cult and have 'withdrawn' from a fellow Christian; or in other words – excommunicated them from your life – then you need to repent before God and re-establish the fellowship. To break fellowship is to contradict God's word and He never ever does that; so if you actually believe God is telling you to 'withdraw' from someone, then you are only hearing a lying spirit, sent by the evil one for that very purpose ... to break fellowship. We are commanded to love one another. Breaking fellowship with another believer is not showing love. If the Lord has brought someone across your path and you find them too much of a challenge, God may allow you to put that challenge aside for a time; but God will bring the same challenge across your path again and again until you submit to God's command to love the people you consider unloveable. God loves us all equally and we must love everyone equally. We cannot pick and choose.

We are not permitted to be racist, sexist or even have favourites as we see in Galatians 3:28; 'There is now neither Jew nor Greek; slave nor freeman; male nor female; for we are all one in Christ Jesus'. We are not to be snobbish and favour the wealthy – James 2:1; 'My Brethren, pay no servile regard to people; show no prejudice and no partiality. Do not practice the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory together with snobbery'. If you feel 'superior' enough to cast a fellow believer out of your life, you are in reality, judging them unfit to be your brother or sister and God calls you a hypocrite. Matthew 7:1 to 5 says; 'Do not judge, criticise and condemn others, so that you may not be judged. For just as you judge and criticise others, so you will be judged and criticised, and in accordance with the measure you use to deal out to others, it will be dealt out to you'. Verse 5; 'You hypocrite, first get the beam of timber out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the tiny particle out of your brother's (or sister's) eye'.

John 13:35 says people will be able to recognise Jesus' disciples by the way they love each other. That strongly implies; if you don't love your fellow believer, then you are not Jesus' disciple. Disciple means literally 'disciplined one'. Ephesians 4:2 says we are to make allowances for one another. 1 Corinthians 13:4 says love is patient. 1 Thessalonians 4:9 says God teaches us to love. If you don't love your fellow believer, then clearly, you are not listening to Him. 1 Peter 1:22 says to love with a pure heart. 1 John 4:7 to 12 says if you don't love, then you don't know Him intimately and are not mature in God. 1 John 2:9 to 11 says if you don't love your fellow believer then you are spiritually blind and you are straying and you are walking in darkness. If you genuinely love God, then you will genuinely love your fellow believer.

1 John 4:20 says, if you say you are a believer and say you love God, yet choose to dislike another believer, God says you are a liar. If you feel you have the right to 'withdraw' from another believer, you don't know God as well as you think you do, and you don't love God as much as you say you do. Jesus said this in John 14:15; 'If you really love Me, you will keep and obey My commands'. Further on in John 14:21 to 24; 'The person who has My commands and keeps them is the one who really loves Me; and whoever really loves Me will be loved by My Father...' 'If a person really loves Me he will obey My teaching; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. Anyone who does not really love Me does not obey My teaching, and the teaching you hear is not Mine but comes from the Father Who sent Me'.

Clearly, from the words of Jesus Himself, if you do not obey His command to love one another, then you don't really love Him because if you really loved Jesus, then you would automatically love all your fellow Christians. You cannot say you love Jesus, then go ahead and pick and choose which Christians you want to love. That is disobedience to Jesus' direct instructions to us as a body. They are Jesus' words given to Him by the Father, and deliberate disobedience to God's word is rebellion and is as evil as the sins of witchcraft and idolatry (1 Samuel 15:23). Loving your brothers and sisters in Christ is taken very seriously by our Father. Rejection is the opposite of love. If you have rejected a genuine believer, then you do not have love. Even more serious than that, if you have rejected a believer, then you have rejected Jesus and even God Himself. Matthew 10:42; 'He who receives you, receives Me and he who receives Me receives Him Who sent Me'. On the other hand, if you do not receive your fellow Christian, then you are not receiving Jesus, or the One who sent Him. Then further on in Matthew 25:45, it states clearly; when you fail to do things for the least of the believers, then you are failing to do them for God. If you fail to love your fellow believers, then you are failing to love God.

If you have been rejected by fellow believer/s – and sadly, that does happen – then forgive them and leave them to God to deal with, but you must maintain the correct attitude. It helps to remember that you are not dealing with flesh and blood, but a rebellious lying spirit that the person/s who cast you out is influenced by. See 1 Corinthians 13:1; 'Even if they speak with tongues of angels'..., indicating they are Spirit filled believers. Even Spirit filled believers can be influenced by evil, especially if they are prone to allowing evil influences into their homes (See the text titled "Works of Evil" on this website). Though their actions are hurtful, we must still forgive them and love them and accept them back when they realise their sin and repent. In God's time, they will come to the point where they will love everyone.

If you are the person who has 'withdrawn' from fellowshiping with a believer, or group of believers then you need to examine yourself. You cannot be a Christian who claims to love God, yet reject believers in Christ. God calls you a hypocrite. There is no scriptural excuse for treating any genuine Christian badly. You simply do not have the right and there is no scriptural justification for doing so. 1 John 2:11 says you are blinded, straying and are walking in darkness (or listening to a lying spirit). If you have been offended by the fellow Christian you are withdrawing from, then you must forgive them because if you don't, then God will not forgive you; Mark 11:26.

The reality is, and it is a sad fact, that not all professing Christians behave the way they should towards other believers. It does happen and it is most frustrating, when some Christians who have known the Lord for some years, still enjoy being immature in Christ, and use that as an excuse to behave badly. These immature people hate the truth; they refuse to listen to the wisdom of more mature and knowledgeable believers; they dismiss what is written in the Bible; they lack wisdom, compassion, mercy, kindness and Christian love. Their attitude is: "Why should I help this person or love that person. Why should I support the Jews? They brought it on themselves anyway." They hold onto that selfish, rebellious and heartless attitude. These immature people prefer to listen to a lying spirit, than listen to Jesus' command to love one another. Truly they are as the Christians Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 13:1 to 3, but we must still love them anyway, and allow God to deal with their attitude.

We really need to experience God's deep unfathomable love, in order to have that unquenchable love for all other people; Christians, Jews and non believers.

Amen and God bless you.

<http://www.bibleabookoftruth.com/>