
How's Your Christian Love Life?

I. Introduction

A. How's Your Christian Love Life?

1. No, I'm not asking too personal a question
2. Love is an important part of our discipleship to Jesus
3. And yet, it is sometimes one of the hardest things
 - a) Because it demands that we overcome personal feelings, perceived insults, and even enemies
 - b) And because it rises above self-interest and takes action in the best interest of others
4. Which is why Jesus and the apostles spent so much time teaching about it, like...

B. In Luke 10:25 — someone who had been listening to Jesus asked Him a question

1. "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?"
2. Jesus answered with a question, "What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?"
3. The lawyer answered, "Love God and love your neighbor."
4. Jesus says, "Right. Do this and live."
5. But the lawyer, wanting to justify himself tried to find a loophole and asked, "Who's my neighbor?"
6. Jesus tells a parable we call the "Good Samaritan" — about who our neighbor is and how we are to love him

C. Since love as a Christian is so important...

1. Let's look at this parable about love of neighbor
2. And ask ourselves, "How's my Christian love life?"

II. One of the first things that we can see is that it is **NOT DONE FOR SHOW**

A. The Samaritan's love for his neighbor wasn't for show

1. he was all by himself on this barren, sparsely traveled, wilderness road
2. it wasn't so he'd look good in front of anyone
3. he only saw a neighbor in need
4. In fact, we might guess that the reason Jesus mentions the priest and Levite passing by in this parable was because, at least in part, they had no audience

B. Matt. 6:1 — "Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven."

1. You can't always help who might see your service, and in fact Jesus tells us to let our lights shine in the world, so that **God gets the glory**
2. But Jesus teaches that our good deeds should never be done for show — **never to glorify us**

3. The Samaritan of this parable saw a neighbor in need, in the middle of nowhere, with no one to see, and took action

C. So, our Christian love...

1. Doesn't necessarily need
 - a) programs to do something with others
 - b) audiences
 - c) or any motivation other than the need of a neighbor and God's command
2. Let's look for our brothers' and our neighbors' needs and help... because they need help

III. Second, **IT DID SOMETHING**

A. One of the most famous Bible verses in the world...Jn. 3:16

1. Doesn't go — "For God so loved the world that He felt it deeply."
2. Rather, "For God so loved that He gave..."

B. The Samaritan's love didn't stop with...

1. Sympathy
2. Empathy
3. Pity
4. Feeling
5. The Levite and priest probably felt bad for the injured man, but did nothing
 - a) Illus. — bus with "Not in service" sign
 - b) The Levite and priest had a virtual "Not in service" sign

C. So, our Christian love...

1. should take off the "Not in service" sign
2. should move beyond the feelings of sympathy and empathy
3. to action, because love doesn't just feel, it does things

IV. Third, **IT LOVED EVEN A POTENTIAL ENEMY**

A. This is the one that really answers the lawyer's question

1. But in sort of a backwards way
2. Who do you want to be a neighbor to you, when you're in need?
3. The answer, of course, is "Anybody!"
4. We won't turn down help from anyone, when we're in need — which was the point

B. Jesus taught in Matt. 5:44 "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,"

C. The parable of the Good Samaritan illustrates this well...

1. Jews and Samaritans held one another in contempt

- a) The Jews considered the Samaritans to be “half-breeds” racially and religiously
 - b) Jews in Galilee would cross the east side of the Jordan to go to Jerusalem to avoid passing through Samaria
 - c) The Samaritans considered the Jews arrogant and pompous
 - d) No love lost between them
 - e) **So, not only was the Samaritan helping a stranger, he was helping someone from a group who scorned and disrespected his own people**
2. *Nevertheless*, the Samaritan loved/helped the Jew!
 3. No prejudice, no up-turned nose, no generic revenge for wrongs done to his own people
 4. Only compassion at work

D. So, our Christian love...

1. must be free of prejudice
 - a) race
 - b) education
 - c) economic
 - d) past history
 - e) religion
 - f) or sinful state
2. ...devoid of grudges or urges to gain revenge
3. ...never counting past wrongs
4. Rather it must simply be compassion at work to do what was in your “neighbor’s” best interest

V. Fourth, **IT MEANS GETTING HIS HANDS DIRTY AND LETTING IT COST HIM SOMETHING**

A. Love is fine and easy and desirable, as long as it is...

1. handshakes and hugs
2. smiles and warm hearts
3. good times, good feelings, and sweet fellowship

B. But what about times when it...

1. demands hard work, dirty work?
2. is inconvenient?
3. costs us something?
4. deals with real problems?

C. In the “Sermon on the Mount” Jesus taught, (Matt. 5:41) “Whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two.”

D. The Samaritan demonstrates the “extra mile” kind of love the Christian must have...

1. he must’ve gotten a little bloody
2. he gave up his own donkey to ride to the injured man
3. he paid for his room and board that night and the next several nights

4. He went the second mile
- E. So, our love, whether for brethren or not; we...
 1. Must look beyond
 - a) the dirt and smell
 - b) the blood and ugliness
 - c) the inconvenience
 - d) the effort
 - e) or cost
 2. should move beyond the minimum
 - a) ...go the second mile in our love for our neighbor
 - b) giving, serving, helping, and sacrificing "until it feels good"
 3. Because love does what is in the best interest of the "neighbor" in need, even when it demands something extra of us

VI. Conclusion

- A. The Good Samaritan's love and kindness...
 1. Wasn't done for men to see
 2. Was action oriented
 3. Loved the potential enemy
 4. Even if it meant getting his hands dirty and cost him something
- B. Jesus ended His parable with, "Go and do the same."
- C. How's your Christian love life?
 1. Is it expressed, whether we have an audience or not?
 2. Is it action oriented?
 3. Does it include even people not like us, the unlovely, and even potential enemies?
 4. Has it included getting our hands dirty and taken time and even money?
 5. Has it gone the second mile?
- D. That's Jesus' definition and what we are called to do...
 1. More than aspire to — DO.
 2. Because truth is not just to admire, aspire to, or get around to one of these days
 3. While we may not do it perfectly, the question is are you working at it?
- E. If your love life as a Christian has fallen short, repent.
- F. If you haven't yet become a Christian...
 1. The Lord has loved you in this way...
 2. ...in hopes of you hearing and heeding His calling to you
 3. He is the Son of God — believe it
 4. The sinful life that you've been living isn't the right way to live — stop it
 5. No one else should be your Lord — name Jesus as Lord

6. Jesus' way of salvation is the only way — so obey Him in baptism today

G. Come