

No Greater Love – Sacrifice

February Memory Verse:

John 13:34-35 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

1 John 3:10-11 By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother. 11 For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.

John 15:12-13 This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. 13 Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.

1 John 3:16-18 We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. 17 But whoever has the world’s goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? 18 Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

Three key words come to mind that describe authentic love that is the foundation for real Christian community.

1. _____

1 John 3:16 We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

- In this verse, God points to the ultimate sacrifice of laying down our lives for others.
- Ephesians 5 says that a husband loves his wife through sacrifice.
- 1 Peter 4:8 Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.
- Proverbs 10:12 Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all transgressions.
- Hatred demands strife. It reveals flaws and stirs up anger. It creates tension and conflict.
- Love covering sin is a choice not to act on one’s rights.
- When we’re hurt by someone, we feel we have a right to be angry, to seek restitution, to expose, or even seek revenge.
- Cover = let it go; wait in patience; or forgive

• **Real love sacrifices _____ for the sake of _____.**
1 Corinthians 13:5 [Love] does not keep a record of wrongs.

• **Real love sacrifices _____ for the sake of _____.**
1 Peter 3:9 Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.

• **Real love sacrifices _____ for the sake of _____.**
1 Corinthians 13:7 “Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”

- The opposite of bearing all things and believing all things would be exposing all things. It means we don't throw other people's flaws and failures back in their faces.

2.

1 John 3:16 We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

- When we sacrifice, we are _____.

Ephesians 5:1-2 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; 2 and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

- When we give ourselves as a living sacrifice, we no longer smell like ourselves. We smell like Jesus and it puts a smile on our Heavenly Father's face.
- 2 Corinthians 2:15 For we are a fragrance of Christ to God...

3.

1 John 3:17-18 But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? 18 Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

- "Show don't tell."
- Matthew 5:16 Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.
- 1 John 3:16 We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us.
- John 1:12 "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name."

Velveteen Rabbit: "Real isn't how you are made," said the Skin Horse. "It's a thing that happens to you. When a child loves you for a long, long time, Not just to play with, but REALLY loves you, then you become real."

Further Thought:

- What changes will you need to make in your life to show sacrificial love to others?
- Who is someone you know who needs your sacrificial love?
- How can you imitate Christ's sacrificial love to someone this week?