

One Citizen Under God

Battleground or playground?

John 15:18-16:4, Matthew 10:16-42, 24:9-14, Mark 13:9-13, Luke 21:12-19

Christians are to be known by their **LOVE**,
the world by its **HATRED**.

The Church cannot be known as **FIGHTERS**,
but as **LOVERS**.

If our actions are not consistent with the **TESTIMONY**
and **NATURE** of **JESUS**, it is not of the Spirit.

The world's hatred is against **CHRIST**,
not our **UN-CHRISTLIKE** behavior.

Two ways love can go bad... in a hurry:

John 15:18-16:4, 12:46-48, 1 Corinthians 5:9-12, Matthew 18:15-19, 1 Peter 2:11-17, 4:14-16, Philippians 2:14-18

"What about fighting for our rights?"

Standing up for our rights is an **AMERICAN** thing,
not a **CHRISTIAN** thing.

Therefore, being **CHRISTIAN** will always dictate
how we are **AMERICAN**.

"I'm loving people by pointing out their sin."

We don't push our **CHRISTIANITY** on those who
don't **KNOW CHRIST**.

Our biblical examples of love:

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the world by its _____.

The Church cannot be known as _____,
but as _____.

If our actions are not consistent with the _____
and _____ of _____, it is not of the Spirit.

The world's hatred is against _____,
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Standing up for our rights is an _____ thing,
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Therefore, being _____ will always dictate
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"I'm loving people by pointing out their sin."

We don't push our _____ on those who
don't _____.

Our biblical examples of love:

Food for Thought for the week of September 10, 2023

1. This weekend we saw how Jesus reminded His disciples they would likely encounter hostility and hatred in the world because of following Him. As one of the disciples who experienced persecution, suffering, and hatred that culminated in his death, Peter gives us some helpful instruction in 1 Peter 4:12-19 that we can follow in living as one citizen under God.

1 Peter 4:12-19 New International Version (NIV)

¹² Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. ¹³ But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. ¹⁴ If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. ¹⁵ If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. ¹⁶ However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. ¹⁷ For it is time for judgment to begin with God's household; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? ¹⁸ And, "If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?" ¹⁹ So then, those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.

In light of verse 12, can you think of a time in your life when you endured a trial or were misjudged simply because you were a Christian? How did you respond? Were you surprised by this, or did you see it coming?

With verse 14 in mind, what are some ways you would be able to know or remind yourself that the Spirit of God is with you, and you are "blessed" in the midst of being disrespected?

In his message, Chris reminded us that Christians are to be known by their love. With the instruction in verse 19 to do good, what are some practical ways to show love toward those who dislike or disapprove of Christians?

2. As biblical as it is to show love toward other Christians and to the world, Chris pointed out that there are two ways love can go bad in a hurry. If you lived out the attributes of love found in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, how might this kind of love keep a relationship inside or outside the church from going bad?

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 New International Version (NIV)

⁴ Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

Is there anyone in your life who needs to be reminded they are still loved by you despite your differences or what happened in the past? What is a tangible way you could show them biblical love this week?