

Learning to Love Like Jesus

I did it all wrong for years. And I was miserable! I'm talking about my attitude and my stinkin' thinkin' that was focused on the thought, "What about me?!" And it came out in my behavior: If I didn't get my way all the time, I tried to control other people through my temper.

I honestly didn't know what my problem was until God spoke to my heart one day and said, "You're selfish. You've studied My Word about spiritual warfare, prosperity, healing, having power and authority as a believer in Christ ... but how much time have you studied about My love?"

That was the beginning of discovering that I would never be happy and have peace until I learned to love like Jesus loves.

One of the first messages God put on my heart to teach was titled "Tell Them I Love Them." At first, I didn't want to do it. I thought, "People already know You love them, God. I want to teach a really powerful message—something they haven't heard before." But God showed me that if people really knew He loved them and what that means, then they would live much differently than they do.

When we know and experience God's love, we can share it with others. Imagine what the world would be like if everyone who calls themselves a Christian would really love each other with His quality of love. Think about it. There would be no gossip, no judgment or criticism, no exclusive attitudes that make others feel rejected, and people's needs would be met much more than they are.

Thankfully, Jesus gave us very real, practical examples of how we can love the way God loves us.

Loving Others "to the Highest Degree"

John 13:1 says Jesus “loved them to the last and to the highest degree” (AMP). In the following verses, He demonstrates what it means to love others like this. And it shocked the disciples.

In those days, there were servants who washed people’s feet when they came to visit. It’s likely they were considered the lowliest servants in the household. Now Jesus, the Son of God Himself, got up from supper, took the servant’s towel, and proceeded to wash the disciples’ feet. His message to them was to love one another by being a servant. Because God wants His love to flow through us and touch other people’s lives.

Love is not just a feeling or a theory; it’s a decision we make and an action we take. It’s so important for us to study what the Bible teaches about God’s love so we can learn to love like Jesus. And we have to pray for God to help us learn how to walk in love—to be a servant who “washes feet” by helping others.

It’s All About Washing Others’ Feet

Matt. 7:12 (NIV) says, “So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you. ...” This is so critical because if we want to have meaningful relationships with others, then we need to invest in their lives by giving them support, encouraging them, helping to meet their needs—serving them as we’re able to do it.

It’s easy to want to help people you like or those you want to impress. But when it comes to doing something for someone you don’t know or have a natural interest in, it can be a different story. And sometimes we don’t feel like serving our family. I know from experience that people can be willing to help others at church or work, but they aren’t willing to do the same things for their family.

I’ve learned that what I do in front of people publicly won’t really mean anything if I’m not living a life that pleases God

at home too. I thought I would die of frustration before I finally got this, so I know it's not easy. We have to realize that we're naturally selfish, and we must make a conscious decision to think of others on purpose—or we'll miss many opportunities to serve them.

I encourage you to read John 13 and pay close attention to what Jesus did and what He said. Spend some time studying Scriptures about God's love and pray for Him to show you ways you can serve the people in your life. See how many creative ways God puts in your heart to "wash feet." You'll probably find it's easier and more simple than you thought it would be to help make someone's life better.

God wants us to have success and enjoy our lives. But He wants us to die to self, get over being the center of our world, and begin to focus on looking for someone who needs our help every day. When you do this, you'll discover you're actually more satisfied, content, peaceful and happy than you've ever been in your life!

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