

Do You Know How to Love?

Do you really know how to love? What about when relationships get tough and those you are connected to make love difficult? Do we actually know how to love in a deeper dimension when love gets challenging?

Jesus is asking the church, “Do you really know how to love?”

Matthew 24:9-14

- Don't be shocked when people hate you because of your faith.
- We need to love people more than trying to be liked, because there is a difference.
- What happens when we serve ourselves and our own interests in self-survival. (betrayal, offense, hatred)
- Hate operates more in our lives than we realize. It is the withdrawal of love in relationships, where we pull back and love less.
- In this atmosphere, false prophets arise. In our brokenness, the enemy trains people in a false gospel.
- In this context, lawlessness will also increase. People will live without moral restraint.
- Above all - LOVE GETS COLD.
- The temptation becomes to numb out.
- The key for you is to know how to endure to the end in love . . .

We are in a season of recognizing that we don't know how to love. We need to grow in what it means to love.

This message is an exhortation on what it means to love in these days. Our challenge in going to the next level is to learn what it means to love those that we typically withdraw love from.

When love is challenged, it can be:

1. Compromised:

1 John 2:15-17

Love: agape - unconditional love of God

Love that is meant for covenant relationship is being compromised by the cosmos; the order and system in place in this world, orchestrated by satan.

Goal: compromise your love for God and loving what He loves.

Temptation - being drawn away from love and into being led by lust and addictions.

Spending time giving your heart and affection to things that are out of priority in the Kingdom of God.

These lusts and addictions become a focus to the point that when those areas go up or down, we emotionally go up and down with them. Lusts of the flesh, lust of the eyes and the pride of life.

Therefore, when you pray, you ask amiss.

Solution: make God your source.

2. Conditional

We are taught to love others when things are good. This is a low level of understanding what love is. Jesus' focus was on loving people who are in opposition, who hate you and work against you.

Challenge: invite God to change your programming in how you respond to those who hate you.

Matthew 5:43-48

Jesus upgrades what the law initially established.

Patience and kindness are the pillars of love that manifest its power.

- Patience: first response to being hated
- Kindness: disarms the enemy

Many times people come against you because of their unresolved brokenness and you seem to resemble it. Even if you are not that kind of person, their junk rises up against you. Unresolved hurt and pain, designed to come against you and get you to increase the cycle.

Bless those who curse you. Do good to those who hate you. Pray for those who spitefully use you.

If you love those who love you, what benefit of growth is there?

Love has a perfecting work it produces in our life.

The call to being perfect is in the context of knowing how to love at a deeper level.

We have to begin asking ourselves, "What does love say?" because God is love.

The reality is that you need to know how to engage people in your uncomfortable areas.

God will do a work of restoring relationships so that a unity amongst the people of God can be formed.

You can win an argument, but the devil still wins, because love was not in the midst.

3. Contaminated

1 John 3:10-15

Whoever does not practice righteousness.

He who does not love his brother.

Without love, death will have a work.

Whoever hates his brother is a murderer. (Reality check: all of us at some point have lived as murderers.)

1 John 3:18

Your words of love must be backed with action. Otherwise our talk becomes cheap.

Luke 22:14-34

Can you love when there is a betrayer at your table?

Love will expose Judas. He will get up. And he will leave.

Peter gets sifted. You will be sifted. Will you learn to love in a greater dimension than ever? So you can strengthen the brethren?

Scriptures References:

- Matthew 24:9-14
- 1 John 2:15-17
- Matthew 5:43-48
- 1 John 3:10-15

- 1 John 3:18
- Luke 22:14-34