

Why Love Has To Win

Setting the scene:

John 13:31-38

Two HUGE problems with Christianity:

John 13:31-38

1. The unmistakable call to follow Jesus is to:

DENY SELF

PICK UP A CROSS

FOLLOW HIM

2. Then I must follow a **COMMAND** that I can't **IGNORE**.

We don't get to choose **WHO WE LOVE**.

We don't get to choose **HOW WE LOVE**.

We don't get to choose **WHEN WE LOVE**.

One clear answer:

John 13:31-38, 17:20-23, 1 John 2:7-11, 3:11-18, 3:23-24, 4:7-21, 5:1-3

**THE WORLD WILL BE ATTRACTED TO THE WAY
WE LOVE EACH OTHER.**

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2. Then I must follow a _____ that I can't _____.

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Food for Thought for the week of August 13, 2023

In his message this weekend, Chris pointed out that one of the huge problems in Christianity is following Jesus' command to love one another. We can easily think loving God is enough. Recognizing this, John gives us useful guidance that can help us remedy this problem. This week, we are going to take a journey through the book of 1 John, reflecting on the call to love one another.

1. In 1 John 2:9-11, John seems to paint this as a black and white issue. Can you think of a time in your life when you experienced the "darkness" of hate, as John describes in this passage? What about the "light" of love?

1 John 2:9-11 New International Version (NIV)

⁹ Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates a brother or sister is still in the darkness. ¹⁰ Anyone who loves their brother and sister lives in the light, and there is nothing in them to make them stumble. ¹¹ But anyone who hates a brother or sister is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness. They do not know where they are going, because the darkness has blinded them.

2. Has someone ever shown you the kind of love that is described in 1 John 3:16-18? What did they do for you? Is there someone in your life who would benefit from you showing this same kind of love toward them?

1 John 3:16-18 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁶ This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. ¹⁷ If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? ¹⁸ Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

3. Read 1 John 3:23-24. Obeying God's commands seems to be an important part of unity with Him. Have you seen this play out in your life? Can you think of a time where doing what you knew God wanted led to more intimacy with Him?

1 John 3:23-24 New International Version (NIV)

²³ And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. ²⁴ The one who keeps God's commands lives in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.

4. Like a gauge used to measure temperature, John uses a spiritual gauge in 1 John 5:1-3 to measure one's love for God. If you were to apply this gauge to your love for God, what do you think it would say? How are you doing with what these verses say? Take a moment to thank God for where you feel your love for Him is strong and ask Him to help you in areas where you feel it's weak.

1 John 5:1-3 New International Version (NIV)

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. ² This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. ³ In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome,